USER'S GUIDE

*for Youth Empowerment
Practitioners and Beginners*

EYERP

EUROPEAN YOUTH EMPOWERMENT
RESEARCH PROJECT

USER'S GUIDE

for Youth Empowerment Practitioners and Beginners

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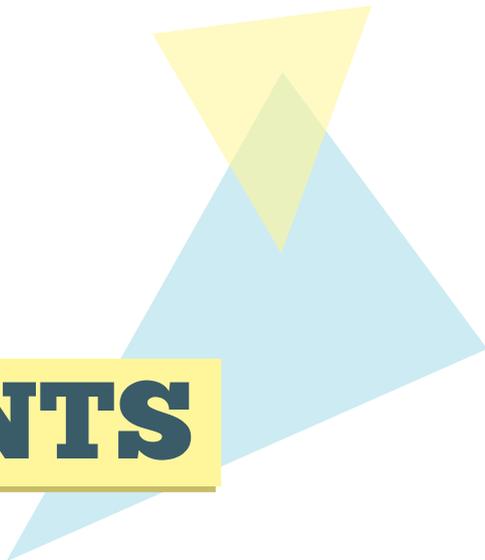
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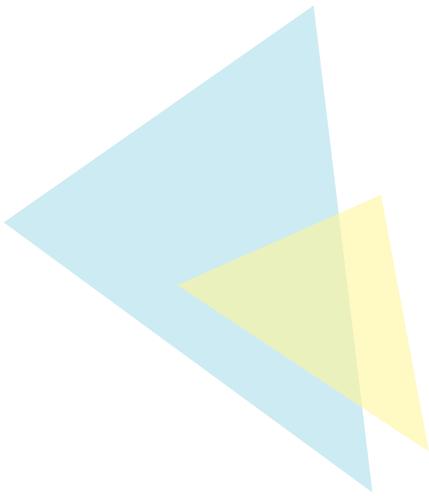
DEAR READER.

You are holding in your hands the second edition of our User's Guide, which is published as a result of the work carried out within the European Youth Empowerment Research Project (EYERP) and funded by the "Youth in Action" programme of the European Union.
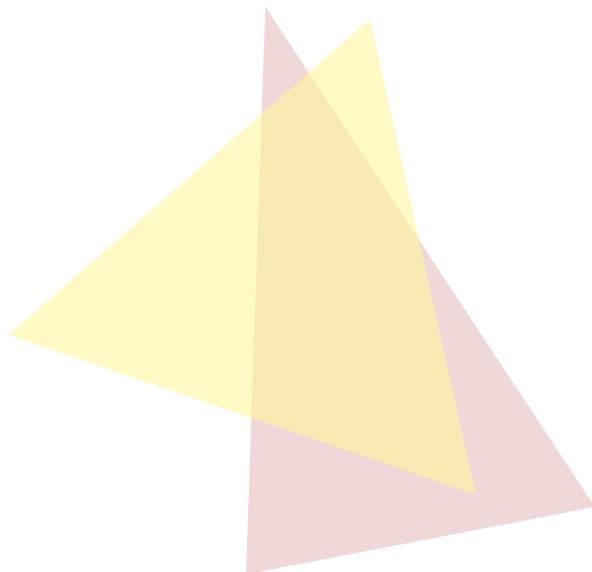
Our goal was to produce a simple and coherent Guide, or a "Cookbook" for youth workers, practitioners, as well as beginners, with chapters that provide new methods and tools on youth empowerment and participation. We also wanted to illustrate that the work of the EYERP in the empowerment dimension is part of a process – a process that connects what has been achieved in the past with the present, which in turn prepares the ground for the future.

As for the recent past, the last two years have vividly displayed the importance of this research project, where we concentrated on sharing new experience, gaining new knowledge and providing tools to implement new methods, in order to make the lives of practitioners and youth workers a bit easier. This User's Guide reflects the diversity of issues we have taken over in this process, that could improve and enrich youth work practice in Europe, as well as support and involve youngsters to become more active and independent. Basi-

cally, this User's Guide investigates which approaches and methods can empower young people compared to others, which are particularly effective and whether they can be converted into practical tools and delivery methods. We hope that you will find it useful.

As always, the success of our work – be it in the office or in the field – relies entirely on partnership. Without the support of the EYERP project team, Project partners, our generous donors, experts, interns and volunteers, none of this would have been possible. We are taking this opportunity to thank them all.

Yours sincerely,
EYERP Team
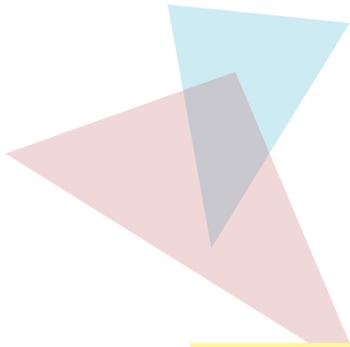
INTRODUCTION

This is the short version of the story of five quite different NGOs that decided to move away from usual method approaches and use different attitudes towards actions in order to find new answers.

Our four partner organizations: aha – Tipps & Infos für junge Leute (Austria), invo – Service für Kinder- und Jugendbeteiligung - Service for Children and Youth Participation (Austria), KERIC (Slovakia) and YUPI – Youth Union of People with Initiative (Portugal) together with Plattform e.V. (Germany) have been actively involved in Youth Participation *(See chapter: Participation)* for many years, knowing the merits and mistakes in the field. Back in the Summer of 2012 we decided to try together unique routes to tackle those challenges in actual youth work, which in our opinion, are very important. We agreed to carry on the research on empirical methods and approaches that could improve and enrich youth work practice in Europe, so as to support and involve more youngsters as agents of their own will.

In our perception, it is quite common that youngsters are treated in a way that they do not have equal rights, that their needs and ideas are denied, and that you cannot trust their personality. It is true, youngsters are not just soon-to-be-adults. Adolescence is a unique phase within the development process. As a matter of fact, participation structures are provided in adult manner or otherwise simply not accessible. This is also true for many other structures and levels in youth work, for instance in community levels. Usually, youngsters can only choose among the given offers. It is very rare when youngsters can decide on what activities should be offered. And youngsters almost never offer the youth work activities themselves or participate in the decisions on how youth should be supported,

educated and involved. In our opinion, we as people who work with youth, people who work on youth participation and other practitioners, feel the need to change the approach towards youngsters. Despite any assistance and offers we give, it would be useful to provide resources and coaching, which the youngsters demand, so that they can flourish and find their own ways in the future.

In the Spring of 2013, with the approval of our research proposal, we began to realize which approaches would be the best choice for our project. As a result, we chose two promising concepts on which we based our subsequent work. First, Empowerment *(See chapter: Empowerment)*, attracted us as a concept of strong natural persuasiveness. And the second concept, Entrepreneurial Thinking and Acting *(See chapter: Entrepreneurship)*, an inspiring approach, which is considered ironically slightly suspicious, became the centre of increasing public interest throughout the European Union. Then, we came together to develop a common understanding of these concepts, of their characteristics and preconditions.

Throughout the process, it took us four international online conferences, a wiki project, many written documents, discussions and meetings with experts, until we achieved a relevant consensus by the middle of July 2013. Most of the complexities of our work were discovered within the exploration of abstract levels, which we all found to be a very hard process.
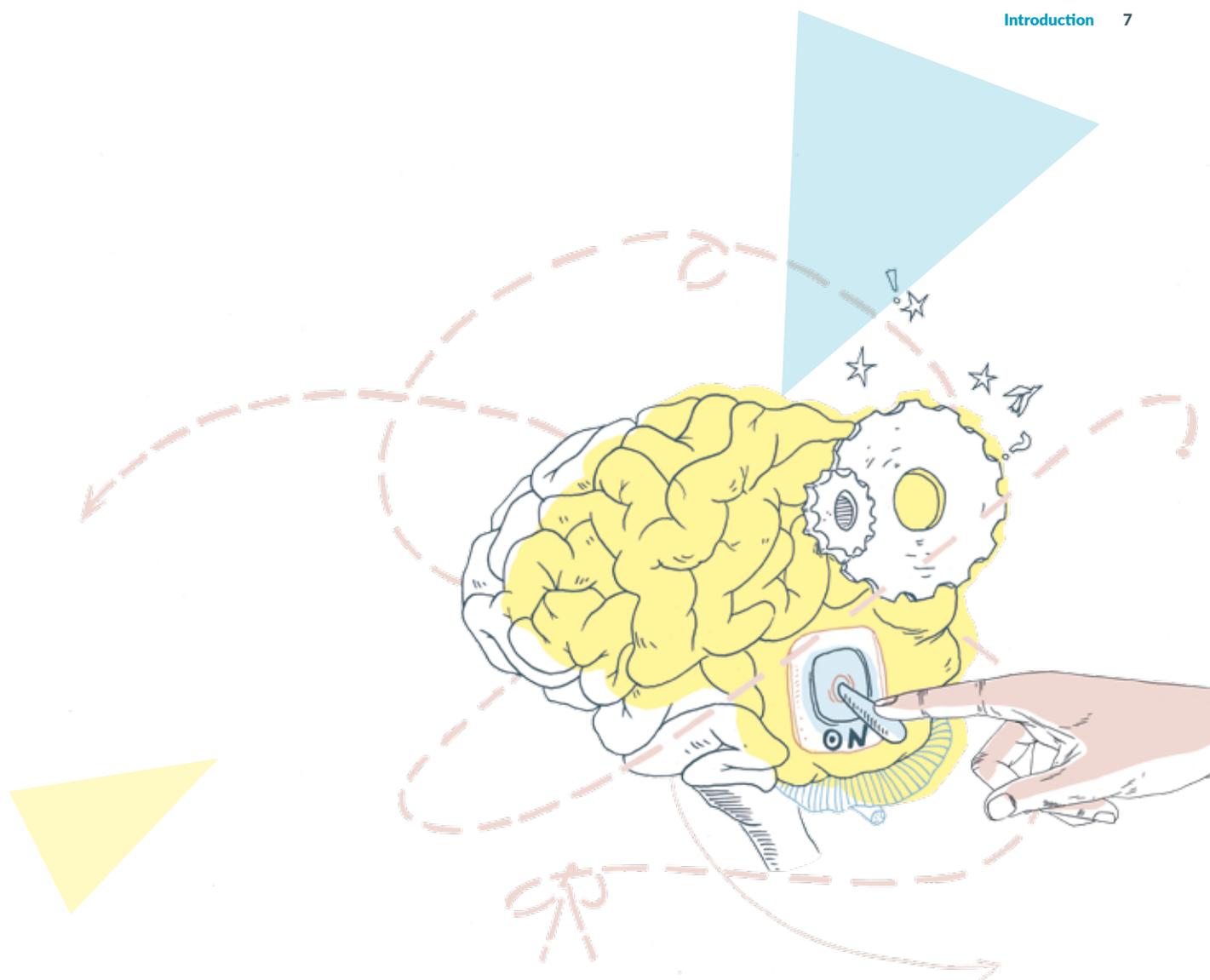
In the process of the research, a few questions have emerged: what do we mean by definitions and common positions? How would that abstract idea look in practice? Consequently, we had to further investigate ideas for possible methods. So every partner had to search for a method that they thought could be an example of a good practice according to our common approach and the criteria we defined earlier. But how do we know what impact these methods really have or what aspects should an effective method consist of? These questions led us to another round of hard work and research, not least because we did not agree on whether these could or should be measured empirically, but because they required further research and discussion. As a result, during the project we involved some other organizations and practitioners in our research.

Four online conferences and more documents later, from 18 to 22 September 2013, we met in Čadca, at "KERIC" office, which is our Slovak partner. This was the first time when we all met in person within the process of this project. There, each partner presented their recommended methods, which consisted of eight methods in total. As a result, we all decided to try out some of the methods which were presented by other partners, where five out of eight methods were selected for tryouts. The idea was to carry out an empirical investigation of transferability, adaptability, essential elements and impacts of the method within the focus of our approach. However, we did not reach an agreement on how to do that investigation, and hence we had to rethink in which direction to move so that we continue the research together.

By the end of October 2013 we had two solutions in our hands. We wanted to perform the implementation of the selected methods as a practical learning exchange. In parallel to this process, an instrument of quality management for youth work and education was developed, which took the form of the Questionnaire. The idea behind it is to serve practitioners with additional but systematic information which can show what works well and what does not, in order to direct their efforts to more fruitful interventions. We wanted this instrument to be easy to operate by the user without any expert support. ☛
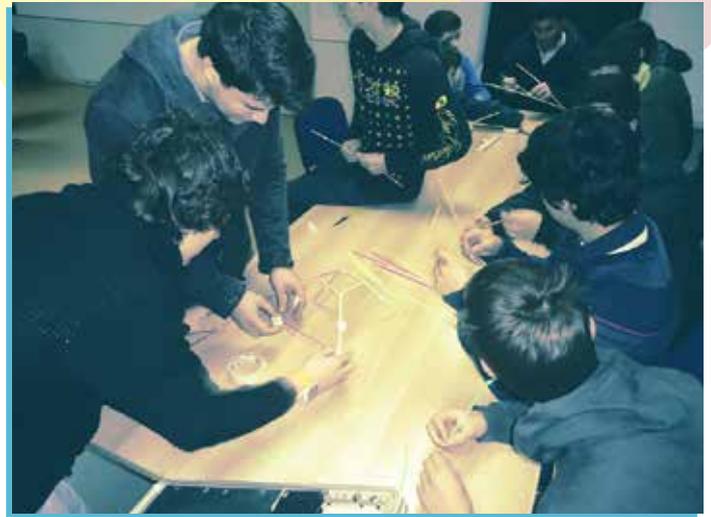
━━━━━ **As we all aspire** the development of youngster's competences, we decided to measure what European institutions recommended in 2006[1] to be a key competence for lifelong learning, the Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship *(See chapter: Entrepreneurship)*. At that moment, it was clear to us that the definition of this key competence did not cover the full range of our approaches, though it did cover the core concept quite well and was of high public relevance. And because in our opinion another essential goal of our work with youth and education is to enable and encourage active participation of youngsters, we also decided to measure their intention to do so. Each youngster is a unique person with a story behind it. So, we wanted to follow the individual's development. Therefore, we decided to start with a self-evaluation questionnaire to get a snapshot of the actual competence and intention levels, which can be repeated whenever it is necessary to record the development of these competences over a period of time or according to relevant actions. What we did and how we came to this is described in details in chapter "Questionnaire".

When we all met in Dornbirn, which was hosted by our Austrian Partner "aha - Tipps & Infos für junge Leute", from 18 to 22 February 2014, all partners brought countless new experiences with them. By that time, we have developed two preliminary versions of our Questionnaire, as well as conducted and analyzed the surveys among 278 youngsters. The results enabled us to identify the weak spots and successful parts of the Questionnaire. Most importantly, the draft seemed to enable the snapshot, but it was quite raw and

daunting to our youngsters. Furthermore, we shared our thoughts and ideas about test runs of the methods that we exchanged with each other and the results that we received. By the time of our meeting some partners were not able to implement their selected methods, while others faced some difficulties. This allowed us to look further for the most crucial elements of each chosen method that we implemented. Some results gathered from the research process are described in chapter "Methods" of the User's Guide, yet enriched with new findings gathered from our method implementations after that meeting, which is a way to transfer the knowledge and experience to others, so that they can also try out these methods themselves.

Three months later, after the meeting in Austria, we finished the final wording of our Questionnaire, and it took another two months to complete the layout and design. Many youngsters and youth workers from all partner countries contributed to the Questionnaire with their suggestions and feedbacks, which incredibly improved the progress of our work *(See chapter: Questionnaire)*. The data from the survey and analysis will be further uploaded and distributed via our website at *www.eyerp.eu* in order to summarize our project and our work.

━━━━━ **Within the final stages of the EYERP project,** an international Conference on Youth Empowerment and Entrepreneurship was organized together with all project partners at the European Youth Education and Meeting Centre in Weimar (EJBW),

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[1] The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (2006). Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council from 18 December 2006 on key competences of lifelong learning (2006/962/EC), see *http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN*

Germany on 10 and 11 September 2014, in order to present the outcomes of the project and share the results among practitioners, stakeholders and a wider audience of youngsters, students and academics. In the Conference project partners presented five methods described in this Guide and received valuable responses and feedback on them. The event was very interactive, with several team-building activities and discussion rounds, where participants were able to share their experiences, exchange practical knowledge and present their ideas.

The event can be considered as a perfect platform for empowerment practitioners and beginners, who would further use the tools and methods presented in the conference by reflecting on their own daily work with youth and measuring their own activities by these tools.

The first day of the conference began with the Empowerment Session where participants concentrated on the self reflecting question of "How to empower youngsters in my work". During the session participants shared their experiences on empowerment and encouraged others to reflect on them during the pair interviews on empowerment experiences. After that, five parallel Workshops on empowerment methods were offered, where participants could join the workshop of their interest and test them personally, by reflecting on their own experiences and daily work. These workshops were also a good opportunity to measure and assess the methods selected by the project partners, in order to enrich the existing pool of methods and improve them for youth workers and practitioners.

The second half of the day was dedicated to the Entrepreneurship competences and the ways to develop those skills among youngsters. The topic was further discussed at the interactive session of World Café, in order to stimulate participants to come up with new ways to reflect and find the links between empowerment and entrepreneurship competences and skills.

The second day of the conference continued with reflections on the methods presented the day before, as well as the possible ways to improve them for further use. After the discussion, participants were offered three parallel workshops on impact assessment, quantitative tools and qualitative tools, where they could discuss the ways to measure and evaluate their work using various options. During the workshops participants were also asked to measure the key competences and personal characteristics such as: Project management, Team management, Communication skills, Pro-activity, Persistence, Risk taking, Problem solving skills, to see how much they foster the development of these competences in their work with youngsters. The conference ended with the final reflection on the two days of work and the ways to spread the knowledge and ideas of the conference to others. The event also created a platform for unique approaches and future partnerships to lead progress further.

The results of the conference and the project can be found in our website at: *www.eyerp.eu*

DEFINITIONS

*What is Empowerment? What do we mean when
we talk about Entrepreneurship and Participation?
In this Chapter we will briefly describe these
concepts and try to connect them to the methods
that we present in the User's Guide.*

Definition №1

EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment with young people

Critical look on power relations between adults and youngsters

Children and youngsters have a lot of power in terms of energy: they move a lot, they are active, they talk a lot and ask many questions, they have strong feelings and emotions, they are curious, they want to learn and do things. Children and youngsters are brimming with energy, that is their very nature. No one would deny that.

So, why do we have to talk about EmPOWERment of young people when they have such a powerful nature? Being young and having no power or energy to participate is actually a symptom of something that is not right. You can search for the reasons in youngsters themselves, but sooner or later you will recognize that in most of the cases it is not something about them that makes them unmotivated, bored, passive, frustrated or uninterested. The reasons for young people to lose their power mainly lie in the world that surrounds them, the world they live in, as well as in the relations they have with adults. In this world of adults, it is very often that they are not taken seriously or even taken into account. Most of the times they have to adapt to rhythms, structures, values and norms of adults, which are often contrary to their needs or desires. In addition to this, there is a lack of space for children and youngsters where they can move freely. And last but not least, they are structurally excluded from decision-making processes from the very beginning. So, they learn very soon that adults have power OVER them and that in order to be recognized, they have to adapt to the rules of adults and fulfill their expectations (obey, be good, learn a lot, have good grades, eat well, be strong, be happy, etc.). In this kind of power relations youngsters have to subordinate their

Janusz Korczak says:

"In the name of the future it is despised what delights, amazes, upsets, concerns or makes (the child) sad. For this day of tomorrow which the child does not understand and has no need to do so, it is deceived for many years of life. `Children and fish have no voice. Your time will come, you have to wait until you are big´ […] And the child thinks: `I am nothing – but adults are everything! Now I am a little older and still nothing. How many years should I still wait? If I only was adult…´ The child waits and lives to him/herself, he/she waits and is not able to breathe freely, he/she waits and expects something, he/she waits and swallows saliva. Beautiful childhood – no, it is just boring."[2]

feelings, ideas, dreams and needs quite often, and that – as Janus Korczak observes - is "just boring". The apathy of our youth, their lack of interest and also some violent attitudes are very likely the outcome of this kind of relations.

We think it is important to have these socio-cultural circumstances in mind when we talk about Empowerment of young people in Europe, because it makes the understanding of the position of youth in our society easier. A lot has already been done in order to give young people the voice and opportunities for action. But there is still a lot more to do, especially with youngsters that are affected by social exclusion because of their gender, origin, color, sexual orientation, social status or physical/psychological/mental constitution. ☞

2 Korczak, Janusz (2012). Wie man ein Kind lieben soll. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen. Pages 44-46.

"In my opinion the sessions that we had with YUPI were essential to show us that we are not the only one in this world and how important it is to know and understand other cultures." **Marco Ribeiro**

If you want to create Empowerment places you need a free mind and you have to trust.

━━ Relationships that may change your world

This chapter is the result of the work of the EYERP Team in combination with the outcomes of the "International Conference on Youth Empowerment and Entrepreneurship" that took place on 10 and 11 of september 2014 in Weimar, Germany.

For us, the necessary step to make Youth Empowerment possible is to question and change the power relations between adults and young people. Youngsters should be able to communicate and liberate their needs, desires or ideas within a vivid relationship with adults. This is the fundamental point of Youth Empowerment work and it encloses a big potential for Empowerment of young people, and as we all grow, of adults.

Therefore, we propose that you create spaces where you can experience these vivid relationships that may change your world and where young people can recover their power and energy, where they can live and blossom, and where they are taken seriously.

If these circumstances are granted, Empowerment is able to sprout in youngsters. The regained power will also be perceptible by the adults who accompany youngsters on their way.

We need spaces...

▶ where they are respected for who they are, not for what they have done

....

▶ where they are listened to

....

▶ where adults and young people are on the same level and where youngsters have responsibilities

....

▶ with possibilities to choose freely and make decisions

....

▶ where you can learn while doing and where it is allowed to make mistakes

....

▶ where you can have fun

....

▶ where youngsters are respected as persons and where they feel confident

....

▶ where it is possible to create profound relationships between adults and youngsters, and where you can feel the passion of sharing experiences together

....

▶ where they have the liberty to explore and express their needs and goals

....

▶ where they can feel self confident

By defining Empowerment in this broad and comprehensive way we would like to underline that we understand Empowerment as a **process** that occurs in people's lives and at the same time, we see it as an **outcome** of professional interventions that encourage such measurable processes.[3]

Our Empowerment Definition

Empowerment is a very broad term that has no exact definition and is applied in different fields, such as psychology, education, international development or management. In the beginning of the project we realized very soon that every partner organisation had its own understanding of the meaning of Empowerment. So the first step was to share our approaches and find a short and concrete definition of Empowerment. After some negotiation and exchanging views we all agreed on the following definition of Empowerment that guided us during the project: Empowerment is the process of raising a person's sense or belief in his/her ability to make decisions and to solve his/her own problems as well as the development of critical consciousness, either directly by those people, or through the help of empowered others. It also includes actively blocking attempts due to systemic obstacles to deny this process. In this transformation, people learn to give their experience a name and to speak in their own language; they understand their situation of powerlessness and systematic forces that oppress them. Their power expresses itself in a translation of this consciousness into action with others. The process of Empowerment focuses on effecting a stronger and active participation, which needs a voluntary commitment of the individual.

3 Rai, Shirin M. (2007). (Re)defining empowerment, measuring survival. Paper prepared for 'Workshop on Empowerment: Obstacles, Flaws, Achievements'. May 2007, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. Page 3.

In our definition you can also find three dimensions of Empowerment: personal, relational and collective Empowerment[4]. Every Empowerment method we tried out and tested under EYERP focuses on at least one of these three dimensions.

In the "Methods" chapters you will find a reference to these three levels that explains the focus of each presented Empowerment Method.

Individual Empowerment

Some of the presented methods (e.g. Discussion rounds) in this book foster personal or individual Empowerment of youngsters by supporting the process of raising the person's sense or belief in the ability to make decisions and to solve his or her own problems, as well as the development of critical consciousness. This individual dimension raises the sustainability of any Empowerment process, as it is an internal process that alters the perception of people and helps them take control of their life[5]. As a result, young people are able to understand their situation of powerlessness and forces that systematically oppress them, as well as to learn to give their experience a name and to express it in their own language. This is a very powerful transformation within youngsters that may influence their attitudes towards life and society in a very profound and long lasting way. The result is that young people start perceiving themselves as able and entitled to make decisions[6].

Relational Empowerment

Other Empowerment Methods that we investigated during the research project and presented in this book (e.g. Human Library) especially work on the ability to negotiate and influence the nature of relations of young people. These skills are fundamental for interaction and the translation of the individual consciousness into action with others.

4 Rowlands, Jo (1997). Questioning Empowerment: Working with Women in Honduras. Oxfam
5 Fride. (2006). Empowerment. "Development Backgrounder" 01. Page 4. See: http://www.fride.org/descarga/bgr_empowerment_eng_may06.pdf
6 Rai, Shirin M. (2007). (Re)defining empowerment, measuring survival. Paper prepared for 'Workshop on Empowerment: Obstacles, Flaws, Achievements'. May 2007, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. Page 12.
7 Rai, Shirin M. (2007). (Re)defining empowerment, measuring survival. Paper prepared for 'Workshop on Empowerment: Obstacles, Flaws, Achievements'. May 2007, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. Pages 3-6.
8 Fatke, Reinhard und Helmut Schneider, Sigrid Meinhold-Henschel und Martin Biebricher. (56) 12 2006. "Jugendbeteiligung - Chance für die Bürgergesellschaft". Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, Pages 24-32.

Collective Empowerment with the focus on "social entrepreneurship"

Empowerment on a collective level means to work together in order to achieve a greater impact and a stronger and active participation, which needs a voluntary commitment of the individual (e.g. Microproject financing). At this point it is "important to recognize, as well, that conscientization of individuals to act for change does not necessarily lead to progressive politics... Groups become empowered through collective action, but that action is enabled or constrained by the structures of power that they encounter. Thus, much closer attention must be paid to the broad political and economic structures, cultural assumptions and discourses, notions of human rights as well as laws and practices...".[7]

Trying to actively block these attempts to deny a process of Empowerment by working together is one way to confront the structural exclusion of youngsters from decision-making process. But we can only talk of real participation or involvement of young people when children and young people are not only "heard" , but "take over a part of control from the adults and shape their own lives".[8]

The approach of social entrepreneurship may be a concrete way to open up such new spaces of participation and collective empowerment for young people.

Definition №2

ENTREPRENEURIAL THINKING AND ACTING

Youngsters have plenty of ideas and dreams, and a long way ahead of them. It's not all, but it's true. You know that well, because you work to support them, so that they can make the best out of their lives.

But what would that look like, the best possible outcome, the target ideal, the moment when you would say "Hey, that one made it and might not rely on my support anymore", when you see that they start creating the life of their own, independent life.

We hope for the adults to carry only good values[9], to self-determinedly follow their own ways, to assume responsibility for themselves, others and the community, and to participate in the society and decision making process. This appreciated maturity is the general educational objective of lifelong learning and of Empowerment. Now, one of the key competences to get there is Entrepreneurial Thinking and Acting or, as the European Institutions call it, the Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship.[10] Basically, it means the ability to come up with innovative ideas and put them into action.
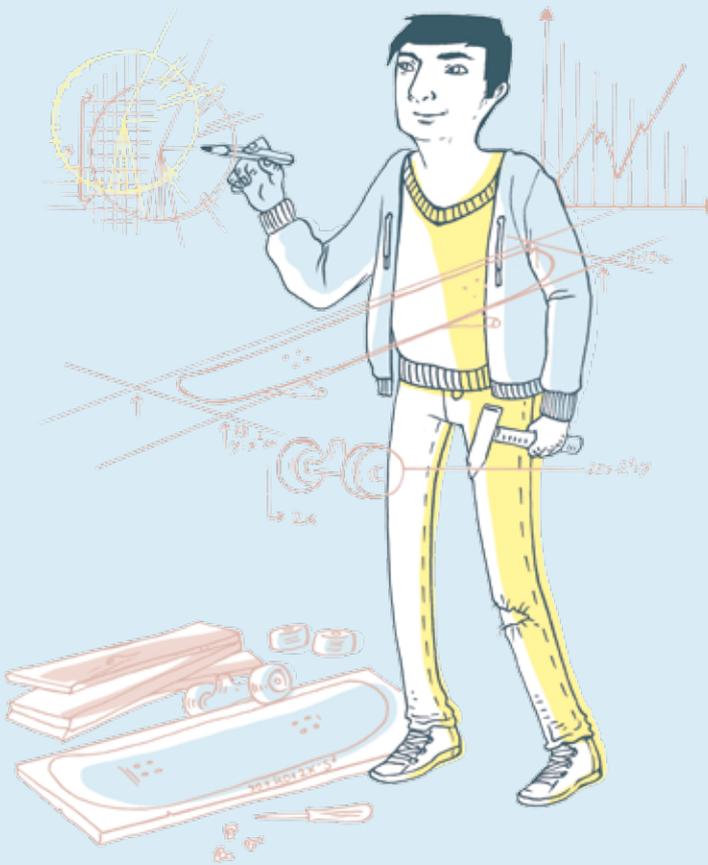
9 Note: We reference that a characteristic of every society or community is the set of values and beliefs that are appreciated and that keep their members together. These set of values are perceived as true good, irrespective of the fact that other societies wouldn't agree or may perceive other values as true good.

10 The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (2006). Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council from 18 December 2006 on key competences of lifelong learning (2006/962/EC), see *http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN*
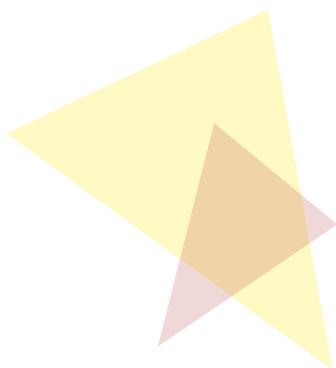
Words like "Entrepreneurship" are usually used in the context of start-ups, economic prosperity, individual and societal risks, and innovation. But if you think about it from the inside, you will find individuals that perceive and act in a certain way. This "Entrepreneurial" way of thinking and acting exists independently from legal bodies and beyond market development. Some call it an art. Here we discuss it as a set of competences, as a human potential in the world's conditions.

Many people in welfare context conceive entrepreneurship and economic issues either as something that is not their business or as the very cause of the social ills they try to remedy. So let's have a closer look at what this entrepreneurial ability really comprises of. Here we set out the key competence Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2006) like we comprehend its definition.

The first facet refers to the characteristics of this idea. It is often labeled as innovation or opportunity recognition. The main idea is: one needs to understand the interrelations of a system, to spot the causes and preconditions of a problem, thereby to identify actual opportunities for improvement. Finally, to work out an effective solution that changes the sustainability of the system, i.e. an innovation, as an act of great creativity.

However, not all ideas should be of societal interest. One shall create ideas that are in line with or promote ethical values and good governance.

The next facet is more functional and names the skills needed to implement an idea. This is about project management (e.g. planning, managing, acquiring resources, evaluating and learning), leadership and team management (e.g. leading, delegating, collaborating, knowing the strengths and weaknesses), and communication (e.g. representing, negotiating, convincing).

As last facet volitional and motivational attributes are mentioned. Entrepreneurs need enthusiasm, incentive, pro-activity, persistence, motivation for an achievement, curiosity and autonomy.

Thingking and Acting Entrepreneurial depicts essential educational objectives. To innovate systems, no matter of their size or their focus on individuals or society, is a clear form of active participation. Good values are mentioned. And since here individuals or small groups forge new ways, it is about self-determination. Hence, the skills and individual characteristics enlisted in the final facets are resources to master life in general and in an everyday occasion. This is what we understand when we talk about the key competences.

"Comparing the reality and the way of life in other countries and in Slovakia made me understand my own culture better and appreciate my way of life." **Juraj Pikuliak**

Definition №3

PARTICIPATION

Basic definitions and approaches

Youth participation, in general, has many forms and definitions, where one can observe various practices, as well as different approaches and theories. One reason for this diversity is that people who work with youth participation have different backgrounds, directions and experience. For instance, people who work in local authorities, academics, youth workers, government officials or policy makers. They all work in different fields, and for obvious reasons, their motivations to work in the area of youth participation is often very different too. Some people are motivated to build vibrant and democratic civil societies, whereas others are motivated to help young people develop or improve their position in the society. That is why this long lasting debate about what illustrates youth participation is still an ongoing one, where various answers can be given to the same question[11]. Therefore, it would make sense to look into the description of youth participation from a few different angles to have a general picture of the concept.

11 SPW/ DFID-CSO Youth Working Group, (2010), Youth Participation in Development:
A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy Makers

One definition by the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life states that, youth participation and active citizenship is about having the right, the means, the space and the opportunity and where necessary the support to participate in and influence decisions and engaging in actions and activities so as to contribute to building a better society.[12]

This definition goes beyond the simple understanding of youth participation as political or social participation, and moves on to an idea of influence and responsibility for certain actions that can affect the lives of youngsters. As a matter of fact, it indicates that they are seen as active participants in social life and responsible actors with great talents and motivations.

Another way to describe youth participation is to refer to the term as a right, which is also referred to as the "rights approach" towards youth participation. For instance, youth participation is defined by UN as a basic human right and underlined children's right to participate in its UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. Similar approach has also been pursued by famous scholar Roger Hart, where he stated that one of the fundamental rights of citizenship is participation, because this is the way to learn how to become a citizen[13]. At the same time, the Council of Europe has referred to youth participation as the basic right of young people "to be included and to assume duties and responsibilities in daily life at local level as well as the right to influence the processes of their lives democratically".[14] Obviously, this connotation of youth participation as a basic right also means that youngsters have all the basic rights and they can exercise them without discrimination.

It is also important to indicate that one precondition for young people to be able to participate is to empower them.[15] As we have seen from the previous chapter on Empowerment, this involves developing the skills and competences of young people, like boosting their confidence, improving their communication skills, helping them discover and develop their own talents.

This signifies that youth participation is not an action prearranged and ordered by others, but an incentive which should generate opportunities for youngsters so that they can develop and improve their skills in a natural way. It means, that the impulse has to come from below, from youngsters themselves, as a way to learn how to identify and seize an opportunity.[16] Of course, we also have to keep in mind that youth participation is an action rather than a goal by itself, the way through which youngsters can achieve their ambitions and aspirations.

12 The revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, May 2003, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.
13 Hart, R. (1992), Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship, UNICEF, Innocenti Research Centre, Florence.
14 Boukobza, E. (1998), Keys to participation. A practitioners' guide, Council of Europe, p. 10.
15 Hart, R. (1992), Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship, UNICEF, Innocenti Research Centre, Florence.
16 GIZ, (2008), Get Youth On Board!; Eschborn, GIZ.

Degrees and principles of participation

As we have mentioned earlier, youth participation has many different forms and various approaches. But there is also another distinct way to understand youth participation. It is to look at youth participation from the perspective of degrees. There are numerous degrees to which youth can be engaged, because simply indicating whether youth participated or not, does not give the full picture of the level of involvement. In order to clarify this issue, Hart has suggested a different model called "ladder of participation", where he introduced 8 degrees of youth participation.[17] Each rung of the ladder is a separate degree of participation, so that the higher the rung gets, the more the young person is involved. This illustration shows that at the first three rungs there is no real youth participation, but only an imitation of it. After rung 4 and higher there is a growing degree of youth involvement, which culminates with rung 8 where youth are making equal decisions together with others. Normally, the higher youth participation is, the better the benefits are, and not only to the young person, but also to the society. Nevertheless, there is also a possibility that participation can bring a negative impact when it is dealt with in an inappropriate way in the lower rungs, as Kirby and Bryson suggest.[18]

This model is, of course, a very useful tool for people who are involved in youth participation, where they can identify the level of youth involvement in their activities, communities and projects. It also allows them to assess the impact of their activities on youth, and whether they are effective enough to attract youngsters and look at them from the critical standpoint. However, it is important to keep in mind that this model is only a reference to a general degree classification of the youth participation concept, so that the degree to which young people are involved also depends on many other circumstances and factors, such as the environment surrounding youngsters, their goals and objectives, experiences, and many others. Several other aspects need to be taken into consideration using this model, such as the degree of youth participation can also evolve over time, where one level can change to another, or where the clear line between the rungs is blurred and hard to separate from one another. To complement this issue, it would be useful to investigate some other models of youth participation, such as models of Davis Driskell or Phil Treseder, which do not involve rungs or hierarchies.

In general, the purpose of this "ladder of participation" tool is to examine why and how youngsters participate throughout communities, and to measure those activities against this tool. However, we have to remember that this tool does not represent the whole population simultaneously, but each specific young person consecutively.

One way to comprehend and include the individual aspect of participation in our understanding is to look at the three principles of youth participation proposed by Marc Jans and Kurt De Backer.[19] The three principles participation should be based on are: "challenge", "capacity" and "connection". The "Challenge" means a certain topic or an issue that is directly related to that young person and which should be attractive. The "capacity", on the other hand, is an ability to fit the capabilities of youngsters and provide them with right skills and knowledge. "Connection" is simply to let young people know that they are not alone and that they can count on others. This model of three principles provides another perspective for people who work with youth and another way to evaluate their work, their impact and results.
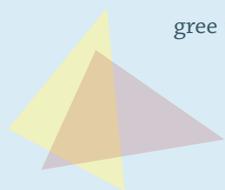
17 Hart, R. (1992), Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship, UNICEF, Innocenti Research Centre, Florence.

18 Kirby, P. and Bryson, S. (2002), Measuring the magic? Evaluating and researching young people's participation in public decisionmaking, Carnegie Young People Initiative, London

19 Jans, M. and De Backer, K. (2002), Youth (work) and social participation. Elements for a practical theory, Flemish Youth Council YeP! p. 5.

8 shared decision making

7 young people led and initiated

6 adult initiated, shared decision making

5 young people consulted and informed

4 young people assigend and informed

3 young people tokenised (non participation)

2 young people as decoration (non participation)

1 young people manipulated (non participation)
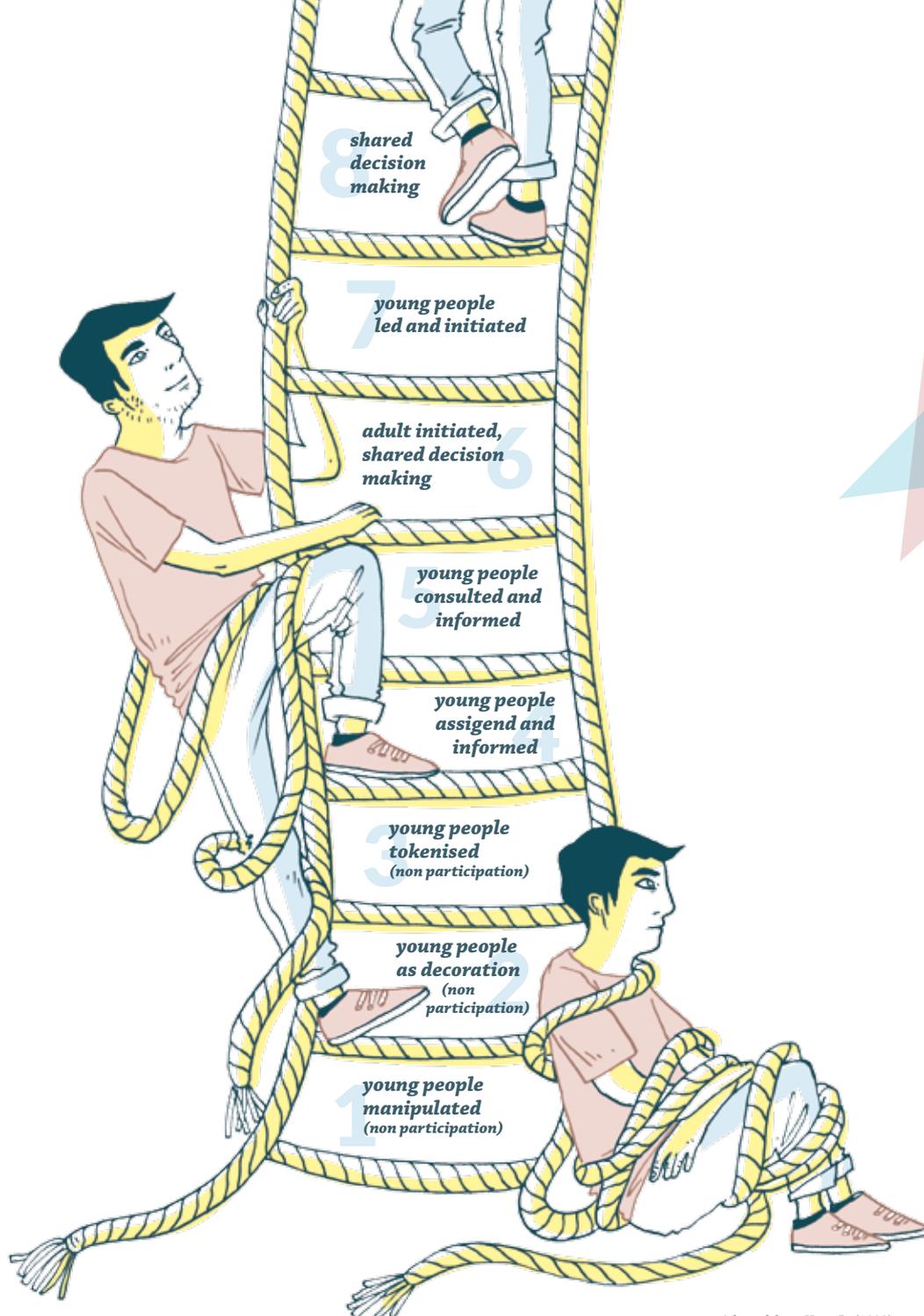
Adapted from Hart, R. (1992)

Overall, participation plays an important role in young people's development and growth, by creating a friendly environment for engagement and involving them in various activities where they can develop their skills and competences. And it should not be seen as a final objective, but as a tool to achieve a positive change in the society in general, and young person, in particular. Youngsters can contribute even more to this positive change, when they can see positive changes in their own lives, by themselves. Because they, like many other groups in the society, want to speak out and be heard, want to play an important role. By participating youngsters can express these issues openly and get their ideas taken into account. This means creating spaces for young people.[20] Together these three definitions of Empowerment, Entrepreneurship and Participation create an integrated concept of youth development and involvement, which is one of the main purposes of this User's Guide.

METHODS

The chapter is comprised of five Methods that we thought are the most effective and innovative ones in empowering and involving youngsters. They also include some observations and useful tips for implementation of the Methods.

Introduction, Selection & Implementation

━━━━ **In order to choose** and select the methods to be analyzed and implemented in our project, we started by defining how the project documentation should be and which fundamental concepts could be the basis for our work.

For this, we decided the following points:

1 We have to justify why we use a special definition of our main constructs (either we give a source or we argue why our definition fits better than another).

2 It is necessary to document the findings of our proposed methods. So we need to know a) who or what is the source of the method (who proposed it), b) who developed this method and c) which reasons argue for the placement in our program (efficacy: empirical evidence/best practice etc.).

3 We need to document the link between the proposed methods and our project goals: Why does this method fit into our project, and which specific goal it is meant to reach?

4 We have to specify the method itself and the theoretical background (description of the functionality): a) How does the method proceed? b) How does it work? What is the assumed causal relationship/ the basic theory?

After this phase, all direct partners searched and collected potentially relevant tools, methods and models for participation of empowerment-disadvantaged youngsters. To implement this, a certain set of method criteria was developed that described important qualities and thresholds of our desired methods, in order to guide the search for method.

Evidently, it was important to develop and provide a set of criteria and evaluation routine that would enable us to judge any Improvement Methods we find, whether it suits our research project or not. The expected gains were twofold: In using an explicit list in a standardized way increased the chance that we would collect all Improvement Methods, that are expected to be collected. This Method search would result in a more homogeneous collection and that would lead us to a stronger method comparison and stronger findings.

Performing the judgment of criteria with this list will generate a rating of the methods according to their appropriateness and potential effect for more proactive and entrepreneurial social participation, especially for empowerment-disadvantaged youngsters. Or in other words: We might develop the first worthwhile contribution with a brief list and tool that enables professionals to identify whether a method is good or bad.

During the search for methods, it was important for us to make sure that these methods are able to improve one of the following resources:

- Self acceptance and self-confidence: an unbroken self-confidence and the strong belief in the meaningfulness of the own life plan.

- Motivational resources: interests and identity ensuring life goals.

- Optimism of coping: a solid and life-historical grown trust in own competences to shape and cope; focus of control.

- Optimism for the future: a positive expectation of the future events.

- Positive emotional regulation: a small negative affectivity; self-care and resources of psychophysical relaxation.

- Inclusion into a subjective ethic of acting: obligation to a solid and identity ensuring belief system (religious/ethical/political).

- Significance of life: construction of subjective identity according to a solid meaningful life guidelines
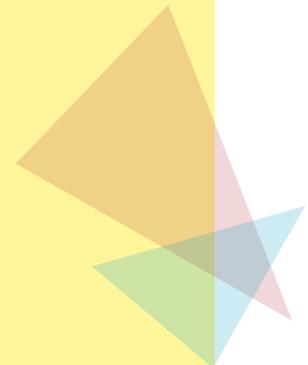
Eventually, our method search followed the experience of each project partner, youngsters, professionals and experts in the field. And each partner contributed with their own potential specifics at a national/regional level by adapting and improving the method implementation. We have searched for methods that had proven to be effective and that they could be potential candidates to improve our Empowerment work.

After the steps described above, each partner started the method selection process in their own countries and during the 1st meeting in Slovakia (between 18 and 22 September 2013) all selected methods were presented, where partners decided which methods to implement in their organizations. Each partner collected some methods locally that were presented and evaluated in national selection workshops with assistance of experts and empowerment experienced youngsters. The methods were selected at workshops to present during the first meeting in Slovakia.

Working methods used at the meeting in Čadca

Speed dating or candlelight date

Goals – exchange experiences; get to know other empowerment projects/methods; find out what are the most interesting new methods to try out for every team; decide about further collaboration by trying out new methods.

Through these informal activities and considering the pin walls, the characteristics and details of each method, their organizations and target-groups, each partner selected the methods to implement in their countries that could better fit with their intentions and project goals.

Pin walls

During the meeting in Slovakia, all partners were invited to present their Empowerment project and their proposed Empowerment methods on a pin wall. Pin wall should speak for its own, which means, that everyone was able to understand the basics of the methods just by reading the pin wall. Photos, drawings and other creative ideas were an additional help! The pin walls were installed on the first day in a central point of the building, so it was possible to have a look at it during our free time, waiting time, etc.

There was a possibility to comment on the pin walls. The goal was to generate an informal dialogue about the methods during the whole meeting, and that everyone get informed about methods they were especially interested in before we all "officially" talked about it.

Method №1

HUMAN LIBRARY

Promote dialogue and interaction between youngsters about a certain topic decided by them. Create BOOKS.

Size of the group: any   **Time needed:** min. 5 hours

Materials: for the first session: paper, markers, posters.
Materials to create and decorate the book are diverse, according to the choice of youngsters and/or criteria defined by the youth worker. In any case- old magazines and a bit of creativity can do magic!

Procedure
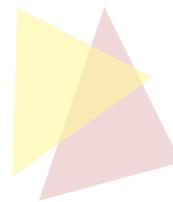
1 brainstorm various topics of interest for the youngsters in a big group.

2 let the youngsters choose 3- 5 final topics they prefer most as a group.

3 each youngster chooses (and signs up for) a topic according to his/her interest. This way, 3-5 teams are created. Participants per team should be maximum of 7.

4 each team discusses their views on their topic in detail and decide the goal of the Book.

5 each team carries out research on their topic. They can use books, talk to others, conduct public interviews or view resources on the internet.

6 each team compiles all information from their research, then selects relevant information that they all want to use in the book.

7 each team decides on the content and design of their "real" BOOK and gathers materials needed for its creation.

8 depending on the time you have, it might take a few hours but also a few days to create the BOOK.

9 all teams agree on a common public event, when their book will be presented to the public, in a space like a supermarket, library, café, pedestrian zone, etc.

10 during the public presentation, the teams show their book to the people, talk about the topic and invite present people to add information, comments, opinions into the book.

11 to let more people see the book and add comments, the BOOK can be displayed in the public spaces for a few more days or weeks.

Tips & hints:

Let your fantasy go wild and motivate youngsters to come up with unusual topics, materials or approaches to create and present the BOOK. Meanwhile, be careful in choosing the final 3-5 topics inside the group, so that no one's feelings get hurt and take into consideration how deep the youngsters know each other, whether they are comfortable and open to discuss controversial issues. Could be helpful if the group know each other from before. Use the potential of every member in the team – the work on the book needs researchers, interviewers, collectors, designers, writers, public speakers, spell checkers, etc. Everybody can find a way how to use his/her talent and contribute to the common work.

Make a debriefing of the BOOK creation process with all teams together. Let the teams share and inspire each other, but DO NOT interfere. Create a learning environment and atmosphere of peer-support. Let the local community know what is happening. Promote the event, send personal invitations to the presentation of the BOOK. ☞
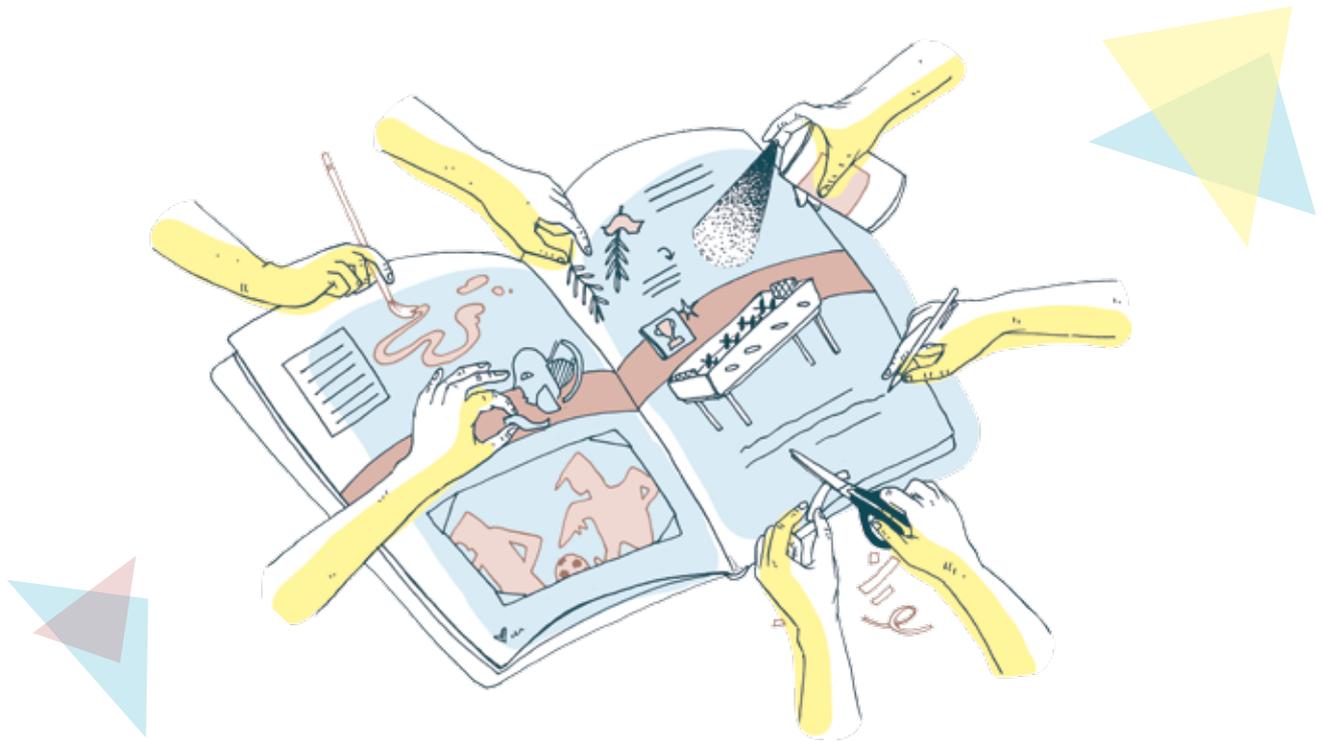
Empowerment aspect of this method:

──── **This method principally focuses on** the development of team work and communication skills of the participants. While doing the research of the topic and creating the BOOK, they have to divide tasks among the team members, get on with each other and make decisions together. This process continues deeper among all teams when the youngsters decide to prepare the public presentation of the outcome of their common work. Thus, this method is about living relationships in a conscious way. As a result, it supports the relational aspects of Empowerment as we defined it in the first chapter.

How it went in Austria:

We implemented the method, which was proposed by the Portuguese organization YUPI called BOOK – Human Library, at the Open Youth Work Lauterach in Austria. We tried to adapt the method according to the needs of our youth center, depending on the target group and their interests. So the aim of the method here was to document all offered activities and excursions of the Youth Center, and at the same time use it as a tool for the young people to reflect their experiences during these activities. In general, by working together on a book we were also aiming to develop relational capacities in youngsters such as negotiation skills, finding compromises or abilities to use a non violent communication for decision making. The method implementation was very successful as young people who participated in this process were very interested in drawing, making notes, leaving messages and somehow bringing their personal touch to this BOOK. We also saw that most of them were very excited to be a part of the group, they were very creative and brought a lot of energy to create the BOOK.

However, the process was not as smooth as we thought it would be. The initial result of their work, the first version of the BOOK was not very good as youngsters were hoping it to be. We assumed that it was mostly because of the different tastes, visions and ideas of the book that youngsters had in their minds when they started the method. After some negotiations and compromises youngsters implemented the second round of the method and it was very successful. They created the Big Book, on which they all agreed, and accepted it as a final method outcome. What we have observed here with the implementation of the method is that youngsters have learned how to negotiate different issues concerning the BOOK and how to come to a conclusion on certain topics. We have kept the BOOK and it currently remains in the youth centre and is available for all visitors at any time. We hope that the book will be constantly expanded and enhanced by new youngsters who might be interested in it in the future.

Method №2

PHOTOVOICE

Provide cameras to the youngsters
and let them project the vision about
their lives through photography.
Promote critical thinking and dialogue.

Size of the group:
between 8 and 12 young people
(recommended but flexible)

Time needed: minimum 3 hours
(can be done in different sessions and duration)

Materials: at least 1 camera per group, computer, flipchart

Procedure
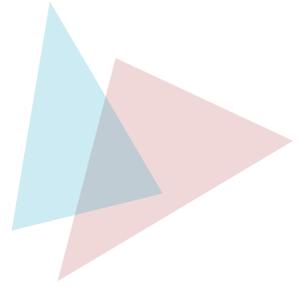
1 introduce the methodology to participants, discuss ethics, rights for the image and cameras.

2 agree on the topic to be approached and the audience whom to present the results.

3 agree on how much time the youngsters have for taking the photos and whether they will work individually or in groups.

4 youngsters take cameras, start going around and taking pictures according to the topic decided.

5 when the time limit is up, gather all the photos taken by individuals/groups in a separate computer.

6 give some time to the youngsters select photos that they want to present to the others.

7 individuals/groups present the photos to the others with explanations why they decided to take them (photos) and what their view of the topic is.

8 summarise the main points raised by the youngsters in terms of the topic selected.

Tips & hints:

If you or your youngsters are not fans of photography, you can use drawings, video, recorded speech or any other "media" instead. But photography is a highly flexible tool that crosses cultural and linguistic barriers and is accessible to all ages, cultures and skill sets. You can use the Photovoice method as part of a "bigger" project – as one of the communication channels through which the young people present their views of the world. This method combines the immediacy of the visual image and an accompanying story. This way, it can be used to enable community members to describe their priorities or show concerns, discuss problems and look for solutions. Prioritize the content of the images over the technical perfection. Do not let the photovoice be a mere photo workshop to teach the youngsters basics of photography.

THINK BIG. Prepare a presentation for the community, local policy makers, media and/or researchers. If you have some budget for this, the results can also be presented through an exhibition in a strategic place in your village/town.

"I took part in the Photovoice workshop because I thought I would learn how to take photos. During the process, I realised that it does not matter if you know the technique of taking photos, if you can look at the world from a different prospective."
Olga Bova

Empowerment aspect of this method:

This method gives an opportunity to show the current issues in the local community and present personal views of the youngsters in a visual form. Therefore, this method supports Empowerment at individual level. The youngsters think about topics that affect them personally and immerse themselves into them by taking pictures. They also have to make decisions and deal with difficulties alone (e.g. technical issues connected with using the camera, etc.). As they have to explain the pictures, they learn how to give their experience a name and present it to the others. On the other hand, the Photovoice method works on relational Empowerment, as an ability to cooperate in a team is crucial in this method. Photovoice methodology has focus on empowering participants to inform others and to be actively involved in decisions that affect their own lives and their communities development.

How it went in Germany:

We have applied the method in the framework of an event with the topic "inclusion". Young people with and without disabilities were involved and it was imbedded in a city bound action (City bound actions are experimental education activities in the city.) The mission of youngsters there was to capture their actions and tasks with photographs. Afterwards, the photographs were used to reflect the activity.

What we found by implementing this method is that it is quick and easy to apply (little effort for preparation), it is a lively and activating method and is fun for participants, it was very helpful because photographs are a well-known communication medium for young people (the use of smart phones to communicate in social networks), it offered a valuable alternative to methods which are focused on language, it can also be applied by young people with disabilities, and it does not need to be used as a mouthpiece for society.

Drawings instead of photographs *– A alternative of the photovoice method. For a festival in the district, based on the motto "chasing the ball together", a poster has been designed. The model for the poster has been determined in a painting competition for children and young people who were asked to draw pictures about the topic. At the exhibition the picture which was later used for the poster has been chosen altogether. The results of the painting competition were going to be exposed at the festival in the district. Few findings from the implementation of this method indicate that the photovoice method also makes it possible to use drawings instead of photographs, it is possible that in the course of a big, established event, the pictures can be seen by the public, and it is also appropriate for children.*

Photographs are telling stories –
A alternative of the photovoice method

In the framework of a weekly media educational offer a photo story has been created. The participants developed a story, staged the photographs and eventually finished the story on a poster with fitting dialogues. One of the findings of this method is that the photovoice does not need to be used as a mouthpiece for society, but can also be used to deal with different topics.

How it went in Slovakia

"Participation in this project gave me the chance to think about myself being another person, with a different life. It helped me to think about my own life and my future in a different perspective."   **Rui Guimarães**

How it went in Slovakia:

The method was applied in the form of an afternoon workshop open to the public. The target group was among anyone interested to participate, learn the basics of photography and project the vision about their lives to the others. The workshop took place a few days before Christmas holidays, so the aim was also to reflect on the way young people spend their Christmas time, how they see Christmas traditions in their country and generally, to have a view of this time in our society.

The EYERP project team has really concentrated on the preparation of the workshop as such – we had several meetings to prepare the event as such, brainstormed ideas, created a poster, invited a young person that had experience in photography, promoted the event among friends, etc.

The participants of the workshop were youngsters regularly taking part in the KERIC activities aged 17 to 25, as well as friends of the EYERP project members that got interested by their peers.

However, the group was bigger than recommended – there were 18 participants. The basic stages of the workshop which we went through were ice-breaking, explanation of the EYERP project and its connection with the workshop, some basics of photography, taking photos in connection with the Christmas atmosphere and reflection on this topic, and EYERP research questionnaires.

But the empowerment aspect of the method, which was to give an opportunity to the group to provide photos about community issues, was somehow lost in the process. The group concentrated more on organizing a photo workshop than on dealing with the aim of the method as such. Youngsters learned how to organize an event, but the aim of the method, as well as the empowerment aspect were not fulfilled. During the debriefing of the application of the method, these issues were opened, reflected upon. Even though the aims of the workshop were not completed, we have learnt a lot from this experience.

*For more information about the method please contact the organizations listed in the **Page 58: Resources. EYERP Project Partners.***

Method №3

DISCUSSION ROUNDS

Treat social taboos as open and objective themes. Give young people a chance to speak out on anti-democratic or radical attitudes in order to get them out of the taboo area and open up the possibility to rethink through it with a careful and value-neutral accompaniment.

Size of the group: 4 – 30 youngsters   **Time needed:** 2 – 3 hours

Materials: flipchart and pins, letter blocks for retaining thoughts, possibly a beamer and canvas.

Procedure

1 Select the topic for the discussion round.

2 Search for an external discussion leader or leaders and invite them to the discussion round.

3 Inform the youngsters about the discussion round and the external discussion leader.

4 On the day of the discussion, make a briefing to the youngsters about what is going to happen and how much time they have.

5 Clarify or negotiate common rules for the discussion (i.e. turn mobile phones on silent mode; let others finish speaking; use a common language or translations, no insults allowed; etc.).

6 Explain the principles of (philosophical) discussion.

7 Let the external speakers lead the discussion. This is important so that you can touch topics the youngsters would not feel free to talk about with the youth worker.

8 At the end of the discussion, give space for a short feedback session.

Empowerment aspect of this method:

▬▬▬ **This method** has a strong orientation on individual Empowerment: By treating taboo issues in a calm atmosphere, the youngsters are able to reflect deeply on the attitudes and ideas, they had not been aware of. In that way, they may question their situation of powerlessness and the forces that systematically oppress them by giving their experiences a name. Youngsters may start to feel that they can take their own decisions by understanding their context in a critical but conscious way. The calm and respectful nature of the discussion also supports Relational Empowerment, as the participants have to deal with persons whose opinions and points of view may be contrary to their beliefs.

Possible topics for discussion:

Recognition (From which persons would I like to receive recognition and to whom I give recognition?)

Respect (Who do I respect and by whom I want to be respected?)

Friendship (What is friendship? What is the difference between a friend, a mate, a colleague …?)

Home (What does home mean to me? Is home a place or a feeling? Can you have more than one home?)

Responsibility (What is this? For what can one be responsible? What are the advantages and disadvantages of being responsible?)

Identity (Who am I? Where am I? Where do I want to go? What can I decide for myself and what not?)
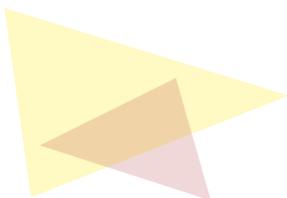
The principle of discussion is that there is no person who is right or wrong, the discussion itself is the goal.

Tips & hints:

We think that the room arrangement matters. You can choose a cosy and relaxing place, without disturbances. Drinks and little snacks are also a good addition to the setting. You can invite variety of participants – e.g. youngsters that pronounce anti-democratic statements as well as young people who are personally affected by discrimination and racism. So try build trust and stimulate interest, but also invite the external discussion leaders to visit the youth centre/club, etc. one day before the discussion to get to know the youngsters and play table football or do something informal with them. On this occasion, they can personally invite the young people to participate in the discussion the next day. You can use short films, photos, or music that identify situations which raise questions or different opinions among the participants as an introduction of the topic. Alternatively, you can also use radical, anti-Semitic or racist statements of some youngsters with whom you work with, which could also be a starting point for a discussion. Rule out the fear of being sanctioned for your opinion. Make the youngsters feel safe, that whatever they say during the discussion round – even statements that normally are not tolerated in the youth centre – there will be no consequences. Create a setting where the youngsters may raise questions and where protest is allowed.

Let the participants decide whether the youth workers may join the discussion in the beginning or just in the end, when the most important issues are recapitulated by the youngsters. Make it clear to the youngsters that they can leave the discussion whenever they need. Some of them might need personal time and space for self-reflection or time to process the intense experience. It could be a good idea to have an additional youth worker around in such cases.

Treat social taboos as open and objective themes. Let the young people express those taboos without having to fear censorship or sanctions. Let the external discussion leaders develop this event. Take care of the setting, the atmosphere, general flow of the event, but stay in the background during the discussion. Get new inputs for further monitoring of the group. Make sure there is space for a "cool-out" time after the activity when the group can just sit and drink or eat something together. This gives them space to exchange experience informally.

Sitting arrangement options:

Alternative 1:
Comfortable and informal round on sofas

Alternative 2: There is an inner (active) and outer (passive) circle of participants. Those, who have agreed to participate actively in the discussion and want to talk, sit in the inner circle. The outer circle is the audience. The audience just listens and is not allowed to participate in the discussion. The youngsters can switch the circle in which they sit any time they wish to.
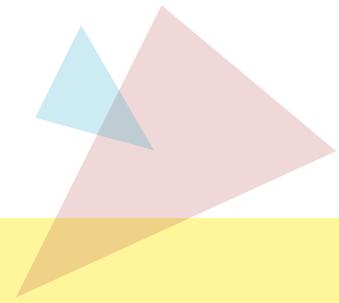
How it went in Germany:

There was a discussion round about the "gender" topic, where the idea was that participants designed three posters with pictures and comments on the topics: "What is female?; What is male?; Is there anything else than male and female?" to introduce the discussion. The discussion took place within the framework of a weekly offer for young people who are 12 years or older. The young people already knew the leader of the discussion before the event. But because of the poor attendance there was no second edition. During the process we saw what is important for a functioning discussion round. So we think that discussion rounds work more properly if young people feel safe and secure, if young people already know the leader of the discussion, if participants know that in the framework of the discussion everything is allowed to be said, if young people are moved by the topic and that taboo subjects pique curiosity, if there is a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere.

In contrast to the previous event, another discussion round about the topic "When do I feel well in the OJW(Ortsjugendwerk)?" showed us how discussion rounds do not work. The discussion was suggested by local social workers with the aim to develop agreements for the mutual interaction. Few findings from the implementation of the methods were that the discussion rounds work less well if the topic does not move young people, if the discussion is meant to serve a purpose and is therefore not open and if the discussion is forced and young people are actually not keen on it.

How it went in Portugal:

Aim of the method which we chose was to promote moments of reflection and discussion/debate between youngsters, about several topics. The target group (age / size / special needs) that we have involved were 25 youngsters (male) between 15 and 18 years old, attending 11 grade from high school.

The intention of the activity was to introduce the topic and promote reflections among youngsters - to feel and reflect about the topic and after that to share and discuss among them. So the youth worker questioned the youngsters about the activity and about the topic to open a discussion. At the end, there was a moment of general conclusions about the topic and how the topic was an important part for the youngster's daily life, in order to make them more active and participative. Empowerment aspect here can be seen through a practical activity in small groups about certain topic, the youngsters are invited to reflect and discuss about the topic, based on their own experiences and daily life.

In the original method the main idea is to arrange discussion rounds with inner and outer circles of participants in the open youth club called "Discussion Evenings" where there are inner circles composed by participants that will take active part in the discussion; and a outer circle with youngsters just listening to the discussion – no comments are allowed and no shouting from the second row. In YUPI the topics were: team work; prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination; gender equality; human rights, citizenship and participation; and volunteering.

In YUPI, considering that the method has been implemented at school and the youngsters have difficulties in discussing and listening to each other, the youth worker decided to use a non-formal activity to stimulate the debate, instead of using the circles method. The method worked very well with the youngsters; in all sessions we had interested and motivated youngsters in the activities; the discussions and debates had a high level of participation from the whole class; we got positive evaluation in all sessions and the youngsters recognized how important the activities and the discussion moments were for them as persons and for their lives.

If you don't know your group, it is important to start with general topics like "cooperation", "team work", "friendship" and after, when you know the characteristics of your group/youngsters better, you can go deeper in other topics. It is very important to be aware of every youngster and the relationship between them, in order to address the discussion themes in a good and positive way.

*For more information about the method please contact the organizations listed in the **Page 58: Resources. EYERP Project Partners.***

Method Nº4

MICROPROJECT FUNDING

Provide resources and guidance. Motivate the youngsters to get active, and thus empower them to turn their ideas into real activities.

Size of the group: teams of at least 2 members, and at least one adult or an external supporter who can sign the contracts and take the responsibility (in case none of the two members is older than 18 years old)

Time needed: usually between 1 to 4 months

Materials (resources): funds that are available to the youngsters. For example, in Germany, up to 400 Euros spent per project. One person that supports the team to implement the project and document it. Materials that come handy: Checklists, budget sheets, project documentation. These will be used by the youngsters to document and report the progress of their project and expenditure.

Procedure

1 Prepare comprehensible and appealing information[21] about the program and its conditions together with inspiring examples about microprojects of other youngsters.

2 Organise an information event about microprojects, ideally invite some youngsters that have previously done microprojects.

3 Those youngsters that get interested to do a microproject must form a motivated group of minimum three members. Each team agrees on a common (premature) project idea.

4 Each team identifies a microproject contact person that will provide guidance to this team, if needed. If you want to reach youngsters with severe social or psychological constraints (e.g. migrant background, weak family background) a mentor is recommended, i.e. an external person of certain authority and credibility to the youngsters.

5 Each team meets their microproject contact person with whom they consult their project idea to elaborate it further, involve important issues right from the start (e.g. evaluation) and get a common comprehension of the plan.

6 Based on the consultation, the team completes a simple application form of about two pages long for a microproject funding and submits it to program coordinators.

7 If needed, the microproject program coordinator facilitates the process further. When the project application meets the criteria of microproject funding, the application is approved and a contract for microproject funding is signed.

8 Each team starts implementation of their microproject. If they wish to, they can ask for counselling. Otherwise, the microproject contact person only shows normal interest in the status quo of the project, but does not interfere in the way the project is done. That is fundamental for the learning effect.

9 After the project finishes, the contact person and the youngsters reflect on the experience in terms of learning and outcomes.

10 The team completes their project documentation, fills in the budget sheets and ends the contract. The contact person should be there to support and advise them.

11 If possible, later on they present their project and its outcomes in public to other youngsters to inspire them or encourage new microproject teams, and for adults, to change their perception and approach towards youngsters.
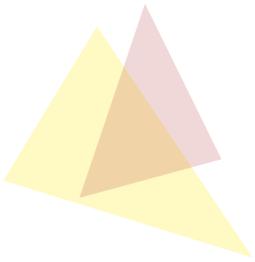
"By participating in a simple activity called 'web' I understood how interconnected we are and that we should live with spirit of mutual help."   **João Andrade**

Empowerment aspect of this method:

—————— **This method integrates** all three Empowerment levels to a certain extent. Individually, the participants foster their belief in the ability to make decisions and to solve their own problems and communicate their needs in their own language. They have to negotiate and find a compromise with their partners. This process supports Relational Empowerment. To come up with ideas for a project and implement them together with other people means an active participation in a society. Thus it supports Empowerment on a collective level and raises entrepreneurial thinking.

Create a team of staff for microprojects:

In fact the optimal microproject staff is a team of experienced peers, and they are the microproject program coordinators and as such the contact persons. If there are no such peers, at least that person(s) must find an easy, interesting and reliable relation.

—————— **A staff member** from the organisation that acts as a contact person for microprojects.

—————— **An appealing and trustful person** (or several) as the program contact person. The best choice for such a role would be a team of peers or persons that the youngsters can identify with.

—————— **A mentor**, i.e. a person with important capabilities and authority to the youngsters.

—————— Tips & hints:

Get the target group of young people to come up with their first ideas for microprojects directly at the information event, no matter how premature those might be. Best would be: a) if the youngsters speak out their ideas in front of their peers, b) if they form a group interested in a common idea or issue, c) and if they start to work on it at once.Regardless of your measures, the youngsters must get a positive attitude towards doing a microproject and believe success would be within their prompt reach and that there is nothing wrong if it fails.

——— 5 Questions...

... that the team discusses during their initial consultation with the microproject contact person. Later on, they answer them in written form in their application form. Answers to these five questions are the base of the application form. The answers to these five questions do not have to be pretty, in perfect language or exceed one A4 page. On the contrary, youngsters will identify them as their answers and must understand and accept them.

1. Context & Motivation: How did you come up with your idea? What motivates you to implement it?

2. Goals and target groups: Concisely, what do you want to achieve or transform and for whom?

3. Implementation: How do you want to do that? What is your plan and major steps in chronological order?

4. Evaluation & Valorisation: How do you want to learn whether you reached your goals and target groups? How will you share and spread your experience and learning outcomes?

5. Budget: What costs do you plan? If the costs exceed the microproject funding, how do you plan to get extra money?

A contract can't be signed when:

1) the youngsters cannot form any team

2) the youngsters have no appropriate idea

3) they are not the source of that idea (e.g. an elder person drives the idea and uses the youngsters to get the funding)

4) if there is no adult. In that case, they need an external supporter who is an adult that can signs the contract and take the legal responsibility.

A contract should contain:

- the names of all group members
- the project details
- a bank account

Signatures of all members of the team (or the ones/one who are over 18). If none of the group members are 18, one of their parents will sign and process the budget administration.

How it went in Germany:

The microproject funding method was tested by social workers in cooperation with a group of students as a support for two youngster's projects. First, the social workers and students presented the possibility of the microproject funding in front of the group of youngsters that met weekly with social workers. Together they collected ideas and one of them has been chosen for realization. It seemed to be more attractive for younger people (below 14 years old).

On another occasion, a group of young people talked to street workers and expressed their desire to redecorate a shelter in a park where they used to hang out with friends and spent time together. The street workers involved the students to support the youngsters. Together with youngsters, the necessary steps should have been planned and realized, but the young people did not show up again. This group of youngsters has been below 14 years old, too.

We were hoping for the third application: There was a group of youngsters that wanted better skateboarding facilities. We counselled them and they went to see some skateboard parks and learn how to do them. Though they never started to build or improve anything. Thereby never wanted to apply for the microproject funding.

What we have found from implementing this method is that some microprojects can be realized well without direct funding. We supported several groups of youngsters and if they wanted to carry out an activity, e.g. a trip to some place, a little photograph story, building something, we helped them through the planning and implementation process. Emerging costs were covered by us but the visit of the district's major and his support was a special motivation for the youngsters.

So a strong motivation only appears if it is truly the idea of the youngsters themselves. A group of young people that meet regularly is more likely to stay with the project. Without such regularity microproject funding might not work. Therefore, we think that a solid relationship between young people and social workers (regular meetings, sharing of common adventures and informal rooms) is helpful during the microproject (especially with younger participants below 14 years old).

Qualification of the microproject staff:

▼ the staff has to be highly flexible, because every project is different

▼ the staff has to balance the support he/she gives to the youngsters. It can be quite a tough task because each project and each project team is different - with different knowledge, experiences and goals.

Be careful: Microproject funding is a great method but it often reaches well-situated youngsters. To involve youngsters with fewer opportunities, the method has to be adapted. It needs to be made easier, with as little paper work as possible.

Method №5

INTERNATIONAL ENCOUNTER

Let the youngsters view their own identity through the mirror of an encounter with another culture, its people and identity. Let them see how leaving home develops their self-esteem and independence.

Size of the group: between 6 to 30

Time needed: between 1 up to 3 hours

Materials: depends on the type of the presentation that is held. For the pre-workshop and debriefing: flipchart, pens and small slips of papers are needed.

Resource person: To implement this method, it is important that the youth that you work with (or at least some of them) have had an opportunity to travel abroad as volunteers, exchange visit students, or participants of various international events. Alternatively, invite a foreign person who is visiting your country or staying there for some time as a volunteer, exchange visit student, worker, etc.

"*By being part of this project we had a chance to learn a lot of things in a different way. We learned how to communicate with others and how to socialize in a best way with people. We learned a lot of essential aspects with YUPI.*" **Ivo Matos**

Procedure

1 Speak to the resource person, invite him/her to the meeting with the group and discuss possible sub-topics of his/her presentation of the international encounter. Emphasise on cultural differences and self-development aspects of their international experience.

2 One or two days before the international encounter, run a short pre-workshop where you can ask the young people to imagine the country that the resource person has visited/comes from and their experience. Gather expectations and possible questions that your group has before the international encounter.

3 Use the notes from the pre-workshop for the preparation of the resource person, to see what the expectations of young people are, as well as for further reference during the debriefing of the international encounter.

4 On the day of the international encounter, introduce the resource person and his/her presentation. Stay in the background, take notes of comments/topics that can be used for further discussions with your group.

5 After the presentation, make participants reflect on their own identity and together with the resource person, look for similarities between the different cultures presented and raise awareness about aspects of their own culture that can be mirrored in comparison with another culture.

6 Concentrate on the international experience itself and ask the resource person about what he/she has learnt from going abroad, how they have developed personally, what moments were difficult and how they have managed.
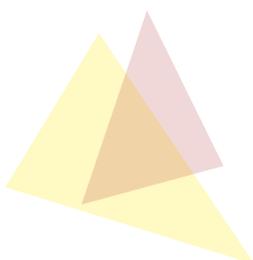
Tips & hints:

During the pre-workshop, when you gather ideas of the young people about the country, or experience of the resource person, let the young people speak their mind, do not judge, comment, or otherwise intervene if any stereotypes or prejudicial thoughts come up during the pre-workshop, note them down and discuss with the resource person how they can be dealt with during the workshop. Create a cosy and comfortable atmosphere for the presentation. Together with the group (or the resource person), think of decorating the room, bring snacks or drinks that are typical of the country, photos, music, real objects, etc. All of the little things that create an international atmosphere.

Invite people outside of the youth centre/youth group that you work with. Family, relatives, friends can be interested to hear about the international experience of the resource person, too. Take the presentation of the resource person as an opportunity to motivate your group to take part in international voluntary projects, exchange visits, etc. Let your organisation develop these ideas, have leaflets or concrete information about these opportunities, in order to share later with youngsters.

Stimulate the resource person to make the presentation interactive and informal. They can teach a song, cook together with the group, create something with the group, bring unusual objects, etc.

"Through this project all professionals that are looking for instill in the youngsters the need to innovate, undertake, create and generate self-esteem will have the chance to acquire good work tools." **Teacher Joaquim Meneses**

Empowerment aspect:

The international encounter aims at raising awareness of one's own culture, and through the encounter with another culture, learning to value own identity. By being in this relation with others and understanding yourself better, this method supports individual Empowerment. By dealing with youngsters of other cultures, the participants may question their own reality and feel themselves prepared enough to take decisions. They also learn that their experience is important and they find ways to express their feelings and opinions to the others.
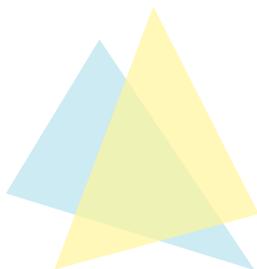
International experience as an empowerment moment:

——— After the presentation, during debriefing, draw a picture of a person. Indicate that the mind represents knowledge, the heart represents attitudes and hands represent practical skills. Ask the group to complete, what they think the resource person has learnt and what knowledge, skills and attitudes he/she has gained during their international experience. Afterwards, ask the resource person to comment and confirm / contradict to what has been said by the group.

Topics to discuss during the pre-workshop:

——— Divide young people into small groups and ask them to think of:

▽ the country that the resource person has visited (comes from) – have they ever been there? What do they think the country is like? What is similar/different from their home country?

▽ the experience that the resource person has had abroad – what do they think their motivation to go was? What did the resource person miss from the home country? What have they learnt?

Later on, ask for questions or doubts that come to their minds, etc. and write them, or ask the groups to write them and present them to the others

"Seeing how others work with young people, what methods and approaches they use is an enriching experience."
Teacher Andrea Kubaková

*For more information about the method please contact the organizations listed in the **Page 58: Resources. EYERP Project Partners.***

QUESTIONNAIRE

In this chapter you will find a brief introduction, an instruction on how to use the tools to measure youngsters' potential and impact of your work, as well as the description of those tools and master copies.

The information given in this chapter should enable you to independently apply and use the tools in your work. In order to further support you in the process, we can provide you with analyses and assistance. If you want to know more about it, use more resources or participate in the improvement process of such instruments, please visit our website at: *www.eyerp.eu* or contact us.

The purpose

We believe that empowerment is a crucial aspect of youngsters' self realization process, which can help them shape their future and their world. Youth workers and practitioners, in that sense, are in the best position to support youngsters and their endeavors in order to make this happen. Therefore, the main goal of this User's Guide is to share resources and tools with you, which could be used in your daily work and support you in your efforts.

We have presented several empowerment methods and tools in previous chapters, which can be used in your work. However, in order to better understand the results and improve the ways you measure your outcomes, the Questionnaire chapter will present you tools that can help you evaluate and analyze your work, as well as examine its' actual effects in a consistent manner.

Therefore, the Questionnaire can help you recognize and document youngsters' potentials and their development. The tools are meant to provide you with unique information, in addition to your

"Personally, I look at this project as an excellent example of a situation, when thanks to the quality of team work all solutions have been found - a very useful experience." **Helena Hajková**

actual observation. And that would enable you to better adapt your work to a specific youngster, to know more about them or have a clearer view of the impact of your activities, and – last but not least – to involve youngsters. It records the intentions of the youngster to put ideas into action, which is an essential connection between Empowerment, Entrepreneurship, and Participation. It will also enable you to follow the youngsters over a certain period of time, where you can evaluate your work and see whether certain activities benefit the youngsters or not.

Ideas in practice

Target group: Youngsters, 15 years and older. It might be too difficult with youngsters below 15 years.

Time needed: Usually it takes 5 to 10 minutes to edit the Questionnaire. If you want to use it for more complex issues you might need more time. Time for preparation, analysis and interpretation might vary depending on the particular interest of the user.

Resources needed: The questionnaire and a pen, or a digital document with appropriate equipment, and a comfortable atmosphere. Something that can be used as a reward, like cookies and sweets. Analysis can be supported by us.

Outcomes: Working with the Questionnaire enables you to:
1) see the concrete intention of the youngster to put ideas into action and its' direct sources
2) measure the attitude
3) analyze the subjective normative beliefs
4) assess the perceived control over putting ideas into action.

How to apply in practice

1 **First of all,** there is no need for an extra training or expert support to use our questionnaire effectively. Every skilled youth worker should be able to use it properly. Therefore, all you need is a copy of the questionnaire printed for every youngster, or an access to the online version for everyone. You can find and use a sample Questionnaire in our website at: *www.eyerp.eu*. In line with that, you should prepare an appropriate setting, which can facilitate the process further, i.e. a quiet, comfortable room with some cookies. Cookies are not very necessary, although anything rewarding and motivating should be there.

When everything is ready and all the participants are there, you can explain the youngsters about the questionnaire and what will happen with their answers. Their answers may help you improve your work, and of course, the youngsters would benefit from this as well. But this mutual benefit may only work if their answers are honest and accurate. Therefore, please make it clear that all the answers are confidential and no one will be judged or face restrictions based on their answers. All answers must be given voluntarily.

2 **After that,** questionnaire materials can be distributed to participants. We suggest that the organizers should create a relaxed and peaceful atmosphere while completing the questionnaire. Obviously, youngsters can act freely, i.e. talk, eat, ask questions, as long as it helps them and nobody gets distracted. It usually takes 5 to 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. If it takes longer than that, you may ask if there is a problems and offer your support. You will find many interesting insights to your work while going through their answers. But in order to see the full picture the analysis model needs to be completed and processed. The data processing will be done automatically if you use the online version of the questionnaire model. Otherwise, all answers have to be transferred first into our online analysis spreadsheet form (See: *www.eyerp.eu*). You can send us the spreadsheet or the digital version of the data, if you need help with the analysis. The analysis will provide you with an actual estimate of the individual's most important preconditions to putting ideas into practice, namely: the intention to do so, the attitude and perceived social norm toward that activity, and the perceived ability to perform and control it.

3 **The more youngsters participate** in the Questionnaire, the better chances you have to improve the quality of the data and analysis. You can further enhance the quality of data by carrying out the survey several times over a certain period of time. This will give an additional information and enable you to compare the results with previous survey data, and measure the development of youngsters. You can also estimate the immediate impact of a method, which you have tested with youngsters, by carrying out the survey directly before and after the implementation of the method.

4 **The final step** in this process is the interpretation of data and analysis. This is where you need to rely on your own skills and expertise. If you know what you what to achieve, your goals, conditions, and participants who took the questionnaire, then the interpretation will be easier for you. Set the results in the right frame before you evaluate them. And then, try to find the most promising reasons and conclusions to your outcomes. When you come to your conclusions, make sure to keep your questionnaire beside you, so that you can evaluate your conclusions as well.
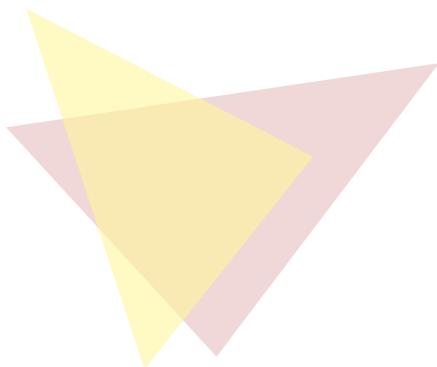
About the questionnaire

━━━━━ **We developed this questionnaire** by building on a sophisticated proven model and with the help of colleagues, scientists, and more than 250 youngsters. It is the result of testing several versions, extensive feedbacks, tests and a collection of best questions. A documentation about our work and results is published on our website at: www.eyerp.eu.

The model we used was introduced by Icek Ajzen in 1985[22]. It sets out the most direct sources for individual planned action, i.e. why somebody does as intended or not. He states that planned action rests on the intention to do so and the individual control over the actual situation. Hence, the proximal causes of the behavior intention are the individual's attitude, and subjective norms towards that planned action, as well as the perceived control over it.
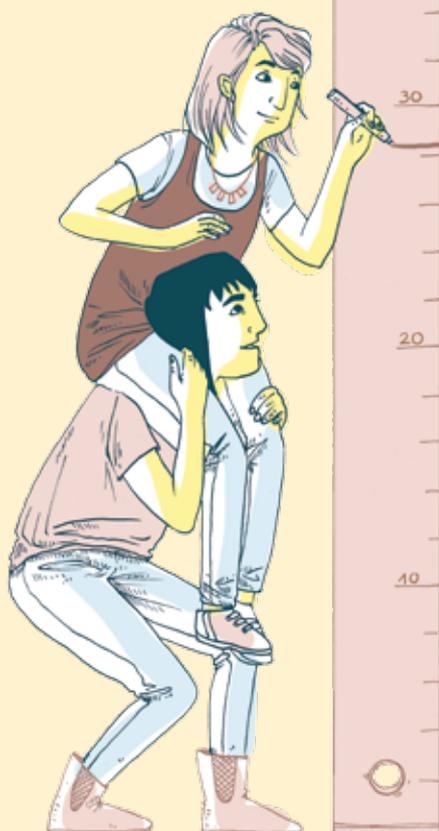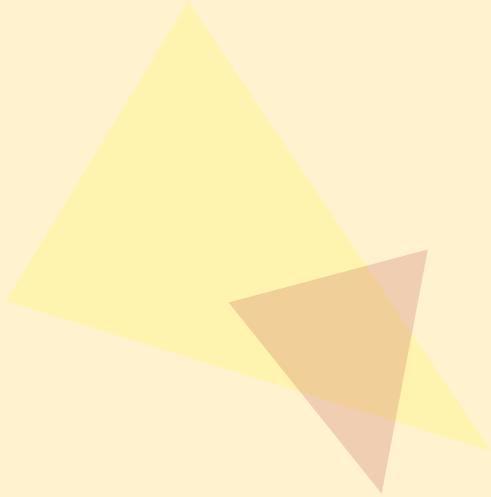
22 Ajzen, I. (1985). From intentions to actions: A theory of planned behavior. In. J. Kuhl, J. Beckmann (Hgg.) Action control: From cognition to behavior. Heidelberg: Springer, S. 11-39

The master ☛

You can use the master to make copies or download
the digital version at *www.eyerp.eu*

────── **The information provided** by the individual is strictly
confidential. However, general results and outcomes of the survey
can be shared and used for documentation purposes, as well as for
reflection of your work and for making a better decisions in the
future. In any case, the meaning of the outcome is a matter of inter-
pretation and not calculation. We would recommend you to discuss
the results with youngsters who took the survey and colleagues to
derive practical insights and outputs.
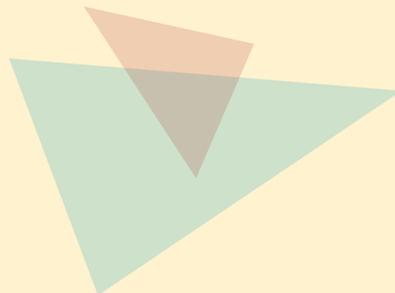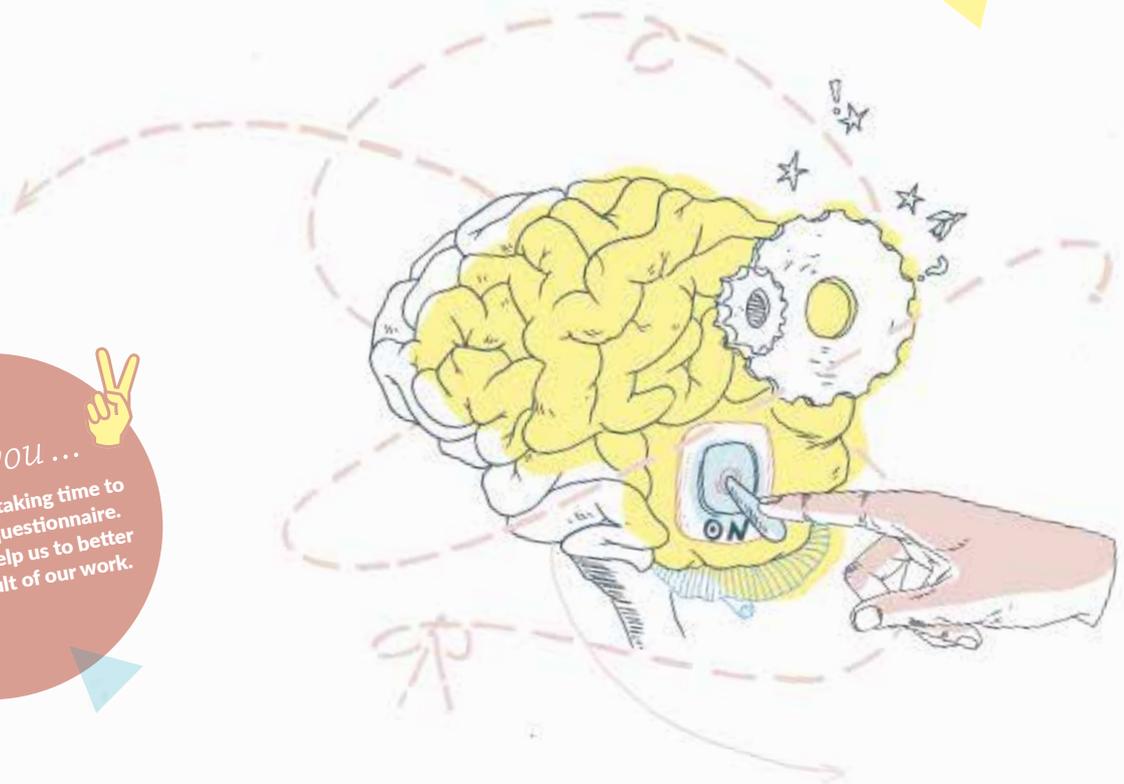
Thank you …

… very much for taking time to complete this questionnaire. Your answers help us to better assess the result of our work.

YOUR IDEAS
FOR YOUR WORLD!

A questionnaire for a better youth work

——— **This questionnaire is about you,** your ideas and your world: the place where you live, your friends, your family and the things which are important to you. You are the person who knows best about this! That's why we would like to know from you how you can contribute your own ideas in your living environment and if you want to do that. We kindly ask you to answer the following questions honestly and from the heart. There are no wrong answers because your opinions are yours and therefore right. Your data will be used confidential and won't be handed to others.

Here we go:

| What's today's date? | | How old are you? | |
| What's your name? | | What's your sex? | |

next page ☞

We have chosen a single statement. You find it always in a box on top. Please read once over it. Below there are always several questions for you. Please reply to each question with the most suitable answer for you. You may imagine a concrete idea of how to improve something, if you want. This could facilitate answering.

> *Within the next three months I want to begin to put a concrete idea into practice.*
> *With this I would like to improve something in my living environment,*
> *for the people there or the things that are important to me.* «

If you imagine that, how does it make you feel?	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	pleasant unpleasant I don't know

Do you think to begin such a plan is rather easy or difficult?	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	easy difficult I don't know

And do you want to begin with such a concrete idea within the next three months?	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	yes no I don't know

What is your opinion on how much these persons try to improve something with their own ideas?

my parents	my friends	people like me
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
very much not much I don't know	very much not much I don't know	very much not much I don't know

> *Within the next three months I want to begin to put a concrete idea into practice.*
> *With this I would like to improve something in my living environment,*
> *for the people there or the things that are important to me.* «

If you tried it, how would it be for you generally?	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	good bad I don't know

Do you think you could begin such a plan?	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	yes no I don't know

How likely is it that you try it within the next three months?	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	very likely not likely I don't know

Would these persons think you should try it?

my parents	my friends	people like me
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
very much not much I don't know	very much not much I don't know	very much not much I don't know

one page left ☞

> *Within the next three months I want to begin to put a concrete idea into practice.*
> *With this I would like to improve something in my living environment,*
> *for the people there or the things that are important to me.* «

Generally speaking, do you find the idea to do something like this interesting or boring?	○─○─○─○─○─○─○ ○ interesting boring I don't know
Do you think it is expected of you to try it?	○─○─○─○─○─○─○ ○ yes no I don't know
Is it possible for you to begin such a plan?	○─○─○─○─○─○─○ ○ yes no I don't know
Are you determined to begin with an idea in three months at the latest?	○─○─○─○─○─○─○ ○ yes no I don't know

♥ Thank you very much…

… for your openness,
your patience and your ideas!

Is there anything that you would like to know about us or about the questionnaire?
Or anything that you want to tell us?

THE COMPETENCE REFLECTION SHEET

Target group: Youngsters, 15 years and older. Depending on the complexity of dimensions.

Time needed: Usually it takes 5 to 10 minutes to edit the Sheet. If you want to use it for more complex issues you might need more time. Time for preparation, analysis and interpretation might vary depending on the particular interest of the user.

Resources needed: The Competence reflection sheet and a pen.

Outcomes: Working with the sheet enables you to 1) better understand the competences mentioned, 2) better understand proactive Participation, Entrepreneurial Thinking and Acting, 3) reflect and compare the status quo, developments, or target levels of the competence dimensions.

The purpose

━━━━━━ **Whenever you want to empower youngsters** or yourself in order to raise their attention for your cause, to establish an initiative, to shape their world and their future, there is a set of certain competences which is essential for your endeavors. Since such actions are called Entrepreneurship or Participation through projects, these competences are labeled Entrepreneurship competences, Participation competences and etc. Although in general they are all the same. Therefore, whenever education in Entrepreneurship, Empowerment or Participation is mentioned, they actually mean competences.

The sheet lists nine Competence dimensions that together depict the key competences needed to put ideas into practice. It is based on the work of the OECD [23], [24,] and derived from the European Reference Framework of Key Competences for Lifelong Learning[25], precisely the "Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship". Working with the list will help you understand, what is meant by Entrepreneurship or Participation through projects, what competences are related, what competence level is or should be reached, what more can be done to empower youngsters or yourself.

How to apply in practice

━━━━━━ **You can use the Competence reflection sheet** to reflect and discuss with youngsters or with colleagues issues related with the listed competences. You can work out a common understanding of what these competences mean. Everyone can evaluate the profile of oneself, of others or a given group. You can depict actual learnings or developments for an individual and his/her work, or set goals.

In practice you hand out a sheet to everyone, explain the task, proceed and reflect on the results, i.g. you might be interested in a group's development. Then first ask them what each dimension means. Especially how to indicate the maximum and the minimum for each scale. What does it mean to possess an absolute level of communication skills or creativity? How would that look like? There is no one answer to such questions, so the aim is to elaborate a common agreement useful for the task.

Based on this thinking, ask them to rate their levels on each dimension by marking a point on the scale. Then you could ask them to compare with others and collect the full picture and reflect on them. So you can ask them to use the sheet to identify individual strengths, to mark the actual level or add learning goals.

In order to see the progress after a certain period of time, you could repeat the same procedure, especially after the period when the likelihood of a possible change is higher. Then everybody can compare potential changes in individuals or the group.

The master ☞

You can use the master to make copies or download
the digital version at *www.eyerp.eu*

23 Rychen, Dominique Simone & Salganik, Laura Hersh (2003). Key Competences for a Successful Life and Well-Functioning Society. Göttingen: Hogrefe & Huber, see http://www.oecd.org/pisa/35070367.pdf
24 http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/definitionandselectionofcompetenciesdeseco.htm   **25** The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (2006). Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences of lifelong learning (2006/962/EC), see http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN

COMPETENCE REFLECTION

EYERP

Competences you need to put ideas into practice

❶ Problem analysis (to reveal structures, problems, opportunities and their sources)

not at all _____ absolutely

❷ Creativity (to develop ideas, concepts and solutions)

not at all _____ absolutely

❸ Project management (to plan, to manage, to acquire and manage resources, to evaluate)

not at all _____ absolutely

❹ Team management (to collaborate, to delegate, to lead, to resolve conflicts)

not at all _____ absolutely

❺ Communication skills (to comprehend and be comprehensible, to convince, to negotiate)

not at all _____ absolutely

❻ Economic and financial skills (to handle money well, to have a sense of day-to-day economics)

not at all _____ absolutely

❼ Sense of initiative (the readiness to jump into action regardless of others)

not at all _____ absolutely

❽ Persistance (to stick to it, to overcome frustrations, to keep up motivation)

not at all _____ absolutely

❾ Risk taking (to put yourself and all required resources into an idea, to appreciate risks and take chances)

not at all _____ absolutely

These personal characteristics form the key competence »Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship« set out in the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union from 2006.

RESOURCES

EYERP PROJECT PARTNERS

Plattform e.V. (Germany)

www.facebook.com/plattform.ev

Plattform e.V. is an NGO based in Erfurt, Germany, which has been established in 2006 and since then has been working on a variety of projects, on local, national and European levels. In this project Plattform took the role of the main project body, by establishing and maintaining organizational activities and the project's management.

aha – Tipps & Infos für junge Leute (Austria)

www.aha.or.at

The Youth Information Centre Vorarlberg aha – Tipps & Infos für junge Leute is a public association for social profit founded in 1991. It is a social service organisation and a place of non-formal education, which is embedded in a network on local, regional, national and international levels. It promotes and supports young people in dealing with information and knowledge, as well as creates a stage where young people can air their desires by giving space to interests and ideas of young people.

The Organization also carries research and stores information relevant to young people, presents it in a youth-centered way and communicates it via various channels to their target group. In this process, young people actively participate in designing the information, which encourages them to focus on the diversity and enables them to make a knowledge-based decisions. This way aha increases their ability to deal with information and media.

invo – Service für Kinder- und Jugendbeteiligung Service for Children and Youth Participation (Austria)

www.invo.at

invo is a public service of the Local Government of Vorarlberg. It promotes the development and implementation of youth participation in communities and municipalities by means of information, counselling and lobbying. invo also encourages young people, youth centres and youth organisations to develop and implement their own participation projects. Its objective is to initiate and help these new programmes and projects to develop sustainable participation structures for young people. invo also stimulates training activities on the topics of children and youth participation and creates networks.

YUPI – Youth Union of People with Initiative (Portugal)

www.yupifamalicao.blogspot.com

YUPI is a youth organization established in September 2008 by a group of young people, which has been already working at local, national and international levels since 2006. YUPI`s mission is to motivate and empower youth in our community for an effective citizenship through active participation. Our working areas are: volunteering, non formal education (research and lobbying), learning mobility and active participation and citizenship.

KERIC (Slovakia)

www.keric.sk

Founded in February 2003, KERIC is a non-profit non-governmental organisation working mainly with children and youth. They offer a wide range of activities with an extra added international dimension, connecting the Kysuce region with Europe and the whole world.

KERIC hosts international volunteers in their organisation and sends young Slovak people as volunteers to Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa, organises conversational language courses, international youth exchanges, summer camps for children, seminars and trainings for youth workers or other non-formal educational activities.

PROJECT FUNDING

Youth in Action

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/
programme/about_youth_en.php

Youth in Action is the Programme which European Union has set up for young people. It aims to inspire a sense of active European citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among young Europeans and to involve them in shaping the Union's future. It promotes mobility within and beyond the EU's borders, non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue, and encourages the inclusion of all young people, regardless of their educational, social and cultural background: Youth in Action is a Programme for all.

Federal Ministry of Families and Youth (Austria)

www.bmfj.gv.at

Since 2014, the name of the Austrian Federal Ministry has changed to the Federal Ministry of Families and Youth, which underlines the importance that the federal government recognizes these two topics as very important and crucial. The Ministry is primarily responsible for youth and family policy, youth and family protection, support and information, and the promotion of health and children's rights.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Youth work

────── SALTO RESOURCE CENTRE

Salto Youth is a support structure for youth projects within the Erasmus+ programme. The website offers a toolbox with methods to be used in youth work, a search tool for partners for international projects, international training opportunities, etc. and other useful stuff for youth workers.

www.salto-youth.net

────── EURODESK

Eurodesk is the main provider of information on European policies and opportunities for young people and those who work with them.

www.eurodesk.org

────── Youth Networks

Online network service, which allows you to search for youth and EVS project(s) and/ or partners.

www.youthnetworks.eu

────── Idealist.org

The Idealist is a directory of non-profit and volunteering resources on the Web. You can use it to receive daily alerts and information about jobs and internships in the non-profit sector that are posted on the site.

www.idealist.org

Empowerment

Mladiinfo International

Mladiinfo International promotes and mediates the communication between young people, students, researchers, university officials, youth NGOs and all those involved in the educational process in Europe and worldwide. Dedicated to youth, their problems and needs, Mladiinfo undertook numerous activities promoting and enhancing free education, communication, media and journalism etc.

www.mladiinfo.eu

The European Youth Parliament

The European Youth Parliament is a non-partisan and independent educational programme for young European citizens. The EYP offers young people a unique opportunity to voice their opinion on European issues, to take part in a pan-European debate and to strengthen their intercultural skills.

www.eyp.org

The European Youth Forum (YFJ)

The European Youth Forum (YFJ) is the platform of youth organisations in Europe representing 99 youth organisations, both National Youth Councils and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations. The Youth Forum works to empower young people to participate actively in society to improve their own lives by representing and advocating their needs and interest.

www.youthforum.org

ERASMUS+

Erasmus+ is the new EU programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport for 2014-2020, starting in January 2014.

*http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/
erasmus-plus/index_en.htm*

Youth on the Move

YoM is EC initiative aimed at helping the young to gain the knowledge and experience needed to increase their employability.

http://ec.europa.eu/youthonthemove

*"I haven't dreamed for a while,
but now with this project I dream again."*

Anonymous