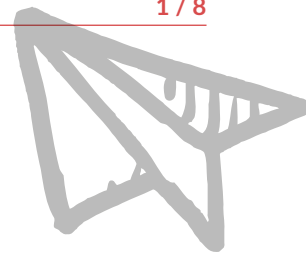


SOME UPDATES FLYING TO YOU!



Dear youth policy shapers,

We will very soon meet in Istanbul! Yes time flies ...

Even though few months is not really a long time to bring big changes in the field of youth policy, it is very interesting to see how the landscape of youth policy in each of our participant country has been evolving since we left Bremen.

Some news on recent developments from Estonia, Turkey, Armenia are here for you!



“TERE” FROM ESTONIA

Thanks to EU funding there have been several new projects started this year related to youth policy. Projects cover entire Estonia and offer many new opportunities to young people. Better cooperation with local municipalities in the field of youth policy and new solutions in the field of youth work to boost youth employment are some of the elements.



A training course for representatives of municipalities to discuss the future of youth work

SOME OF THE INTERESTING ADVANCEMENTS ON STATE LEVEL

1st of January came to effect new Child Protection Act, which puts emphasis on child rights. In addition to different principles the act provides a legal basis for national child welfare agency. The agency would combine responsibilities from different areas and ministries: social, mental health, education, justice.

Support system for concept of youth recreation was presented to the Government. With this support system the Parliament gives 6 million euros in 2017 and 15 million euros in 2018 to local governments in order to support youth initiative and recreation activities.

The Bill on Amendments to the Local Government Council Election Act was passed in the Parliament, which gives youngsters who have attained at least sixteen years of age right to vote in elections to local authority councils (the Constitution already gives 16 year olds right to vote on localelections, but the bill was last legal step which needed to pass).

MAIN CONCERNS...

- How to better insure the inclusion of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) and youngsters at risk?
- Now when the voting age is lowered, how to insure better civic education in and out of formal educational setting for young people?

MAIN TREND...

There is a big wave of innovation in the country to make youth policy more mobile and “smart” (not surprising in the case of Estonia, is it? ;)

WHAT WE NEED IS...

- More cross-sectorial cooperation and improved cooperation among various actors on problems concerning youth.
- Wider inclusion of youngsters in youth policy development processes.
- More recognition for “youth worker” profession.





SOME OF OUR IDEAS BACK IN BREMEN

1. Training on how to use research to improve the quality of youth work (can also be an international training course).
2. Working on changing the attitudes and perception of youth workers as profession (organizing profession days for youth workers).
3. Positioning youth work development in the country in a more understandable way (creating a videos/webpage).
4. Coming up with some ideas to improve the inter-ministerial cooperation in the country.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE?

Estonian National Youth Council recently started cooperation with Tallinn University in order to give practical input to youth work studies.

Estonian-Armenian cooperation has been initiated right after the seminar. The foreseen study visit was unfortunately cancelled due to security issues at given period, however a full 3-day programme including visits to all the main institutions, youth centers, National Youth Council was designed and will hopefully serve as a basis for another occasion to be planned.





“MEHRABA” FROM TURKEY



MOST IMPORTANT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD

- The establishment of National Youth Council has been accelerated since the elections in November 2015.
- New draft Youth Policy Recommendation by Youth Organizations Forum of Turkey has been prepared.

WE ARE CHALLENGED WITH...

- Youth work being mostly service-based. Right-based youth work approach is still less and few but it is improving by the initiatives of some youth NGO's. Today GOför is the most important body for right-based approach for youth policy and youth work.
- Youth policy not being inclusive. Approach to definition of young people is changing according to governmental political perspective.
- The approach of prevention of the problems regarding the rights and basic needs of young people, being envisaged through short-term measures, which is not realistic.
- Programmes not being designed to reach young people with fewer opportunities (social, economic obstacles, geographical obstacles, disability, educational difficulties, cultural differences, health problems).
- Youth work in the country mostly dominated by “youth exchange” projects. New Erasmus+ programme gives great opportunities to youth NGO's in Turkey, however project-based funding approach hinders creating sustainable and long-term solutions for youth.
- The fact of immigration of Syrian young people in the country still not being included in national youth policy.

TO MAKE A STEP FORWARD WE NEED...

Youth policy to be inclusive and participatory. Therefore, we should create free spaces for young people to participate in the policy making process and create possibilities for youth from diverse backgrounds and different socio-economic conditions to express themselves, define their needs and create strategies.

More incentives to be given to youth organizations in order to encourage them to focus on youth policy. Capacity building has to be considered on financial level but also on human resources area. Initiatives like GOFOR should be recognized as representative bodies of youth organizations by the policy makers.

THINGS WE HAVE DONE SINCE WE LEFT BREMEN

- We have contacted and started to exchange ideas with Youth Organizations Forum.
- We try to make a session in the next General Assembly of Youth Organizations Forum where an expert from the colleagues of Youth Policy Seminar presents a best practice on shaping youth policy or creating a common ground for youth NGO's.
- We communicate regularly on ongoing developments in the field, we have informed our colleagues on the outputs of Youth Policy Seminar and tried to get their feedback.
- Because of the elections recently, there wasn't any opportunity to communicate with policy makers about this seminar



Youth Organisations Forum



“ԲԱՐԵՎ” FROM ARMENIA



WE HAVE MOVED FORWARD WITH SOME IMPORTANT ACTIONS LIKE...

- “Mapping of various understandings and types of youth work in Armenia” by Youth Studies Institute.
- “Understanding main challenges and opportunities of youth work in Armenia” published by a consortium of NGOs with the support of Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs.
- Series of steering and consultative meetings held by the Ministry to formulate the next steps for youth work recognition to be taken further in the country.

WE ARE PUZZLED WITH THE FACT THAT...

- Most of the communication happening in youth policy field is not institutionalized and is very much person-based, there is a big need for a better communication system and information sharing platforms.
- National and local youth policy processes are not synchronised.
- There is a quite big lack of confidence towards policy-makers in general, which makes it very difficult to push participative processes forward for both sides.
- There is a big inconsistency on various levels: regardless clear national youth policy priorities there is a lack of follow-up and coordination. As there is not enough state support for youth policy and youth work development, especially youth work in the country is often supported by international organisations, who among themselves need serious coordination.

WHAT WE URGENTLY NEED NOW IS...

- Clear political decision on assigning positions on local level responsible for youth.
- Capacity-building of the assigned specialists.
- Enhancing communication between policy-makers, researchers and practitioners in the field, as there is already enough data and experience present, now it's the time for the "chemistry" to happen.
- Creating permanent and concrete platforms for participative decision-making processes

WE ARE ABOUT TO START...

- Creation of youth worker profile(s), competence framework and various training formats.
- Raise the awareness on the recent research projects among not only youth organisations but also other stakeholders responsible and dealing with youth.
- Preparation of a Youth Work Forum in Gyumri in the framework of "Youth Capital" annual state programme.



Sociologists processing data in Youth Studies Intitute

TOP OF THE HEAD QUESTIONS FOR YOU

- ▶ *What motivates you the most to work in the youth field?*
- ▶ *How to get youth in risk to participate?*
- ▶ *What's the next step after the 2nd part of the seminar?*

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES TO KEEP IN MIND

ARMENIA

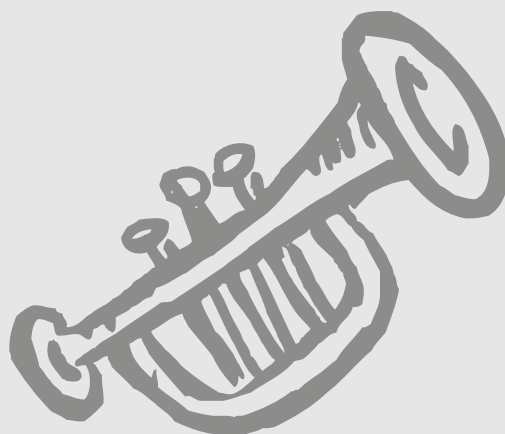
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ESTONIA

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TURKEY

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MANY WARM GREETINGS AND SEE YOU SOON!
SEMINAR TEAM