

Coyote

Youth work / Knowledge / Policy



LEARNING MOBILITY:
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL?

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and the Council of Europe in the field of youth



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Contents

- 3** **Edito**
- 4** **Effects of mobility and how to measure them**
Søren Kristensen
- 8** **Why is it so difficult to include “inclusion” in mobility talks and discussions?**
Snežana Bačlija Knoch
- 13** **Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy?**
Özgehan Şenyuva
- 18** **Fact and figures from the youth mobility “scene” in Turkey**
Yörük Kurtaran
- 22** **Overcoming the fear of the unknown**
Triin Ilves
- 26** **How inclusive is the (Erasmus +) Youth in Action programme?**
Snežana Bačlija Knoch
- 37** **Training plan for youth work — Inclu-Fit & Mobi-Dance**
Triin Ilves and Marlies Pöschl
- 40** **Learning *through* mobility: the story of Habib, an asylum seeker from Iran**
Tali Padan
- 44** **Conveyor belt poem**
Daniel Briggs
- 48** **Fix the system or ourselves?**
Tali Padan
- 50** **The lonesome rider...**
Jacques Spelekens
- 53** **We need more bowling and fewer boxes for the learning mobility of young people**
Susi Nicodemi
- 56** **A trainers’ guild, a work in progress**
Buzz Bury, Duncan Hodgson, MarCus Vreecer and Yuliya Stankevich
- 62** **Marker : A historic farewell, gadgets and banners, and a thought for the future**
Mark E. Taylor
- 64** **Notes on contributors**
- 65** **The adventures of Spiffy : Spiffy gets poetic**
Mark E. Taylor

Coyote is published by the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth. The main activities of the Partnership are training courses, seminars, and network meetings involving youth workers, youth leaders, trainers, researchers, policy makers, experts and practitioners. Their results are disseminated through different channels including this magazine.

Coyote aims to use a form of English that is accessible to all. We aim to be grammatically correct without losing the individuality or authenticity of the original text. Our aim is that the language used in the magazine reflects that used in the activities described.

Some articles are offered by contribution and others are commissioned specifically by the editorial team in order to achieve a balance of style and content. If you have an idea for an article then please feel free to contact the editor.

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Edito

By **Mark E. Taylor**

On behalf of the Coyote editorial team

Hello readers!

Spiffy titles abound in the youth world: the European Platform on Learning Mobility¹ is one of the best!

Coyote’s editorial team had the honour to be present at the platform’s second conference "Learning mobility in the youth field: towards opportunities for all – Evidence, experience, discourse".² Held in Istanbul, there was a good chance that the venue would inspire all to get into serious debate. And it did.

We took the opportunity with both hands, seeing where everyone stands or doesn’t... Got into *that triangle* again, trying to see where we could make sense and pushing the boundaries of non-sense!

As you can probably tell already, a certain poetic sensibility influences this issue – maybe it helps reach parts of understanding that others cannot. Clearly, Daniel Briggs’ contribution is the most blatant example; look closely and there are passages in articles which jump out from the page. And we continue our experiments with form, for example, an article written as three mind maps and another as a straight story.

We have encouraged authors to go that little step further, to challenge themselves and some of the concepts outlined in the conference. How can we measure what is learned during mobility experiences? What gets in the way when we try to talk about inclusion and just who is being included and how? Do systems and programmes match individual situations? In what ways can business representatives and educators explain learning mobility to each other? What is it possible to learn when your mobility is not voluntary but forced as Habib analyses from his own search for asylum?

Going back to our roots, Coyote started life as a magazine about training and trainers in youth work, so we felt it crucial to hear from an initiative to form an international guild of trainers. What will be their impact on the future practice of learning mobility? Coyote will be watching to see!

Enjoy your reading!

We are glad to rectify a little error from the last issue which saw Siiri Taimla and Vanda Kovács being credited for each other’s drawings



Illustration by Vanda Kovács



Illustration by Siiri Taimla

1. See: <http://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/european-platform-on-learning-mobility>
2. The full report of which can be found here: <http://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/8655813/EPLM-report-2015.pdf/66294907-f3e3-40d7-aaa5-e9b6de6e6ea0>

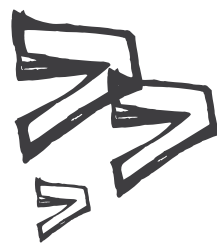


Effects of mobility and how to measure them

By Søren Kristensen, PhD

“Learning mobility, meaning transnational mobility for the purpose of acquiring new knowledge, skills and competences, is one of the fundamental ways in which young people can strengthen their future employability, as well as their intercultural awareness, personal development, creativity and active citizenship. Europeans who are mobile as young learners are more likely to be mobile as workers later in life.”

Council Recommendation of 28 June 2011 (“Youth on the Move”) ¹



Learning mobility is a key instrument in European youth policies, because participation, as indicated in the quotation above, is associated with several sets of desirable learning outcomes. Whether and to what extent this happens in actual projects and programmes is for evaluations and evaluative research to ascertain, but it is complex. Basically, the effects of learning mobility can be organised into three categories, each of which comes with a particular set of challenges with regard to measurement.



Not just about “checking boxes”

quality is before, during & after the learning mobility experience

- ▶ **Knowledge skills and competences of a cognitive nature** are in many instances directly visible and hence measurable. This goes for foreign language proficiency or vocational skills. We can run a test or make an assessment, compare with accepted scales or curricula of training programmes, and the results can in many instances be recognised as (part of) a formal qualification.
- ▶ **More complex learning outcomes**, described in terms like “intercultural awareness”, “personal development”, “creativity”, etc. are much more slippery. Definitions are imprecise and methods of measurement rely on elaborate tests and/or intersubjective assessments (triangulation) that are difficult to calibrate in relation to formal contexts.
- ▶ Finally, some outcomes are essentially of an **affective** nature (that is, linked to attitudes, convictions and emotions), and they can only be ascertained or measured by observing the behavioural patterns of participants over a period of time after the stay abroad. In the quotation above, this goes for “employability”, “active citizenship” and cross-border labour mobility.

1. [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32011H0707\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32011H0707(01))

Effects of mobility and how to measure them

Measuring the effects of learning mobility

Organisers of mobility projects are naturally interested in knowing whether or not they have reached their stipulated learning objectives. So are external funding providers, and grant money therefore usually comes with a requirement that an evaluation be carried out in connection with the activity. However, with learning outcomes belonging to the two last of the above categories, it is a very substantial challenge to measure directly whether and to what degree you have actually been successful. This requires sophisticated and time-consuming methods on a scale that is usually light years beyond the resources of the average project. In a more realistic perspective, we must therefore resort to indirect measuring methods and use indicators to inform us about phenomena that are very hard to access directly.

Indicators are factors that we can measure and observe, and which are related to other, less accessible factors which we wish to conclude something about. It is an important task of research to identify such indicators and to determine their validity and reliability: do they have a connection with the phenomena that we want to examine, and to what extent do our measurements represent a true picture of them? For mobility used as a pedagogical tool, we find these indicators in the learning process and by focusing on factors which are conducive to the desired developments. As an example, we can take the learning objective “strengthening intercultural awareness”. A stay abroad might be just as likely to produce negative as positive effects, but we know from research that certain factors are conducive to intercultural learning. Already back in 1969, the Israeli psychologist Amir formulated the “contact hypothesis”, which proposes a set of indicators by which we can estimate the likelihood of positive, intercultural learning outcomes in a given project. According to Amir,² in order to ensure the best possible environment, there must be:

- ▶ *equality in terms of status* – both parties in the encounter must share a roughly similar socioeconomic status to allow them to identify with one another;
- ▶ *convergence of aims* – both parties must have at least a degree of shared aims and interests to ensure that contacts between them develop;
- ▶ *appropriate attitudes prior to implementation* – there are no overly negative attitudes towards people from the other culture beforehand;
- ▶ *appropriate contact intensity and length* – the contact should last for a certain period and must not be superficial in nature;
- ▶ *low cultural barriers* – cultural barriers are not so high at the beginning of the actual encounter that interaction is made impossible;
- ▶ *social and institutional back-up* – the encounter is organised in the framework of an integrative institutional framework and a climate of mutual support exists;
- ▶ *appropriate preparation* – participants are given adequate linguistic and cultural preparation before the encounter.

Similar sets of indicators exist – or can be elaborated – for other types of learning outcomes. Mobility projects focusing on improving participants’ “employability”, for instance, would share some of these indicators, but replace or substantially reformulate others. It is the task of researchers, together with practitioners, to develop such sets of indicators to cover different outcomes. To be useful, however, this work must be have a solid knowledge base.

What we know and what we don’t know about mobility

Over the years, we have developed a body of research which makes a strong case for learning mobility as a powerful pedagogical instrument. However, we still have important work ahead of us in the development of our knowledge of its effects, how they are achieved and how to measure them. As it is, too much of our knowledge relies mainly on anecdotal rather than systematic evidence. Two issues in particular require the attention of researchers.

One is the scarcity of so-called longitudinal research – that is, studies that follow a group of participants over a longer stretch of time (for example, 10 years) and try to establish a connection between the experience of a stay abroad and later developments in the lives of these individuals. Most evaluations of mobility projects are undertaken more or less immediately after participants have returned to their home country, and it can be very difficult to assess the true significance of the experience in such a short time span. Participants may state during debriefing sessions that they are more likely to go abroad and work later as a result of their sojourn, but the effectiveness of the experience as a tool for the promotion of the “free movement of labour” can only be properly assessed if a significant amount of them actually go abroad to work at some stage in their career trajectory.

Another major problem is the lack of diversified information on mobility with regard to variables like target groups, project types and learning objectives. Roughly speaking, we know what works for some groups and in some situations, but it may not be the same for another group of participants, another type of project, or with a different set of learning objectives. The “young people with fewer opportunities” constitute a case in point. Despite efforts to the contrary, they are still underrepresented in learning mobility activities – indeed, some initiatives which were initially created for young people with fewer opportunities have become “colonised” by more resourceful groups,³ making it doubtful to what extent these experiences are actually applicable to those with fewer advantages. This is an area where we still have many lacunae in our knowledge, and where further research is most welcome.



Illustration by Siiri Taimla

3. For example, volunteering abroad, see Committee of Regions, “The Mobility of Young Volunteers”, a study undertaken by the Public Policy and Management Institute, 2009.

Why is it so difficult to include “inclusion” in mobility talks and discussions?

By **Snežana Bačlija Knoch**

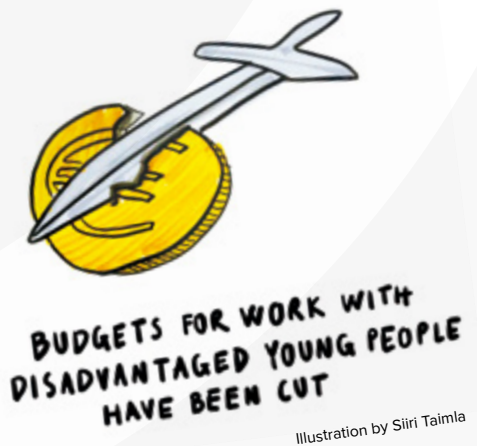
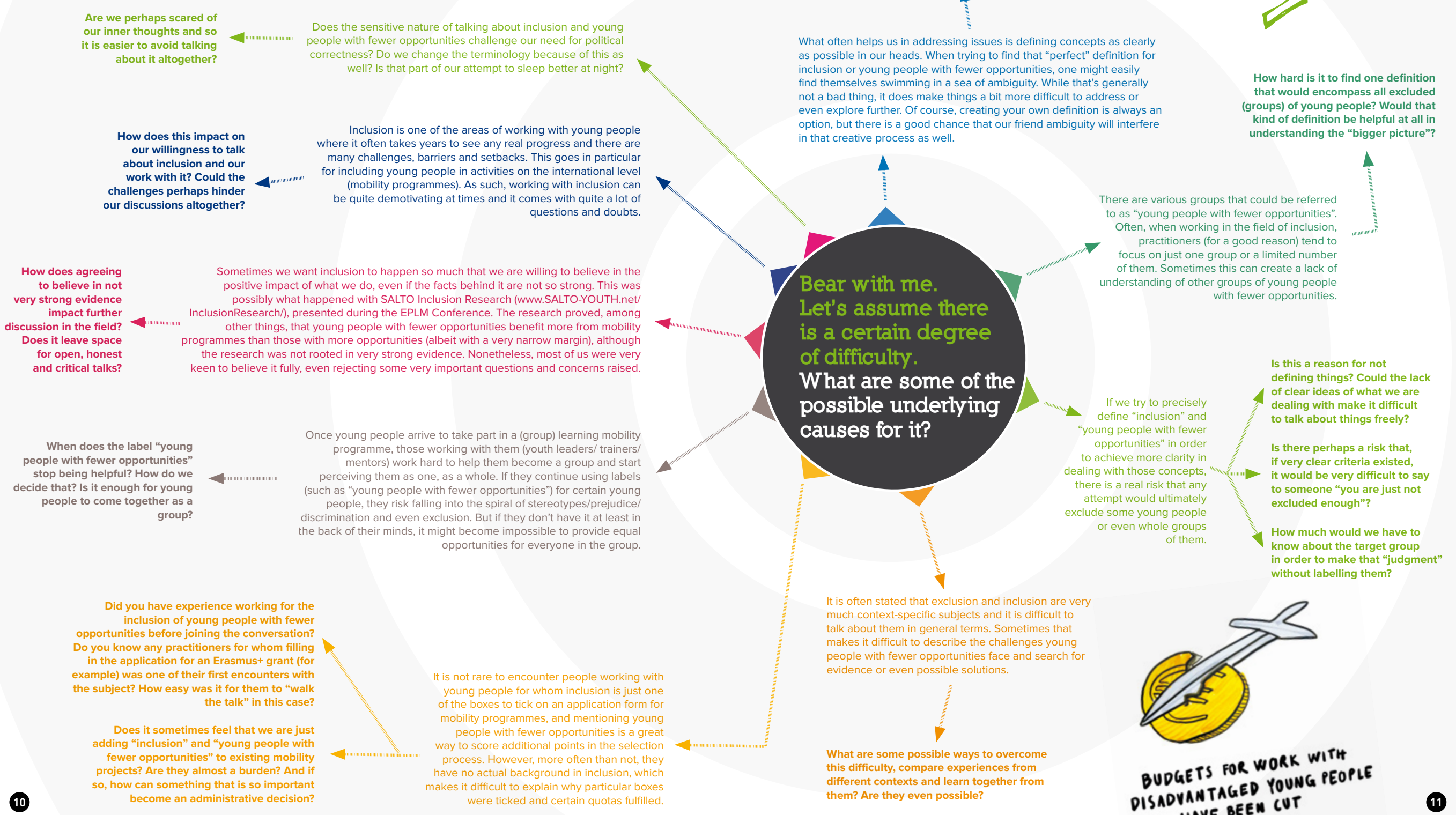
You might be wondering why I am asking this question and where it comes from! True, it could seem formulated and a bit odd. Even if it doesn't, you might not feel that there is any particular difficulty in addressing inclusion when talking about mobility. And that's fair enough. Perhaps if I tell you a little bit about the origin of the question, it will make some more sense. Perhaps...

This edition of *Coyote* deals with issues from the European Platform for Learning Mobility (EPLM) Conference. The title of this event was “Learning mobility in the youth field: towards opportunities for all – Evidence, experience, discourse”. I attended as a *Coyote* editorial team member and was somehow expecting to hear a lot about whether all young people have opportunities to take part in learning mobility and if they don’t, how we can make sure that these opportunities are there. Perhaps I was a little bit too eager, but my impression was that we spent most of the time at the conference talking about learning mobility and the different experiences and research that surrounds it, but not so much about how inclusive it is and whether it is really open for all young people. And even less about how we can make it happen. The feeling that I got was that most of the people, if not everyone, in that big conference room in Istanbul felt the burning need to make sure the opportunities were there for everyone, that they were passionate and willing to do something about it themselves, but that there was also some kind of discomfort when addressing the subject.

Based on that, instead of blaming, shaming and pointing fingers (which would probably be pointed at me as well, anyway), I decided to take this feeling further, transform it into a question and see where it takes us. The question led to even more questions and those created further questions to be reflected upon. The maps in front of you are not attempts to provide answers, but rather to leave the questions with you and see what you think. And maybe, if we approached our next mobility discussions with these questions in mind, just maybe, we would get a little bit closer to gaining confidence in trying to deal with them.



Why is it so difficult to include "inclusion"?



Why is it so difficult to include "inclusion"?

Why do I need to be talking about inclusion? Is that something that comes as part of my role in the European youth work field? Or am I genuinely interested in talking about it?

Who benefits from my being involved in the conversation about inclusion? Am I contributing to some overall shift in the field? And do I benefit myself?

If I am so interested in talking about it, but don't feel competent enough, how could I gain more confidence? Should I go and try to do (some more) work in the field of inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities, in particular through mobility programmes? Or should I read more about it? Or perhaps something completely different?

How can I focus on inclusion without feeling that I need to squeeze it into some boxes and add it to mobility programmes or any other existing activities?

Answers to these questions could potentially help us confront difficulty when including inclusion in our mobility conversations.

Do I know the reality of working with young people with fewer opportunities enough to be able to talk about it freely and provide evidence of what works and what doesn't?

Am I ready to admit defeat and reflect on potential failures in my attempts to work with the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in mobility programmes? In addition, am I ready to challenge existing practices and demand real proof that inclusion is happening as the organisers claim it is?



Illustration by Siiri Taimla



Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy?



By Özgehan Şenyuva

The added value of youth mobility, in particular the skill-developing benefits of international mobility, is well documented. Rigorous research – as conducted for instance by the RAY network (Research Based Analysis of Youth in Action) – provides sufficient evidence that young people develop various competences through their participation in learning mobility schemes.¹ After their mobility experience young people, in general, have acquired a more global mindset, stronger self-confidence, intercultural teamwork skills, and a higher degree of individual responsibility.



1. Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of Erasmus+ Youth in Action* (RAY), implemented by a network of Erasmus+ Youth in Action National Agencies and their research partners currently in 29 European countries <http://www.researchyouth.net/publications/>

Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy?

Given these incontestable benefits, there is a major effort among European youth circles towards making mobility schemes more accessible for young people from disadvantaged social backgrounds with fewer opportunities. And there is a good reason for this: in study after study, research reveals that the majority of the participants in learning mobility schemes correspond to a certain profile. They are better educated and have already adopted an international perspective.

In other words, those who are already well equipped with the prerequisites for the acquisition of the competences that mobility will provide them.

As educators we would, of course, like to believe that personal development is exactly why they participated in the first place. In other words, we assume that young people proactively participate in developing their competences. I believe there is a certain degree of wishful thinking in such an assumption. Mobility holds more promises than meet the eye. By focusing on the development of social and interpersonal competences we are missing a very large group of young people who participate in mobility schemes for two major reasons: having fun and escaping from reality.

And these are perfectly legitimate reasons! Being a young person is not easy. And it is getting more difficult. To put it in the terms of a dilemma of classical economics, young people have infinite needs and desires, but very little resources. The ongoing global crisis and its negative impact on societies are making these resources even scarcer. Young people have to put up with economic and political problems for which they are not responsible, but whose consequences they have to suffer. For a reality check on the deteriorating living conditions of young people in Europe, the recent findings of the EU Youth Report 2015 are particularly striking.² In such a moment, if someone offers you the chance to go away, leave it all behind and discover something else... why not? Maybe the grass is really greener on the other side? And even if it isn't, it still could be nice to have a break, spend some time in a different place, and have some fun with different people.

Come away with me on a bus
Come away where they can't tempt us
With their lies

Norah Jones, "Come away with me" (2002)



© Georges Melles: Voyage dans la lune, Wikimedia Commons



© Caspar David Friedrich's Chalk Cliffs on Rügen, Wikimedia Commons

German is a complicated language. And, to the surprise of many, it is a beautiful one with a very rich vocabulary to describe emotions. Certain words have such complex, multi-layered meanings that people consider them untranslatable. In the context of our topic, there are two wonderfully relevant examples. *Sehnsucht*, for instance. Wikipedia, the most common reference at the moment, defines *Sehnsucht* as "thoughts and feelings about all facets of life that are unfinished or imperfect, paired with a yearning for ideal alternative experiences". Does this not perfectly apply to young people facing challenges in their societies? Happiness is necessarily out there, in an alternative experience, probably in an alternative place. Another term, *Fernweh*, means literally "faraway-sickness", a longing for places never travelled to.³ As Talia Gutin describes: "*Fernweh* is an ache for experiences never had and sensations never felt. Where homesickness is a yearning for the familiar, *Fernweh* is a yearning for the complete unknown — a place free from the limiting confines of our familiar society and home."⁴ Don't our youth mobility schemes offer a window of opportunity to respond to this yearning? Go somewhere, just do it. They offer a chance to make the "strange familiar and the familiar strange".⁵ *Sehnsucht* and *Fernweh* — two major, perhaps underestimated, motivations to go abroad through mobility programmes.



Somewhere over the rainbow, way up high
There's a land that I heard of, once in a lullaby
Somewhere over the rainbow, skies are blue
And the dreams that you dare to dream really do come true

H. Arlen and E.Y. Harburg from *The Wizard of Oz* (1939)

© Ron Ellis / Shutterstock.com

Following the end of the Cold War and the historic reunification of Europe, young people across the continent heard the call to seize the opportunity to travel. They could now go freely to places that had always been inaccessible before, and meet with similarly minded (or not) young people speaking different languages.

However, this has never been as easy as it sounds. Just consider Moldova, where the average salary per month is €181, or Hungary where it is €503. Even if the strict visa policies, which made it practically impossible for a young person to travel are no longer valid for many countries (though still a nightmare for some, including Turkey, with one of the biggest youth populations in Europe), going mobile still remains very difficult.

3. Talia Gutin, "Fernweh" at www.fernweh.com/fernweh/ 14 November 2015.

4. Ibid.

5. Megan Melissa Machamer, "Making the strange familiar and the familiar strange: Stepping into the shoes of an ethnographer" at <http://peepsforum.com/making-strange-familiar/> 29 December 2015.

2. EU Youth Report 2015, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/report_en.htm, accessed 28 November 2015.

>>> Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy?



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© Cover scan of *Planet Comics*, issue 71, Fiction House, 1953.
© Space Rangers strip with art by Bill Discourt, Wikimedia Commons



This is where organised mobility schemes, such as youth exchanges or voluntary service, step in. They offer a very affordable opportunity to travel. They also provide a purpose to the travel: the time abroad is not only spent consuming, but producing something. Furthermore, organised mobility schemes offer a comfortable environment, where the young person can focus on the theme rather than mere everyday survival (there is a programme, there are food and accommodation arrangements, there are in-group mechanisms for making decisions, etc.). On top of that, in a mobility programme, social interactions are greatly facilitated (at least in

the beginning). In the case of group exchanges, there are name games, parties, ice-breakers and energisers. Compared with formal learning at schools, there is a great deal of non-formal and informal learning that takes place, and the young people are in active control of their learning process. They undergo it voluntarily, rather than having it imposed on them. It all sounds good, and it generally is. Once you get the taste for such an environment, it is difficult to let it go. This explains the well-known phenomenon of “professional participants”, who jump from one project to another, always the most active. They simply can’t get enough of that environment.



Is this the real life?
Is this just fantasy?
Caught in a landslide,
No escape from reality.

Queen, *Bohemian Rhapsody* (1975)



© NASA on the Commons, Flickr Commons

One of the most dangerous moments in space travel is always the re-entry into the atmosphere on the way back to planet Earth. This is also a very popular subject in sci-fi movies: the starship or shuttle shakes and rattles; it glows all red with fire outside and the protagonists scream and swear. And all of a sudden it's over: they look outside the window and are greeted with amazing blue skies and clouds. It is a very important climatic moment that symbolises that the unknown is over: you are home, you are safe.

Returning from a mobility programme is a similar experience. The longer the mobility, the harder it becomes to re-enter. All the youth workers engaging with volunteers know when to watch out for the pre-return depression. As they get closer to the end of the project, the volunteers start worrying and becoming slightly depressed about ... going back home. It is rather understandable: once you are abroad, you always have home as a security option. If everything goes wrong during mobility, you can escape to home. But what do you do when things go wrong at home? That is why a majority of EVS volunteers for instance try to prolong their stays or even wish to continue living in their newly adopted host countries.⁶

The re-entry syndrome also points to the need for the development and implementation of post-mobility programmes and training for young people. In well-managed multinational corporations, reintegration after work placement abroad is recognised and planned for as it is a delicate process, which is an essential part of the whole mobility experience. Post-mobility training programmes would not only ease the reintegration of mobility participants, but would also facilitate the self-recognition of competences acquired.

Overall, mobility schemes offer young people a possibility to meet the yearning they feel for a change of time and space. Lucky are those who have the information, time and resources to participate in such programmes. Millions of young people, unfortunately, are not even aware of the possibility to benefit from mobility, and they continue to shoulder their own realities, whatever they may be, trying to endure their *Fernweh*. It is when these young people are entitled to their “escape from reality” (which, incidentally, also develops precious competences) that the purpose of mobility programmes will have been accomplished.

6. REVS Competences for Employment research project full report at www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/inclusiontraining/PastInclusionCourses/evsskillsandemployability, accessed on 14 November 2015.



Fact and figures from the youth mobility “scene” in Turkey

By **Yörük Kurtaran**

Photos by Marlies Pöschl



Yes, mobility matters, because it is a good tool for young people to explore another culture. It is also a good mechanism to help young people know more about what Europe is all about, with all its glory and its problems. Moreover, it matters because it is one of the fundamental rights that has been recognised under the European Social Charter as well as the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

However, what does it really mean when we look at mobility in the context of a specific country, for example, to an Erasmus+ programme country like Turkey? This is a country that was one of the miracles of the last decade (yes, not “has been”, but “was”), a country that has the highest voting turnout rates (more than 85%) in the last five elections yet is highly polarised thanks to the debates and allegations about authoritarianism, secularism, corruption, human rights abuses, minority rights and so on.

Young people in Turkey constitute around 16% of the population. The percentage has been decreasing due to economic developments and rapid urbanisation. Their numbers – around 12.5 million in a total of 78 million – will remain firm in the next 15 years (if *ceteris paribus*, yet refugees will probably change this if they stay) because the overall population is still rising. However, as there is an uneven development between the east and west of the country as well as the city centres and the urban poor areas, the percentage of disadvantaged young people among the youth population has a potential to increase in the coming years. That is probably one of the most significant developments that the country needs to address within the context of youth policy. However, we know that the public expenditure for youth is less than 2.5% of GDP.¹

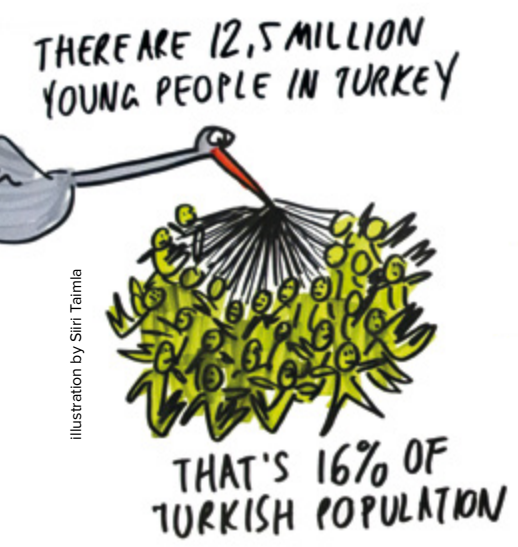


Illustration by Sırı Taimla



Another way to put this is to claim that the policy makers choose tanks and military planes (with a figure of more than 4% of GDP, the security expenditure of Turkey is high above NATO members countries’ average) over the needs of the young people. It is also accurate to claim that as youth unemployment has never been below 15% since 2001, it is the “normal” state for Turkey not to provide employment support to a significant portion of its youth population. The list of “normals” of Turkey can be lengthened; for example according to the 2016 World Press Freedom Index,² Turkey ranks 151st out of 180 countries, and it is 125th out of 142 countries in the Gender Gap Index³ of 2014.

Added to this, the historical conceptualisation of youth in Turkey has been troublesome. Youth are seen as the future of the country, meaning that their rights for today can be delayed for tomorrow. A good example is the right to vote at 18, but the age limit of 25 for running for the parliament. When people talk about young people in Turkey, they tend to think they are all students, yet they forget

that out of the 34 OECD countries Turkey is at the bottom of the list for the percentage of students who graduate from high school. Youth is also considered only as an age group. However, thanks to Pierre Bourdieu, we know that being a young person has a lot to do with taking power relations into consideration. Again, one of the classic lines that probably everybody heard from their elders is “when I was your age, I was doing this and that, yet today you – with all the opportunities that are provided to you, you do just this”, meaning that youth is seen as a group beyond space and time. Do we blame our grandmothers because they do not use the Internet? No. Then why do people tend to behave like this towards young people? That we do not know. Another classic piece of thinking about young people is that they are brought up to fulfil what people think is a greater cause. This instrumentalisation finds its expression in phrases such as the “integrity of the country”, or for “rapid economic growth”. Young people are important, but not because they are simply young people.



1. Monitoring Platform for Public Expenditures (Kamu Harcamalarını İzleme Platformu) Report for 2012 and 2013 (2013).

2. <https://rsf.org/en/ranking>
3. www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR14/GGGR_CountryProfiles.pdf

Fact and figures from the youth mobility “scene” in Turkey

Up until 2010, the official youth policy of Turkey was to not have an established youth policy. However, times have changed. Since 2010, the General Directorate of Youth has turned into a Ministry of Youth and Sports. A National Youth and Sports Policy Document has been drafted. Thanks to the highly polarised society, youth has become one of the battle grounds for politics. You can hear a lot of politicians talking about how an “ideal” young person should be.

As anyone can see, youth is one of the hot topics in Turkey. Not because the politicians tend to talk about it more (because they do), but because young lives matter. That is why, in the university, we chose to focus more on the relationship between youth and mobility in one of our projects implemented in 2013.

Based on a series of workshops and research projects that have been implemented through the Network: Participation of Young People in Turkey programme,⁴ the field work of one of the research projects was conducted in May 2013. This is a significant date because just after the field work was finished, the Gezi Park protests gained ground and more than 2.5 million people in Turkey (as this is according to the police records, we multiply this number by two) went out in the streets to protest for two months.



Some 2 508 young people between the ages of 18 and 24 were interviewed for the study and we found out that 64% of young people have been mobile within Turkey. Yet out of those who were not mobile, 40% say even if there is an opportunity they cannot participate due to “obstacles”. These obstacles were lack of permission from parents, resources, etc. Another striking finding was that the ones who were mobile tended to remain mobile.

The findings for mobility outside of Turkey are equally striking. Only 9% of young people have been out of the country. Of those who had gone abroad, 73% could do so with the support of their family, 7% with the support of their employer and only 1% through a mobility programme. We see that men (remember the “obstacles” of the above paragraph?) and young people living outside of their parents’ house tend to be more mobile. In parallel, children of highly educated mothers tend to be more mobile. Thanks to the findings of such field data as well as our experience in the youth work field in Turkey, we know that visas, the price of a passport, funding opportunities, not knowing a second language, education level and other

factors are determinants of youth mobility. In other words, because of the state’s inability to mobilise social support mechanisms for – at least – equal opportunities, young people from middle and upper income backgrounds are more mobile. And yes, it widens the class gap in Turkey.

When you compare this data with other research⁵ results, you see that youth who are more active in a civil society organisation (CSO) tend to be more mobile, thanks to the student exchanges and the support of both CSOs and public institutions. So what does all this tell us? It tells us that promoting and implementing mobility programmes are not enough to fulfil the mission, because the ones who have access to this set of opportunities are sometimes young people who already have access to similar tools. And “young people” are not only young people. This group can be broken down into different categories based on gender, ethnicity, social class and so on. This means that no matter what you imagine as being a full description of a situation involving “young people”, the reality is often way more complex.



illustration by Sirri Taimla



Overcoming the fear of the unknown

Young people with disabilities in the mobilised world

By Triin Ilves

Going abroad is a complex undertaking for people with disabilities. Regular problems double once you have to think of how to access a building, where to live or how to move from one destination to another.

Before starting the big adventure abroad, young people with disabilities have to think of all the previously mentioned access needs, but this doesn't mean that the experience itself should be limited by issues such as the existence of wheelchair ramps or audible traffic lights. Even more so, these questions should definitely not dictate who gets to participate in various mobility programmes, whether it's an exchange to another university, an internship in a company or going abroad to work.



Lana Nikolic and Agnes Sarolta Fazekas



Lana Nikolic, right

Clearly, young people with disabilities face more challenges when they participate in mobility programmes. In addition to the regular application process, the person doesn't need to handle just the additional paperwork, but also he or she must identify the exact needs and requirements of everyday life.

Agnes Sarolta Fazekas, Member of EAIE ACCESS (European Association for International Education Steering Group Access and Diversity) Expert Community, explained that in the application process, a lot depends on the different information the participant or the disability office procures.

It's important to combine information with dialogue. Both the home and host universities need to work together in order to figure out how to best meet access needs.

"Essentially it's bilateral co-operation", said Fazekas, "but you can't forget to include the young person".

What are the requirements in terms of accommodation and study materials to fully participate in classes? A lot of these questions are often answered without consulting the young person, thus creating a situation where access requirements are handled differently than really needed, Fazekas said. Often the situations don't even require substantial changes, but rather small adjustments, Anna Rita de Bonis from VIEWS (Visually Impaired's Educational World Support) Italy explained.

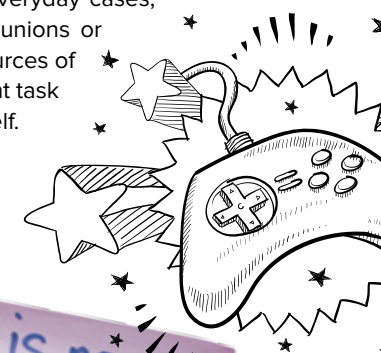
"Every disability type is a story of its own, so preparation is individual," Lana Nikolic from Serbia said. "Predict some of the basic possible problem situations, and make up solutions, try to be prepared as much as possible," she added.

There are also many opportunities that are specifically designed to make going abroad easier. Although in many cases the question of resources, especially financial, is the biggest obstacle, there are additional options for young people with disabilities.

One of the biggest mobility vehicles – the Erasmus programme – offers extra grants for people with disabilities. However, there are still many who are not aware of this, according to Agnes Fazekas.

In 2012-13,¹ 388 students with special needs or disabilities received additional funding to take part in Erasmus exchanges, compared to 336 students in 2011-12. This is only .14% percent of the total Erasmus student population.

Fazekas added that there are also many other grant or funding options and she can see that the network of information and opportunities is becoming wider every day. There are also many pioneering countries in the area, such as Ireland and the UK, but she pointed out that in everyday cases, universities' welfare or disability officers in student unions or student exchange offices are most often the best sources of help for young people with disabilities. The important task here is to find that key person and be active yourself.



There is no such thing in life as normal.
Morrissey

Anna Rita de Bonis pointed out the importance of promotion and sharing the information in more channels. Addressing both the institutions as well as the individuals, it's not enough to merely send out the word to particular participants. In various awareness campaigns, organisations could also include media channels with more coverage.

Linking the personal experience to a wider campaign, young people with disabilities can also find motivation from other people's experiences. "If they can do it, why can't I do it?" However, this is just one part of it, at other times the promotion involves specific issues. For example, on many occasions it depends on the person with a disability to advocate for vocal synthesiser software that allows companies to hire blind people.

Naturally, not all situations can be solved with the help of technology – hiring personal assistants or creating buddy systems require more effort and resources, but once the system is established, it's almost guaranteed that it becomes "the new normal".

STAGE 3:
BECOME THE PROACTIVE LINK IN THE NETWORK CHAIN

1. Erasmus 2012-13: the figures explained. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-476_en.htm

Overcoming the fear of the unknown

Agnes Sarolta Fazekas (left) and Beata Bószó (right)



STAGE 4:
MAKE OTHERS
SEE THE PERSON,
NOT THE
DISABILITY



Illustration by Siri Taimla

However, a simple “no” can still end many journeys. In reality, applying to various internships or work positions in companies can end up with rejection.

In many cases, the river of job opportunities is too narrow for people with disabilities. Moreover, the companies have to start seeing the person first.

“It’s important to apply a ‘yes’ attitude,” Agnes Fazekas said. Only then is it possible to overlook the rejections and swim towards the big fish, in order to become one yourself.

Internship opportunities offer the first real employment experience and are often the building blocks of a successful career. However, Agnes Fazekas stresses that it’s more difficult to do an internship than a study semester abroad because companies often do not have partnerships as universities do. Yet many firms are becoming more aware of how to include a diverse workforce.

“Nobody negates the fact of disability, but it is very important that people understand that a person does something not despite a disability, but in equilibrium with it,” Lana Nikolic said. Sometimes the refusal to employ a person is simple prejudice, other times employers think that they can’t provide a suitable workspace.

According to Anna Rita de Bonis, various associations should also work more towards awareness and change the discourse that a person with a disability is a less-qualified worker.

“Teaching people from companies or programmes about people with disabilities, what they can give and share, and about their professional competences and capacities leads to understanding and wider recognition,” Nikolic added.

The reality in many countries “looks like a still from a science fiction movie,” Lana Nikolic noted.

“We [in Serbia] are all in that youth with disabilities should have equal opportunities. But in reality it is so complicated that no one knows how and where to start. The main problem is that there is no recipe how to act, every disability type is unique in itself,” she added.

Anna Rita de Bonis sees some similarities. She explained that in Italy the state supports people with money, but there are not that many services that could also lead to more inclusion and equal opportunities.

However, giving out money without a cause does not erase the problem. Instead, it should be given to research and promotion. Lana Nikolic underlines the need for comprehensive research projects to find out the most common necessities – training, programmes, support structures and other things that lead to overall empowerment.

Both Agnes Fazekas and Anna Rita de Bonis suggested focusing on information sharing that could encourage and motivate young people.

STAGE 6:
FIND AND
SHARE THE BEST
PRACTICES
AMONG YOUR
PEERS

More good examples emerge every day – Agnes Fazekas recommends looking at EU-wide companies or cases from within the network of relevant organisations. There are also many EU grants to support creating more inclusive work environments, she added.

Listing various initiatives – AHEAD WAM (Association for Higher Education Access & Disability Programme Willing Able Mentoring) from Ireland or ENIL (European Network on Independent Living) Youth Network – Fazekas said that employers are learning what can be done in order to make more the work environment more inclusive.

A lot of ideas come from the disabled people themselves. Adjusting the workplace is usually far easier than the companies imagine. Anna Rita de Bonis gave an example of vocal synthesiser software that lets blind people “see” things on screen.

Lana Nikolic emphasised that empowering youth with disabilities to believe that they can do a lot of things, and that disability is not an obstacle, is a force that pushes them forward.

“When they understand that they will become braver to try and apply to programmes or jobs,” she added.

Agnes Fazekas noted that the concept of a “normal” student doesn’t exist anymore. Therefore, institutions need to overcome the fear of dealing with the unknown. The knowledge of information and support structures gives more independence and encourages a young person with a disability to take steps towards joining the mobility programme.

STAGE 5:
FIGHT WITH
THE (STILL TOO)
GRIM REALITY

STAGE 7:
GAIN THE UPPER
HAND, EMPOWER
YOURSELF AND
SUCCEED IN
THE GAME

1UP



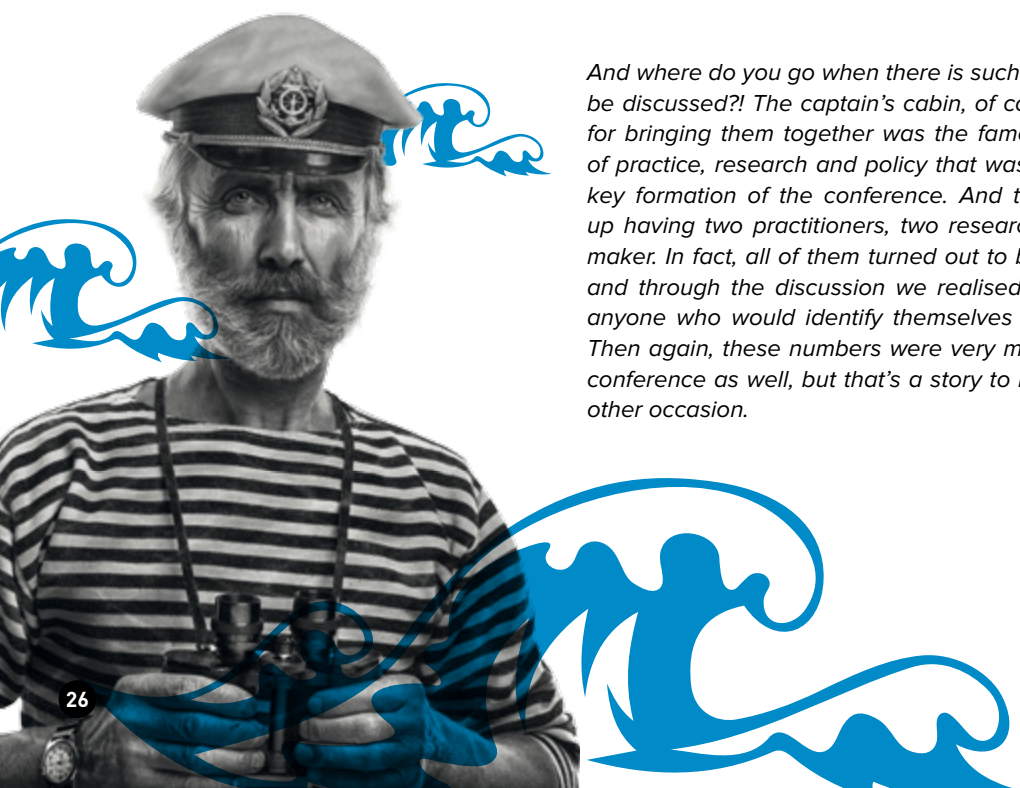


How inclusive is the (Erasmus +) Youth in Action programme?

A triangular perspective from the captain's cabin

By Snežana Bačlija Knoch

On the evening of 8 October, a group of eloquent and dedicated people found themselves cruising on the Bosphorus, surrounded by the magnificent Istanbul lights that were shining through the chilly autumn darkness. Instead of enjoying drinks with their friends and colleagues, they were enthusiastic enough to spend quite a long time talking about some of the most interesting insights that came from the two previous days of various discussions in the context of the European Platform for Learning Mobility in the Youth Field Conference "Learning mobility in the youth field: towards opportunities for all – Evidence, experience, discourse". The main question to be explored by them was: how inclusive is the Youth in Action programme? Or in other words: is the programme walking the talk?!



And where do you go when there is such an important topic to be discussed?! The captain's cabin, of course! The inspiration for bringing them together was the famous "golden triangle" of practice, research and policy that was supposed to be the key formation of the conference. And that's how we ended up having two practitioners, two researchers and one policy maker. In fact, all of them turned out to be a bit of everything and through the discussion we realised that we didn't have anyone who would identify themselves as the policy maker! Then again, these numbers were very much the reality of the conference as well, but that's a story to be explored on some other occasion.

Interviews with...



Chip Veerle Haverhals
Member of the European Scout Committee, WOSM –
World Organization of the Scout Movement

In my role in the European Scout Committee, I am responsible for diversity and inclusion, which means that I am in the lead in taking strategic decisions, what our volunteers on the European level should be doing or should be working on. And on the other side, I am responsible for external relations and funding.

Bob McDougall
Freelance trainer and project manager, UK

I am connected to the field in every way possible. That's all I do. All the training I deliver, all the projects I manage are somehow linked to Erasmus+. And inclusion.

Marti Taru
Researcher, Tallinn University

I've been doing research on young people and youth work, youth policy and more recently, I've been working with evaluation of the Youth in Action programme, through the RAY network.

Tony Geudens.
Project co-ordinator, SALTO
Inclusion Ressource Centre

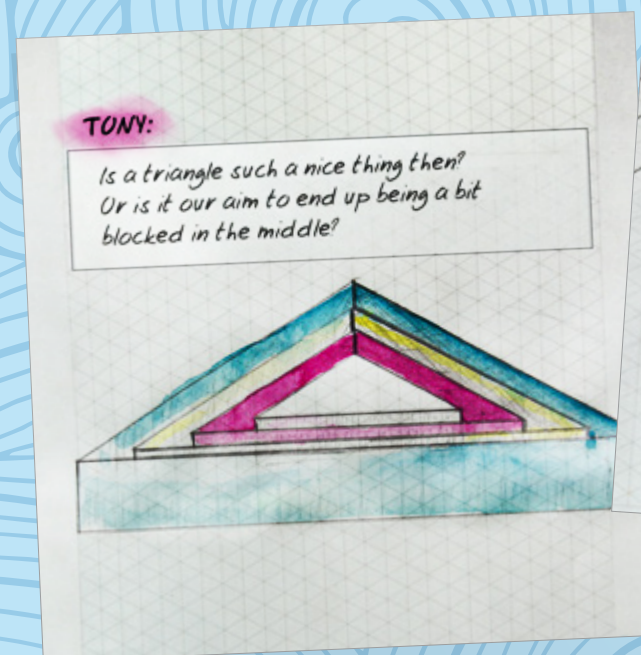
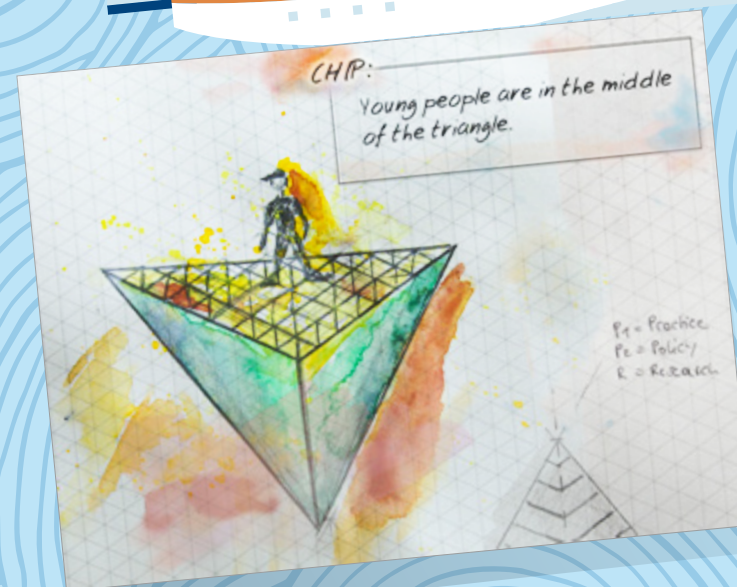
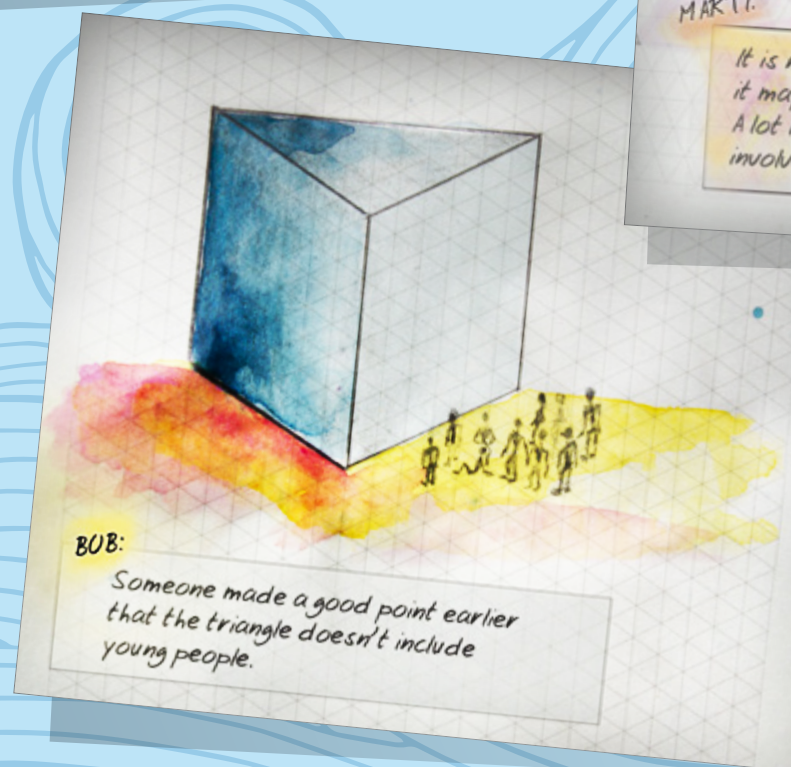
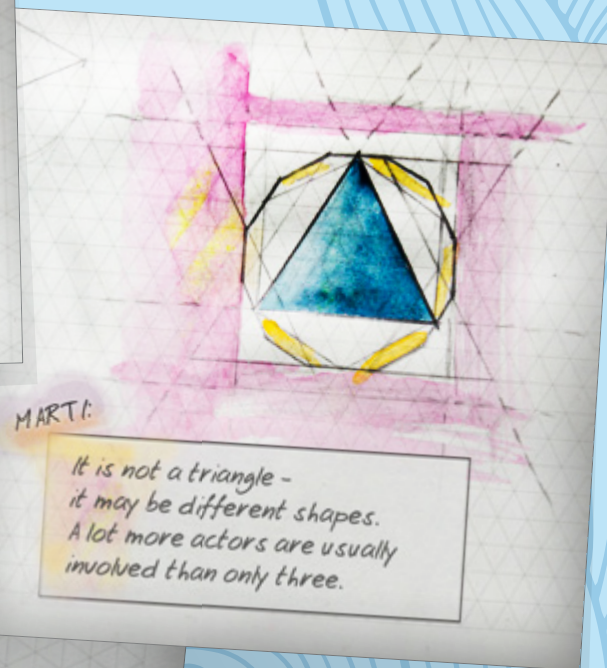
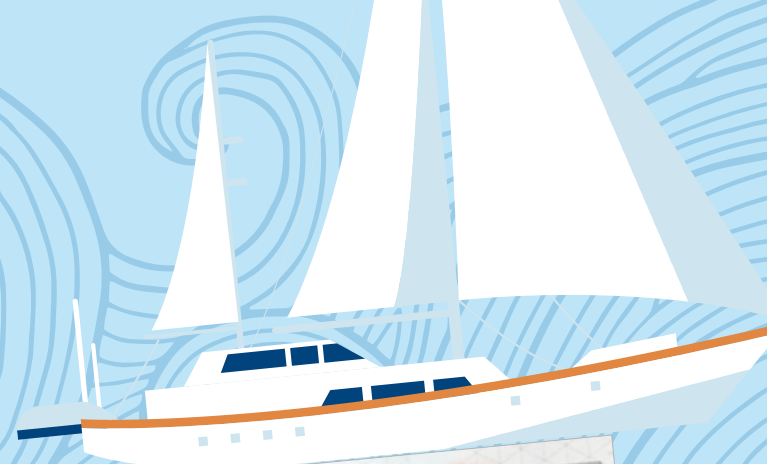
Youth in Action is a very nice programme, but we need to make an extra effort, or have extra activities to make sure that young people with fewer opportunities, who would otherwise not find the way, still can benefit from programmes like Youth in Action. So, the question about accessibility of Youth in Action is very important to us.

Christiane Dittrich
Researcher, Goethe University

I am interested in this topic because I have been a Scout and I had a lot of good experiences while travelling with the Scouts. And now I work on mobility as a research topic and I want to know why there are people who don't travel.

How inclusive is the (Erasmus+) Youth in Action programme?

Minutes after settling into the captain's cabin (after a few giggles and a couple more selfies), the conversation started to flow on its own. Before being asked the first question or even introducing themselves, the participants started to examine the inclusiveness of the golden triangle itself!



How inclusive is the (Erasmus+) Youth in Action programme?

After warming up for a while discussing triangular and other related shapes, the conversation moved to the question that brought us all together to this unique and inspiring environment: how inclusive and accessible is the Youth in Action programme to different groups of young people?

Marti

I think that potentially everyone has a chance to get involved in a mobility programme, but not everyone actually gets involved.

Tony

To me it doesn't matter so much whether you call it accessible or inclusive. The question is whether Youth in Action is adapted to young people with special needs or with fewer opportunities or whatever you want to call them. And I think the projects of Youth in Action, exchanges and volunteering are accessible and very beneficial, as we saw in the RAY data for young people with fewer opportunities. Now, accessibility also sometimes refers to how easy is it to use the programme and I don't think it's for young people with fewer opportunities themselves to go and do all these application forms and all these kinds of things, so there, yes, we can make it more, I would call it, user friendly, also inclusive. It's maybe not so user friendly as it could be or as it has been in the past. There are reasons for this, we got together with all the educational sectors and they like these bigger structures and everything nicely squared off and stuff like that, which is maybe not so adapted to the youth field. But the projects for young people with fewer opportunities, yes they can change lives, just as they do for other groups of young people, I think. The big issue is: have we made it more difficult for organisations who work with the target groups? And then I think, yes, maybe, something went wrong there or we still have to streamline that part and make it more user friendly.

IT'S VERY NECESSARY TO HAVE PLATFORMS WHERE WE CAN INTEGRATE RESEARCHERS' KNOWLEDGE TO PRACTITIONERS, LIKE EPIM



IT'S NOT SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER HERE, BUT IT'S WHAT'S NEEDED

Bob

I would tend to agree with that, when you are talking about the organisations. But what it comes down to is the choice that an organisation makes: is it an inclusive organisation or an organisation that offers opportunities to young people who approach them? I don't even think that the programme needs to make itself more accessible, the organisations need to choose what their priority is. I mean, yes, there are difficulties within the programme and the way that it's funded which make it harder for the organisations to focus on inclusion, but it's up to organisations to make the decision on what their priority is.



Chip

Exactly. I also have the feeling that the weight of being inclusive or not is completely on our shoulders, on the shoulders of the organisations. It depends on our projects, on what we decide and how we sell also our products. And maybe even if sometimes you are being inclusive in your project, but you don't reflect on it in, let's say, in the project like by writing it down in the application, you might even miss an opportunity to get some support. So we feel like that it became a sort of a trend, when you write, please quickly include something that sounds nice about being diverse and inclusive.

Chip

Because you will get it and it is often really true that maybe the main focus is not there, it is one of the tools, one of the means of these training programmes, of these events, but not the main focus. Which, also, in my opinion should not always be the main focus. But what if we don't focus anymore on this, as a huge organisation, then they wouldn't reach these people anymore and research would no longer have numbers.

Oh, because you are more likely to get the funding if it ticks a box?

Bob

How inclusive is the (Erasmus+) Youth in Action programme?

What about financial difficulties? For example, lack of financial support for European Voluntary Service (EVS) hosting and sending? Or very high travel (and visa) costs, in particular for some countries and/or regions that are totally disproportionate to what the programme offers? Even if it is expected from the organisations to fundraise locally, in many cases that is just not possible.

Chip

The support structures are mainly structures, but where is the support? To do the applications, you, as a volunteer movement, need staff or professionals to fill it in. And then again, there are structures, yes, but erase the word support because the support is not really there.

Christiane

I think there is support, there is also financial support, but if you don't know that you can get financial support from these structures, you may not even bother to contact them.

Bob

I've seen many practical examples of people who have come to the UK on an EVS for example and complained about the cost of visas, but also on the whole process of having to travel to the embassy and all that. And all those costs are eligible to be covered, but, if the applicant didn't realise that, then they wouldn't think to apply for it. And that's almost "make or break" for some projects.

Tony

Yes, there is a lot more responsibility on the youth organisations, support structures, whatever you call them, and it's a missed chance that the programme makes access relatively difficult, so we will only reach the ones that are really into it, converted and stuff like that. If it were easier, then it would be more accessible.



Illustration by Sirri Taimla



photo by Marlies Pöschl

Are there any data (we saw some from the RAY network today, whose validity you argued about) or other research that would prove in a way that the programme is inclusive?

Marti

Not that I know of. There are no quality data that could be used for evaluating whether those who really need to be are included in the programme or not. There are data of course, but that data, as it stands now, would not give a very reliable or valid answer to the question. So we do not actually have a solid, empirical basis for analysis. Although we have something, yes, that is true.

Like I was saying before, there is also such a broad spectrum of who is considered to be disadvantaged. Like the people at the thin end of the wedge, would they be able to access the programme?

Bob

Christiane

I think that's a good point, because there is also the question: why should everybody travel? Why should everybody be mobile? So I think there needs to be more research about what young people think about youth mobility. And maybe you, or we, should ask people who are not mobile why they aren't.

Tony

But then we get back to the discussion that it's not an aim in itself, it's a tool. If youth workers or social workers see that it could be a lever for a young person to either stay out of trouble or get back on track or blossom or whatever, then use it. But indeed the question is not why don't all people go on a mobility programme, because maybe for some it's not an issue. They are just happy under the church tower, as we say in Dutch.

As I could ask why you are all not joining the Scout movement as it's sometimes really a personal choice. You don't like the scarf? [everybody laughs] I think sometimes we are also just being inclusive without noticing certain things and then not communicating about it. I think one of the strong points in our organisation is, for example, working with disabled persons. We have really strong programmes, and we do good things and we are working completely inclusively. Our local units work with all young people together or, if necessary, they have separate local units for those with special needs, very much focused on the individual needs of each person, but still enjoying the youth programmes or the Scout programme. But maybe we don't have the need or we don't see the need to communicate about it, to make it recognised, or to get involved with the policy makers or researchers. So maybe sometimes we do some things without shouting it out to the world: we do it, we do it!

Chip

How inclusive is the (Erasmus+) Youth in Action programme?



photo by Marlies Pöschl

Marti

I think the need to document outcomes and results is also very much linked to the need to be accountable to someone. So if you use public money then you have to prove that you really get value out of that money. But if you don't use public money, then it's your own business what you do with money and how you use it.

That's a really good point. We are accountable as organisations using public money, we have to report on our projects and we have to see if we have met the aims that we wrote in the application. But, the separate issue that I have is how seriously is that taken? When our national agency is reading our final report, as far as I can tell, they don't look into the quality so much, they are counting the receipts and making sure that the money is accounted for. We ask them to come and see our projects so often: "Come along, see what we are up to, we are really interested to see what you think of what we are doing." They are not interested in that. They are much more interested in making sure that we got all our boarding passes. So, yes, you are right, we should be accountable, but to whom?

Bob

We talked about how inclusive or accessible the programme is, but another question is, in the long run, does it really, as a tool, help young people? Does it empower young people with fewer opportunities and then include them in their communities back home? Do you think that is an effect of the programme?

Bob

I think that, yes, it can be extremely beneficial, but it's not necessarily a foregone conclusion that it will be. I think you need to put effort into it. It can be even more beneficial in my experience for someone with support needs to do a programme like this, but again the organisations need to put the effort in, to make sure that there are follow-up activities. They may want to do something else, but with a little more responsibility next time, so that they are followed right through the process and it doesn't just turn into a holiday.

I of course agree, but I just want to point out another aspect to that. Tony has mentioned several times that this is just a tool which makes you think, but what is the goal then? Obviously, one of the goals is the change in the individuals who participate, but there could also be other kinds of goals, at the societal or collective levels. For instance, a lower unemployment rate is definitely one of the goals which are very important in youth policy at the European level, and also at national level with school dropout rates and voter participation. Health could be, but isn't for some reason, mental health especially. So definitely these could be alternative goals or goals in addition to the dominant ones. But, in any case, there is a difference between individual goals and goals for society as a whole. And even if you are successful at the individual level, and there actually is quite a lot of proof that for those who participate in the programme participation is beneficial, it's still might be that at the level of society, the change is marginal, if there is any change at all.

Marti

To go back and also try to wrap up, is there anything you would like to add, not just about changes at the societal level, but whether young people feel more comfortable, more empowered to participate?

Bob

There was some research done last year specifically about EVS and employability: where the NGOs and co-ordinating organisations were surveyed, as were ex-volunteers and employers. It was basically to find out the skills and competences that you gain during an EVS placement and whether they are transferable and usable in the employment world. But the information gathered, from volunteers specifically, was quite useful as it compared skills that they had before their placement, skills they have now and to what extent they feel that they are more skilled in certain areas or whatever. So there is that research that exists.

There is a lot of research on the change of attitudes and beliefs. That is relatively easy to measure, easy to capture. But whether that actually changes behaviour, especially at least to increased probability of finding a job or continuing education, we're still a few steps away from finding out. There are other factors which also influence whether you get a job or not or whether you drop out of education or not. Even if there is proof that participation brings about a change in attitudes, it is only one factor. Therefore, you cannot be sure that behavioural changes will follow.

Marti

Chip

Over the last 15 years, we have discovered that, if people go on an international exchange or international projects, Jamboree for example, to talk in Scout terms, these young people, whether at the age of 15 or as a young leader at 22 years old, they stay longer in the Scout movement and they volunteer longer and are more likely, when they leave the Scout movement, to do something relevant to volunteering. We don't know why.

Christiane

I think it's because they are identified with an organisation and also they had the feeling that they were getting respect, that there were loved by the people from the organisation and maybe they don't get that at home. And I think if they get to know this, they will come back, because it's a good feeling.

Bob

So you are saying no one is ever truly altruistic?

Tony

The only thing... the reason why we do things is because we want to be loved.

Bob

Come here... :D

Chip

Where can I like this? Can you put it on Facebook?



How inclusive is the (Erasmus+) Youth in Action programme?

And with a little bit of warmth, fun and love, our magical time in the captain's cabin was over. There was no better way to end the conversation among incredibly invested and passionate people, who got very cosy in their new setting, supported by warm and approving looks and nods from our Turkish-speaking captain.

Have we managed to answer the question of how inclusive the Youth in Action programme is? Probably not, since there are a lot of aspects to be considered in making the final verdict. But hopefully the dialogue captured on these pages can give you some additional insight from very different perspectives.

That said, we are also aware that our "triangle" was not perfect and that are so many voices that deserve and, in fact, need to be heard on this question. Young people (beneficiaries of the programme) were highlighted by all of our participants in the conversation, but not only! So, if you have an opinion to whether, from your experience, the programme walks the talk, please do share it with us! We look forward to hearing from you!

Munchausen's approach to youth work by Marti Taru

There was a mythical figure, Munchausen, who pulled himself out of the bog by his hair. In statistics there is also a term: bootstrapping, which basically refers to the same thing. Pull yourself out from the mud, by your hair, for instance. The thing is, to do this, you use your resources only, you do not get anything from outside. And I was just thinking that youth work is very much in the same position. To get recognition, youth work has to pull itself out by its hair. So if you really believe that this is a thing that is worth doing, you just need to continue doing it. Because to provide some kind of scientific proof that it's really, really beneficial will be very, very hard. It takes a lot of time. And it might be that in real life it is much easier to pull yourself up by your own hair instead of waiting until the researchers come and prove that youth work is really worth doing.



Training plan for youth work – Inclu-fit & Mobi-Dance

By Triin Ilves and Marlies Pöschl

photos by Marlies Pöschl



It's January, Christmas is over, the cookies are gone, the plates are empty. Youth work looks at herself in the mirror, anxiously: "Have I got out of shape? Have I become rigid? Big? Exclusive?"



"I need to work on myself!" she thinks and jumps onto on the treadmill of self-optimisation. "Luckily, last year in Istanbul, a few people worked out a training plan, specifically for me. My very own personal Inclu-Fit & Mobi-Dance – a training plan for inclusiveness and mobility in youth work. What a privilege! I'm curious to see if it works," thinks youth work.

By sharing a few tips on how to get youth work on the track to inclusiveness, participants of the EPLM Conference had the chance to become mentors for youth work's special Inclu-Fit & Mobi-Dance. Each of them suggested one simple exercise or thought experiment. Here we go!

Jump and watch out

We should all be jumping, so that we can see over walls; walls we usually don't even see anymore but that are keeping excluded people out. Jump, so you can see further and allow yourself to see the hurdles that young people have to overcome.

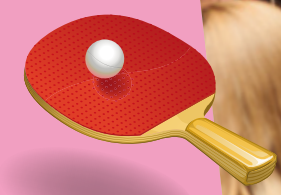
JO DEMAN
EUROPEAN YOUTH
FORUM, BRUSSELS



Give everyone a racket

In table tennis, there are usually only two people playing, and the other people might get bored. But there is a version in which more people get rackets and all the players move around the table. They are always mobile and their roles are constantly changing so that everybody gets to play, and everybody becomes involved.

ROMANA MYSULA
JECI-MIEC, UKRAINE



Training plan for youth work — Inlu-Fit & Mobi-Dance



SUSANNE HAUER
ALLIANZ KULTURSTIFTUNG,
GERMANY

Move forward step by step

I think inclusion is a process in which you can only be successful if you move step by step and that needs to be put into practice in sustainable ways.



Travel through the world with open eyes

On the one hand it's about inclusiveness and about the ability to travel through the world even if you are disadvantaged. On the other hand it's about travelling with open eyes – not closing your eyes to other cultures and people.

SANDRA TÜRK
REISENETZ, GERMANY

Don't forget: stretching works for some, but doesn't work for others

To reach some parts of the body, you need extra effort. Inclusion also needs extra effort to reach some young people, but it's worth it. We're healthier afterwards. If you don't stretch your muscles enough, they might block. So stretching is very important for the entire body. If you just build muscles and you don't stretch, your muscles might break, just as youth work risks failing if we don't make sure to stretch out to those that are excluded.



STEFAN MANEVSKI
CENTRE FOR INTERCULTURAL
DIALOGUE, "THE FORMER YUGOSLAV
REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA"

**JACQUES
SPELEKENS**
ENGIE, BRUSSELS

Increase flex-security

In order to make sure mobility is inclusive, we have to train young people's flex-security. It's like training someone to walk on a slackline, so he or she can do it while blindfolded. It will give him or her security to do the same thing in a different environment.



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Keep the balance between different language levels

Your background language is very important in terms of inclusiveness. Your mother language as well as exposure to the English language could mean a lot to your language skills. Living and working in the European Union, people tend to use mostly English or French, not taking into account that the levels of either one of them are still quite different in different parts of Europe. So that even knowing a language doesn't necessary mean that you are included by default. Therefore we should acknowledge that there are different levels of language knowledge but also different language backgrounds that can make learning new languages easier or more difficult.

SASHA MURR
UNITED KINGDOM



MARK E. TAYLOR
COYOTE TEAM,
STRASBOURG

Clean your ears

If you want to include something, you have to make space. For example: clean your ears.

**CHRISTIANE
DITTRICH**
GERMANY



Do it regularly!

My training exercise is more of an after-workout one. You stretch your body and in order to do that, you need two people for the exercise. It's also an exchange and collaboration between them. This is also an exercise you do more and more – you practise and get better over time. When you do things more than once, you get more out of it.

"What a workout," thinks youth work. Stretching, jumping, flexing, stretching, bouncing against walls...

What is this chase all about?

There are times when we, youth workers could try and jump over the walls, but we should keep in mind that sometimes creating a sphere of inclusiveness would be easier if we erased certain boundaries rather than teaching everyone else to overcome them. Or what if we just changed the rules of the game? The one with the longest legs does not necessarily need to be the winner – as we learned in the fairy tale "The hedgehog and the hare". In a race with the light-footed rabbit, the hedgehog uses a ploy. He just asks his wife to hide near the goal, and, as the hare appears running, she jumps out of her hiding place and shouts: "I am here already!"

"Maybe I'm more of a team player anyway," youth work thinks as she takes off her shoes.



Learning *through* mobility: the story of Habib, an asylum seeker from Iran

As told to **Tali Padan**

(Please note, the interviewee asked to change his name for the purposes of this article.)

I am, and have always been, stateless. I was born in Afghanistan and moved to Iran when I was very little. Afghans in Iran are not as respected as Iranians, and there were many things that we could not do, just because of our nationality. For example, I couldn't continue with my studies after high school, because Afghans needed a much higher mark than Iranians to get into university. I started working, but Afghans also get paid much less than Iranians and get treated much worse.



One day, when I was about 21 years old, I was working in a factory, and my uncle told me that he was leaving Iran for Turkey and then Europe.

We were close, me and my uncle, and I got sad, because I also wanted to go, but I didn't have the money, and my family was very strict. After he told me this, I stopped working and didn't talk to anyone for three days. I finally called him and told him I wanted to go with him. He agreed to let me come, and I was surprised that my family also agreed, as long as I could borrow the money from relatives. I spent an intense week gathering as much money as I could to pay smugglers to make the trip to Turkey and then Greece. When I was leaving, my family were all crying, but I couldn't turn back, because I had already made the decision to go.

We met in Tehran and took a taxi to the border, about 10 hours. We stayed at the border for about one week, with a lot of people who were making the same trip. They didn't really care about us, gave us a little food and a little water, and finally told us we can walk across the border, and it will take us two or three hours. In reality, it took us 12 hours, and we walked through a difficult path in the mountains. I was tired, stressed, thirsty and hungry, and I remember hearing shooting in the mountains; I was very scared. We finally made it to a city near the border and stayed there for two weeks and waited for the smugglers to take us to Istanbul. We stayed in Istanbul for two weeks in a small place that we didn't leave very often, because it was too dangerous to leave.

One day in Istanbul when we were outside the apartment, we saw people talking to policemen about us, and the policemen started shouting in our direction. I told everyone to run, and we all ran through the streets of Istanbul. I ended up hiding under a car, and the rest of the group got stuck in an alley, and I watched from under the car as they were arrested by the police. I stayed under the car

for a while, and when it was quiet, I got out. I was alone in the middle of the city and had no idea where I was or how to get back to the apartment. I had some money, and I also had the phone number for the smuggler in Iran, so I went to a kiosk and bought a calling card to call him. I couldn't speak much English then, so the smuggler talked to the kiosk worker, and they arranged for a taxi to pick me up and take me back to the apartment.

When I finally got back to the apartment, my uncle and the rest of the people were there, and we were so happy to see each other. They all had to pay the Turkish police and then were released on the spot. A week later, we went to the Greek border, where there was a river that we had to pass. I heard a lot about this river, that many people drowned in it, and they filled up rubber boats for us to cross. We made it to Greece, where we went to the police to get registered, and then we took the bus to Athens. I still felt I wanted to keep going and not stay in Greece, but in Athens we had to pay the smugglers. My uncle and I talked about not paying the smugglers, or paying less, because the journey was so dangerous and we had to pay the Turkish police. One of the smugglers heard us and asked us to come with him, so he can give us a place to stay. I didn't have a good feeling about this, but we went with him. When we got to the place, the smuggler locked the door behind us and took us to a room, which only had a TV and about eight guys, with knives, swords and guns. The room smelled of blood. One of the guys said: "You don't want to pay us, do you think we are stupid?", and took the TV and threw it at my uncle. Then the fighting started. Three of them came to me, punching and kicking, and the rest were beating up my uncle. When it ended, I saw my uncle was very bloody and had a knife wound in his back. We paid them the money, and my uncle was taken to the hospital, but I had to stay so they could make sure we didn't escape or call the police. We stayed there for one week.



Learning through mobility: the story of Habib, an asylum seeker from Iran



My uncle finally decided not to continue with the journey, but I wanted to keep going. We agreed that I would keep going, and my uncle would make the journey back to Iran. He tried to convince me to go back with him, but I wanted to keep going. I stayed in Greece for eight months and tried many times to leave the country. I was in and out of prison because of my many attempts to leave. Finally, I went with a smuggler to a forest, where I stayed for two nights, and then a very small boat came to us. We were around 40 people there, but many people were too scared to get on this small boat and knew they would drown if they got on. We ended up being 12 people, including myself, on the boat.

I was happy to be on the boat, and the waters were calm, but when night came, the waves got bigger and bigger. I had never been on a boat in the middle of a sea like this, and I was really scared. The other people were screaming because the waves got so big, and it was raining, and I thought this would be the end. I didn't know how to swim, and I thought I would definitely die here.

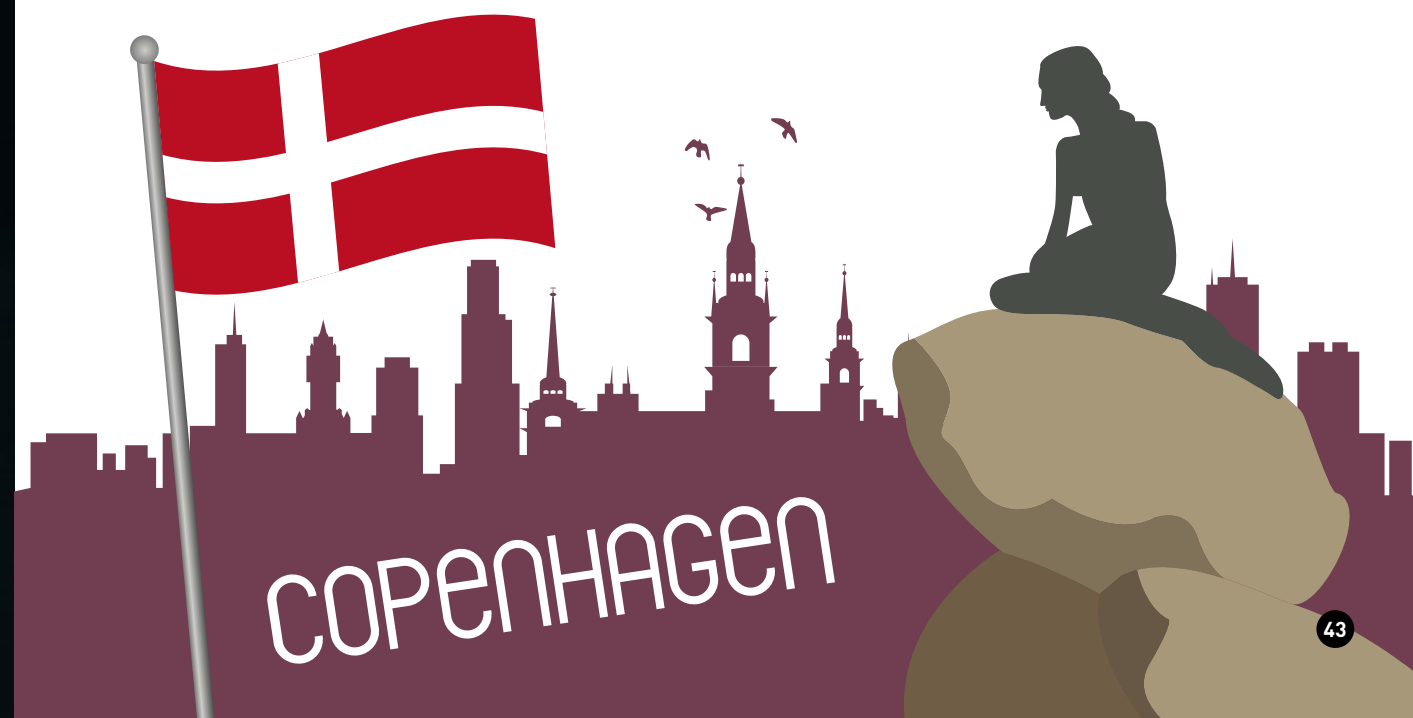
After 8 hours on the water, we saw the lights from Italy. When I got off the boat, I was just happy to be alive. I thought – I don't care if I get asylum or if I have to go back to Iran, I'm just happy to be alive. The Italian police picked us up and sent us to a camp, but I escaped from there to go to Rome. From Rome, I took a train to Paris, where I slept one night on the street, and then I took the next possible train to Cologne, Hamburg and finally Copenhagen.



What did I learn on this journey? I am so happy to have been able to get out of my small and closed environment and meet people from different cultures and different places. Before, I didn't know anyone from another culture. I had never seen anyone from Africa, or Asia, or even a Sunni Muslim. I come from a very conservative Shiite Muslim community. Through meeting different people, I realised that everyone believes their own truth. This made me think for a long time about what religion really is. It brought up a lot of questions, and I could no longer think my religion has to be the "right one", especially when one type of religion makes you hate people from another type of religion. I saw how religion mixes with politics and how brainwashed you can be. I started to listen to other people and their truths, and I opened up and made space for people to express what they feel is true.

Because I had this dangerous journey, I was almost forced to learn, spontaneously, through these experiences. I think I am lucky, in a way, to have survived and learned all of this, but I would also like it to be combined with knowledge you can learn without fear and danger. Imagine if all these international organisations that are giving opportunities to people to go abroad would help people that must get out of their countries. This would be a nice combination of spontaneous and planned learning, and would be truly inclusive.

Immigration and mobility are big journeys in life that can change your learning process in many ways. I feel like I got more than I expected. I didn't expect to learn so much, and that this learning would be the most important part of the journey. The most important lesson was in being open to other people and other cultures – this is something that has not left me, and I practise it every day in Denmark. The more we open the borders, the more people will have the opportunity to gain this learning experience and this openness to accept and welcome others.





Conveyor belt poem

By **Daniel Briggs**



In a key note speech at the conference, Daniel Briggs presented his perspective on inclusion by offering a critical look at our system and how it is designed to reproduce the same structural inequalities year after year, as in a conveyor belt. This poem captures some of this sentiment, including the frustration and anger felt because of these constraints, especially in light of the mass movement of migrants into Europe and the suffering that they must endure because of these structural inequalities.

It's funny how fate,
Can turn in your favour,
As against you oscillate.
Can provoke self-hate.
Yet, just like a bet...
It can you create.
A gamble on debt,
Nothing to lose,
Can cancel the threat.
Like speaking the unspoken,
At a forum,
Where the norm,
Is this weird polite form,
Like established decorum.
And to say what's been said,
Is like a flock of sheep,
After the shepherd tread.
And to do what's been done,
Is as original as none.

And I suppose that's why,
I was invited,
To stimulate or to try,
Not because I was cited,
(Though I was delighted)
Tenth on the list.
To a conference, assist,
To offer a twist...
And here is my case,
And what it consist.

"It is about young people,
And how their mobility,
In an education industry,
Is mobilised by ideology,
A meritocratic philosophy,
A middle class notion,
To stoke drive and devotion,
To kickstart the idle,
And that self-improvement,
Is logical promotion,
Where personal investment,
Is worthy testament,
A measure of success,
And internalised assessment,
Seen socially as best."

"But to suppose is wrong,
That all those young,
Bear this human capital,
To make this move tactical,
To the cultural goal,
To make their life practical,
Is outside their control."

"For either they live,
On the one hand,
In city wastelands,
Sold a dream of inclusion,
In a life of exclusion,
Yet this is what politics,
Had for them planned.

Yet unemployment is rising,
Inequality oversizing,
The companies downsizing,
The corporations devising,
Their spending plans revising,
Leaving surplus populations,
In a cycle of frustrations,
Resubmitting applications,
Or file for benefit,
And not get it definite,
So millions remain spare,
Not here, not there,
Not anywhere or anywhere.
Which is why countless,
Are commercially swayed,
Where others obeyed.
And end up believing,
All the time perceiving,
That qualifications and courses,
Build CVs enormous,
And calls with job offers,
They will be receiving..."

illustration by Siri Taimla

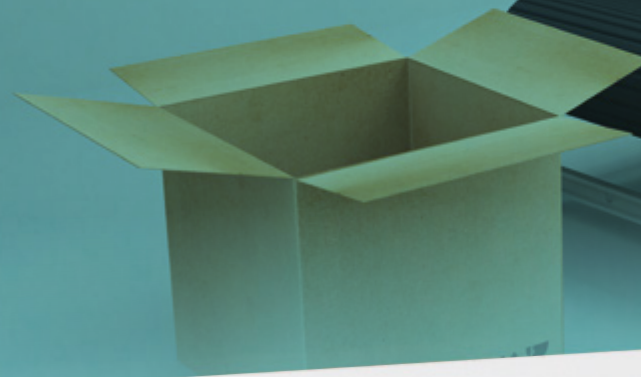


illustration by Siri Taimla

Conveyor belt poem



“...But this is deceiving.”

“Then on the other,
And even more precarious,
Is a group more various,
Who come from all over,
From countries war-torn,
Where the chances of death,
Are present when born.
Regimes which send teams,
To bomb their own people,
To violent extremes.
They ran from their land,
And this is how politics,
In their misery had a hand.
Now a miscalculated sundry,
Just like e-mail,
Ignored until Monday,
Yet at borders they poise,
Where thousands make noise,
Even washed up dead boys,
Does not deter them away,
While at the Commission,
They chat over latte.”

“And yet this is the existence,
From which we have distance.
Such is our lifeworld,
So individualistically reduced,
That what happens to ‘me’,
Is only of concern.
It is what we now learn.
For we are now wedged,

In a commercial life fledged,
And the pastime to pass time,
Away from this corruption,
Are in spaces of consumption,
Which inhibit our gumption,
And reduce critical assumption,
Cancel out questioning,
And the important issues, pressing.
And in popular cultural depictions,
Are the nail-bar addictions,
And narcissistic afflictions,
A generation living in fictions.
The meritocratic subscriptions,
Of a life worth lived,
Advertised on placards,
To be spent on credit cards,
Places been, celebrities seen,
But what does it mean?
A socially weighted envy,
Sold to us trendily,
To get lost in malls,
And spend without thinking,
And experiment with drugs,
All the night, drinking,
The investment to tell,
Clouds the reality that dwell.
And this is the spell,
That is to people sold, well,
In android phones,
And Facebook statuses,
In online forums,
No concern for tomorrow,
Because today is ‘awesome.’”

“This is the omen,
That talks candidly Bauman.
So when problems are seen,
They can be turned off on TV.
Because it doesn’t affect ‘me’ directly,
It cannot be real, correctly.
So the beggar on the street,
Made poor life decisions,
Could not quite compete,
And let himself deplete.
And the job I don’t have,
Doesn’t belong to the chav,
But some Eastern European,
‘Who’s over ‘ere stealin’,
‘Or asylum appealin’.
So the education I ‘flunked’,
Was because I was drunked,
Duped into this thinking...
In disbelief blinking,
Because at graduation,
Reality is at me winking.
But I can study a Master,
And on a conveyor belt run,
Just to get ‘there’ faster,
Yet when I get off,
I still don’t have much.
The horizon still distant,
While the rainbow persistent,
And it I still can’t touch.”

Illustration by Sirri Taimla

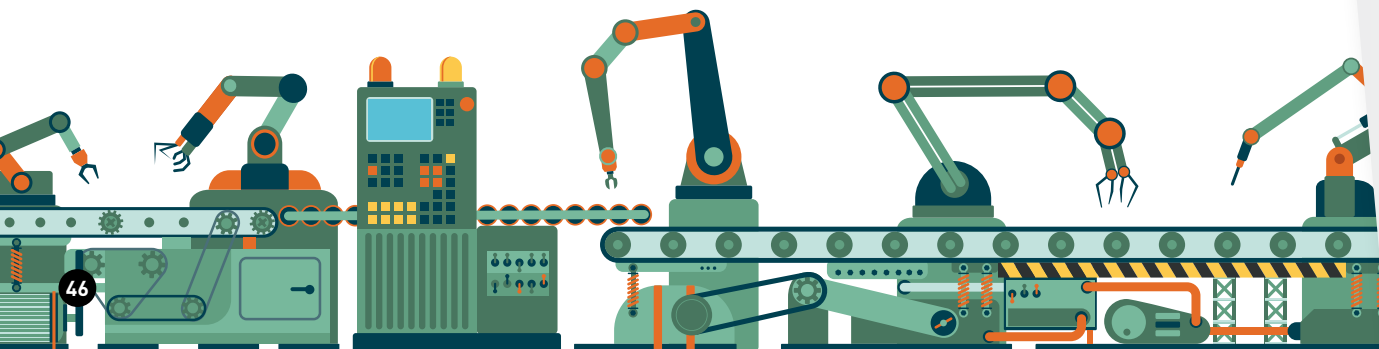


Illustration by Sirri Taimla

“And we can sit around tables,
With our names on labels,
Tell of our good work,
And the youth it enables.
But all the while storing,
Are these things said here,
That we are ignoring.
And our efforts,
As supposed experts,
Should be to admit,
Before being able,
To honestly commit.
It is to this reality,
That we should submit.”

And after all this,
Some said what I said,
Was fantastic and great.
But that is not the debate.
Even though in Istanbul.
I turned up late...
But I wasn’t sightseeing.
Nor at the tables with labels,
Nodding in agreement.
I was with young Syrians,
Which is thinking ahead,
Because the future of Europe,

Is where they have fled.
Because of our damage,
Now this is our challenge.
So rather waiting for rain,
To turn to storm,
We should not weather it,
As it clouds over fast,
We should together it,
We should it forecast.

And I know I’m part of it,
So write me the chapters,
Where I turn on my discipline,
And turn all septic.
And attack, epileptic...
To infect them implicitly,
In the pomp written explicitly,
About their “humanity”,
Is mere ugly vanity,
Of conferences, of “relations”,
Of prestige and citations,
And career-climbing migrations.
To be Professor,
And let it be known?
But I just like history,
And how it had grown.

I just believe in people,
It is really that simple,
And be it how it will,
Until I lay still...
For at my funeral,
Many assemble,
Not in my excellence,
Do they resemble.
Nor in my propensity,
For philosophical density,
Nor my writing intensity.
They are there,
Because they care.
Be they one,
Be they none.
I was here,
Then I’m done.

**And even in my grave,
Where I have true peace,
This mess will cease,
For when we fall hard...
We will rise up,
And when all goes down,
Is when we will rise up.**



Fix the system or ourselves?

By Tali Padan

For every person that gets the opportunity of a learning mobility programme, there are thousands that don't. For every person that gets the opportunity to complete high school, there are thousands that won't. And for every person that has a job in a European institution there are millions that are not employed by such a governmental body. Before we decide if that is "bad" and then attempt to fix it, let's spend a bit more time looking, without fixing.



There is an immediate judgment on who has "more opportunity" and who has less, on who is disadvantaged and underprivileged. The unemployed, Roma young person, for example, is inevitably labelled this way. Instead of looking at who is behind this label, let's take a look at the labels themselves: more opportunities, advantaged/disadvantaged, privileged/underprivileged. We need to ask the following questions: the opportunity to do what? Advantage for what? Privilege to do what? Is it a privilege to have a well-paying job? Is the advantage in making money? Having a job? Having a degree? Do we all have the same opportunity to be happy?

One thing we humans have in common is our search for happiness. Somewhere along the way, we started thinking that **having** will get us this happiness. Having a relationship, having a job, having a degree. Rather than loving, working, learning, we see these things as objects to be owned. Instead of living, we spend our time planning how to "have a life". Instead of being, we focus on what to become. Based on what we want to have, we spend a lot of time planning a future that we imagine for ourselves, and if that future arrives, we are too busy planning the next future to even see it. We want freedom but we are imprisoned by our own beliefs. Perhaps true happiness lies not in **having freedom** but in freedom from **having**. Many people find their most peaceful moments when they are unattached to both the future and the past; when they are free from thoughts about what they need to become in order to be happy.



This kind of freedom has little to do with how much education you have, what kind of job you have or how much money you have. In fact, such "havings" can even be further distractions from this freedom. Our belief in having is a cultural conditioning which we forget to question as simply a belief – a thought that the mind gets attached to. The media help with this conditioning, as do our parents and our schools – by preparing us to become something, to get a job, to be important, to own a house, even to **have** a family. You only have to listen to the voice in your head to hear how much it takes over – the voice that is planning what's next, the voice that tells you what is missing, the voice that is now saying: "I agree with you, but".

Therefore, the conversation about how to better include the disadvantaged into social mobility programmes requires some more exploration. Travel and mobility are accepted as learning experiences, but we also have examples that prove the opposite – people that have been on exchange programmes and have strengthened their stereotyped ideas of others, or their national identities. There are also those who have never left their country but somehow have the wisdom and strength to question their assumptions about other cultures.

Rather than seeking a solution, I find it worthwhile to examine the problem just a bit longer. What is it that we are trying to solve? The intention seems to be to level the playing field and give equal opportunities to all for learning mobility programmes. This is a noble cause. And it also provides an opportunity to look further into where we would like to include people – not through research or statistics, but through examining what motivates us. What kind of learning do we value? What is it that we want more people to have the opportunity to learn?

From my experience, it is the "unlearning" that makes the most difference. In our divided world, filled with separation, division and conflict, more knowledge and information are not really leading us towards peace. Learning through mobility programmes only "works" if you question your assumptions, not if you strengthen them. This kind of unlearning breaks down your borders, so as to see less of a difference between "you" and the "other". That this happens through a learning mobility programme is hard to guarantee, and it depends on many factors, most crucially the experiences and maturity level of the participant. This maturity level cannot be predicted from their socioeconomic background.

If the young person is ready to have their beliefs questioned, and through the learning mobility programme becomes more open, trusting and inclusive, this naturally impacts others. While the attempt to make these programmes more inclusive is generous and comes from good intentions, this conversation might be blocking us from looking at some more fundamental questions – inclusion into what? Learning what? Which belief system do we value? Who are the "disadvantaged" and what are their disadvantages? These questions are important because they help us focus on what is important. Rather than jumping towards the answers, let us linger in the questions for a little bit longer, contemplate and turn them around in our heads. **That** may be the most inclusive thing we can do.





The lonesome rider..

By Jacques Spelekens



When I received the first e-mail regarding the Istanbul EPLM Conference, in the early days of April 2015, I was not only surprised that people remembered me after my first speeches delivered at the Council of Europe and European Youth Card Association (EYCA) about “mobility in the mind”, but I was also very astonished that I got invited – as a representative of the “business world” – to a conference dedicated to “learning mobility” in the youth field.

Whether in Strasbourg or in Andorra, I’ve always felt I was a “lonesome rider”, a black sheep among hundreds of representatives of official European bodies, NGOs, associations, foundations and official institutions – all of them dedicated to thinking about similar issues and trying to suggest innovative and creative solutions, or at least guidelines towards innovative and creative solutions.

The world of “business” was amazingly absent at those gatherings, which always appeared to me as clusters of people sharing very similar thoughts, and very few action plans. And this in spite of the fact that the final outcome (and the main issue) was, and still is: how can we develop young people’s skills (pupils, students, trainees) through promoting mobility programmes (among other ideas) so that they easily meet the requirements of business? Getting young people to start a business or at least to work in a company is the final purpose of all these endeavours.



During both previous opportunities I had to focus on the need for closer relationships between the worlds of education, training, work and associations. I had the strong feeling that there was an overall consensus on the subject and that things would inevitably improve in the coming years. That was in the early months of 2013. Two years later, when I received the invitation to participate in a workshop on “learning mobility” in the youth field, I said to myself: “Great! They eventually understood the need for co-elaboration!”¹

To my great surprise, when I arrived at the conference premises near Taksim Square in Istanbul, the “revolution” I hoped to witness at the EPLM was merely an “evolution” (without the “r”). Indeed, when I had a glimpse at the participants list, things suddenly became clear to me (again). Once more, I would be the “lonesome rider” for another three-day conference!

I was certainly disappointed. But I’m a stubborn guy (being an Aries!) and I tried – little by little – to get in touch with the other participants. Amazingly enough, most of them were positively surprised to see that the “business world” was present, but most of them regarded me mainly as an external observer, not really involved in the core issues at stake. Most of them wondered why I came at all, even though their issues and mine were alike: youth employability as a path to sustainable and lasting employment, lifelong learning, development of soft skills and ad hoc behavioural capacities, making jobs attractive, creating strong links between training and industry, global mobility and flex-security, initiating partnerships with the “third sector” as the Brazilians call the associative world.

It was only on the third day (during the workshop I was supposed to co-moderate) that attendees came up with nice suggestions and creative ideas that really sounded like the ones I had been talking about for years. They indeed appreciated hearing that we (businesses, NGOs, ministries, sectorial bodies, etc.) should do more than co-operate, but rather “co-elaborate” new projects in which everyone’s talents, skills and expertise are needed to improve future working conditions in an economic environment (and paradigm) where everything changes very swiftly: demographics, technological discoveries, industrial (r)evolutions, an ageing population, intergenerational knowledge transfer, employee retention, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), sustainable development, large-scale migration and crises.

1. “Co-elaboration” is a fairly common term used in international contexts these days; it stands for a process of constructing meaning together.



Illustration by Siiri Taimla



photos by Marlies Poschl

The lonesome rider...

We can only cope with these matters if all stakeholders understand each other, use the same vocabulary and join forces, regardless of the particular agendas they follow. All stakeholders need to develop (together) a new ecosystem in which sustainability and respect for diversity (or “alterity”) are key elements for a better quality of life (at work and at home), and where there are equal opportunities for all individuals. This is the core of most large companies’ CSR policies as well.

Working with academics and consultants (within my CSR department at ENGIE² in Belgium), we managed to measure the impact of a certain number of new habits of young people and businesses. Young students, trainees or apprentices who go abroad to study (as part of their curriculum or not) tend to adapt themselves better to the multicultural, international and diverse environment that modern companies now offer, and there is up to 23% less turnover (“employee rotation”) among young recruits within the first three years on the job. Mobility has become a true asset within companies, a key element for performance.

Companies offering lifelong training programmes and possibilities to develop international careers also tend to be more attractive to young graduates. Many joint programmes are currently being developed in Europe to promote these experiences through insisting on internships

and tutoring and focusing on mobility through European programmes for apprentices. Initiatives like the Alliance for Youth³ or the Pact for Youth⁴ work towards the same objective: putting as many students in contact with the real world, the world in which they will work later and prosper as individuals.

At the end of the seminar in Istanbul, I received quite a number of e-mails from mainly young participants reacting to the major points I had mentioned during my brief intervention, as if I managed to raise some awareness about the necessity to “co-elaborate” (my favourite word for the moment in this context!).

The only wish I can utter at this stage is that this is but the beginning of a new era in the relationship between different worlds. Mentalities seem to be ready for it. It’s now a matter of taking the right initiatives to gather people of good will (and with innovative ideas) to make sure that all the world’s “lonesome riders” work together to form an open club to change attitudes.

By the way, Istanbul is a great city and the seminar’s organisation was great too.

I hope to meet my fellow participants again soon somewhere in this vast world – at least those I didn’t scare with my somewhat unconventional approach to mobility, learning and (intellectual) prosperity.

A moving confirmation

QUALITIES THAT ARE HIGHLIGHTED THROUGH MOBILITY

- flexibility
- adaptability
- language literacy
- multiculturalism
- accountability
- open-mindedness
- tolerance
- social responsibility
- communication skills
- sense of initiative
- eagerness to participate in “co-elaborative” projects



2. ENGIE: the former GDF SUEZ Group (www.engie.com).
3. Alliance for Youth: initiative by the NESTLE Group.
4. Pact for Youth: initiative taken by CSR Europe.



We need more bowling and fewer boxes for the learning mobility of young people

By **Susi Nicodemi**

Photos by Marlies Pöschl

Susi was general reporter at the conference and has constructed this article around themes she used during the final session.

Here’s a young person. Let’s call him Jack. It could, of course, be Jacqueline, or Jacques, or Jan....but for ease of talking today, let’s call him Jack.

Now who is Jack? Who identifies him? Is it an NGO with a plan? Is it a youth organisation that has outreach targets or policy makers with a strategy? What is it about him that makes him the “right” kind of target? What labels does he accept for himself?

Who is Jack? Has he even thought about it himself? Does he associate himself with the labels that other people give him? What are those labels, and who has defined them? There is a surfeit of descriptions for Jack these days.

It is necessary to have labels in life to shape the overload of information that we have to process on a daily basis and to categorise data, or put labels on them. Does Jack recognise himself in those labels, or sign up to the category where he is put? Does he agree with what those labels are? And would he put himself in a box with those labels? Good youth work is based on young people’s voluntary and active participation, engagement and responsibility.



» We need more bowling and fewer boxes for the learning mobility of young people . . .



Why would he build a box around himself?

These definitions are usually shaped by policy. Maybe Jack shouldn't accept a box that he is given by a policy maker. Maybe it's not one disadvantage that fits the political list: it could be many that overlap or intersect, or some that don't even have labels yet. The identity of a young person has multiple dimensions that relate to the different contexts at different parts of his or her life. Perhaps those labels make more or less sense at different stages for him; maybe his actions disregard any labels that others give him.

The identity of a young person is very important, and develops as he or she grows. If Jack is to be involved in learning mobility, it's vital that he knows himself before he can know others. He needs to understand his different layers of identity – the effects of his past that have made him the way he is, the sway of his peers, his cultural heritage or his different spheres of influence. Introspection, or being able to look inside and evaluate who you are, is a very important mobility skill.

And it's not the "one-size-fits-all" approach of going through identity theory. Supporting young people during learning mobility is about the space and the context they are in at the time, their current situation, what's going on in their lives, what's affecting them, what's pushing and pulling them... and then discovering their needs that the youth worker can help with. Has Jack been helped to think through who he is? Has he thought through the different dimensions that make up his identity, and their intersectionality? And has his youth worker linked that to his current reality and needs, taking his sensitivities into account?



photos by Marlies Pöschl

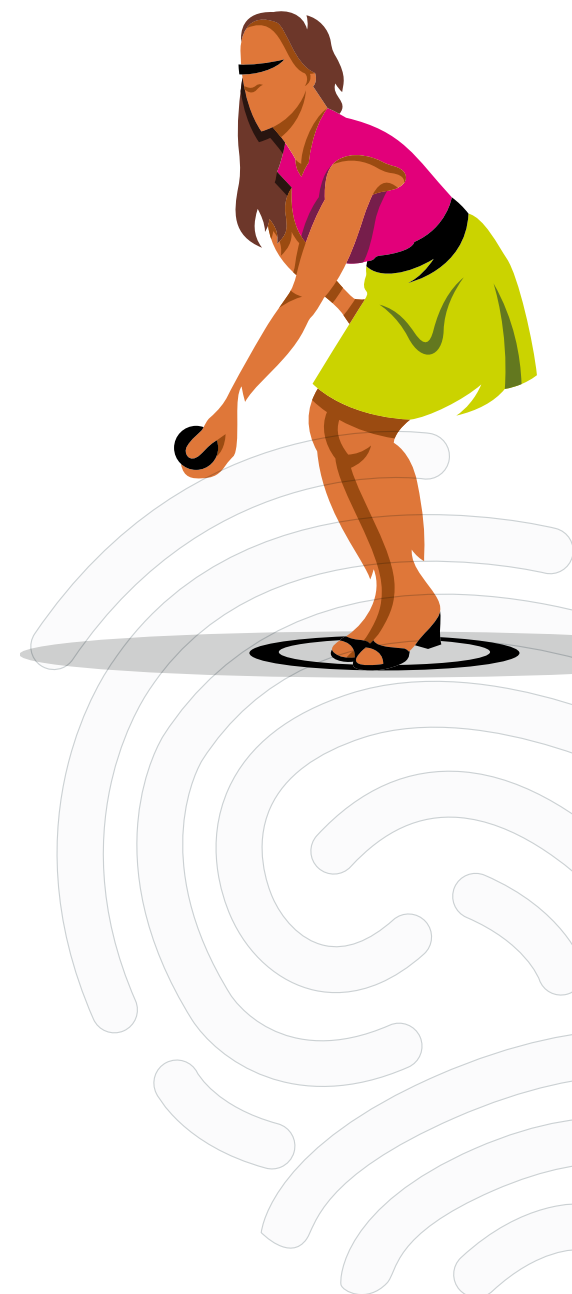
Should he be approached holistically: not just one disadvantage, not just one label on the list, or one political priority to be ticked off, but maybe he should be taken out of the box? He should be supported in the ways that he needs, to grow and develop and benefit from the learning mobility experience. We should not create boxes and limitations that he will want to escape from.

If we do insist on pushing Jack in the box, what will happen? Remember those childhood toys? He will spring out and hit us. It's a metaphor that can be taken in all sorts of ways. Think about it.

And while you are there, try the old adage of "thinking outside the box". Let's take Jack out of the box. Approach him in a different way to support him during his learning mobility experience.

Let's think about a different type of Jack. The little white ball in bowls is also called a Jack. Take that as a metaphor, where Jack becomes the centre around which the support and opportunities are offered, in the shape of bowling balls! In bowling, some balls are nearer to Jack – easier to reach and more relevant. Others are further away and harder to reach; they would stretch him out of his comfort zone. That's where the learning is. Sometimes the different opportunities and support will give him a knock, or take him to a different place than where he started from, perhaps intentionally, or at an angle he wasn't expecting.

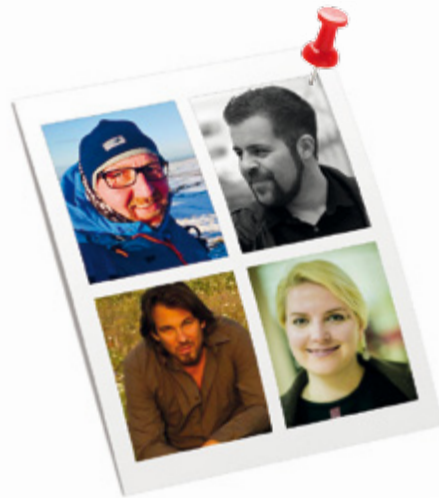
It's a learning journey for him. Under his own steam as an actor in his own right, or with the support he needs. Hit the road, Jack. Leave that box behind.



A trainers' guild, a work in progress

By Buzz Bury, Duncan Hodgson,
MarCus Vrečer and Yuliya Stankevich

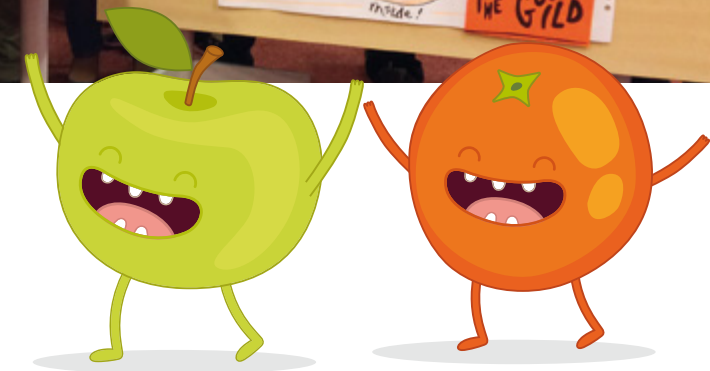
Photos courtesy of the IYWT Guild



What is it that international
youth work trainers need?

- ✓ A common voice
- ✓ A platform to exchange practices,
success stories and concerns
- ✓ A home and a source of inspiration,
peer support and innovation
- ✓ A clear definition of trainer status,
identity and quality standards
- ✓ A joint representation to lobby
for trainer interests

Well a lot of this is happening as you will
read in this article – here is the story so far.



Working with Trainers III, Sofia, Bulgaria

In September 2013 trainers and national agency staff members met for the third edition of Working with Trainers, a meeting held by SALTO and several national agencies. It was a full agenda as we started to explore and identify the quality issues of trainers working as part of “trainer pools”. Discussions and activities led us down many paths that included: trainer competences, trainer challenges, professional practice and development, quality standards, the European Training Strategy and so much more.

It was from our time together here that the idea of some sort of trainer-led association or network developed. It was clear many had thought of something along these lines individually but never found the opportunity to share, challenge and explore it with others. In many ways it gave us more questions than answers: for whom? for what? why? As well as what are we talking about here exactly? A union? A professional practice association? A network? These questions proved to be the catalyst and momentum for a small number of interested trainers coming together to work on an application for a meeting in Ireland for other curious trainers. An Irish associate organisation agreed to apply; the application was submitted and later the platform, for more trainers identifying more questions, was approved.

An Irish adventure

In March 2014, trainers from across Europe and its neighbouring regions gathered to take the next steps on this journey of development. A total of 24 trainers from 21 countries arrived to meet like the Celtic chieftains of old, to discuss the future, confirm boundaries, identify resources and how they can work together to make sure the future was theirs. The meeting was supported by two external professionals, one to facilitate the process and another to document the gathering.

An itinerary for the meeting had been mapped out and the landmarks included questioning who we are, what we could be as a network, what we want and where we want to go. It was an open process which invited everyone to participate and contribute. The journey wasn't an easy one and challenges and demons were faced, and we knew that they would not be the last we met on our continued adventure.

It still wasn't clear which direction we would be going in, but it was agreed that the network would be for trainers and by trainers working in the youth work sector who met quality standards, and that it would have a positive impact on youth policy and non-formal education in Europe and hopefully beyond.

During this time, the group also sought to consult with the wider sector through an online survey to establish what the definition of a European youth work trainer and what the needs of such a network would be. Additionally the [IYWT blog](#) was brought to life to document the process and serve as a record of the meeting and discussions. A working group was agreed and a small number worked on another application for a meeting, this time to be hosted by an associate organisation in Budapest.

Slow boat to somewhere

Budapest, Hungary – October 2014 and the group were back together with some of the original trainers from Ireland along with a collection of newcomers at the Fortuna Boat Hotel. The group worked over three days to establish a network strategy, including aims and objectives, structure, culture and communications strategy. They also considered a consultation process to ensure the wider informal community of trainers in Europe (and neighbouring regions) could contribute to its development and some clear next steps for the coming 12 months to move the guild forward.

At the outset of the Budapest sessions the group identified four themes which would need to be kept in mind in order to make a success of this stage of the process.

- Too many leaders but no leadership
- Dreaming to create the network
- Participation to be inclusive
- Balancing outcomes and objectives with relationships

The group also decided on seven top measures for success for the network to be considered over the next 12 months:

1. recognition by trainers and other stakeholders;
2. defined quality standards for trainers;
3. voice and a representative body;
4. a sense of belonging for members;
5. support for trainers;
6. joint action;
7. creating methodology.



We also settled on two final statements about the guild. The first is on who “we” are.

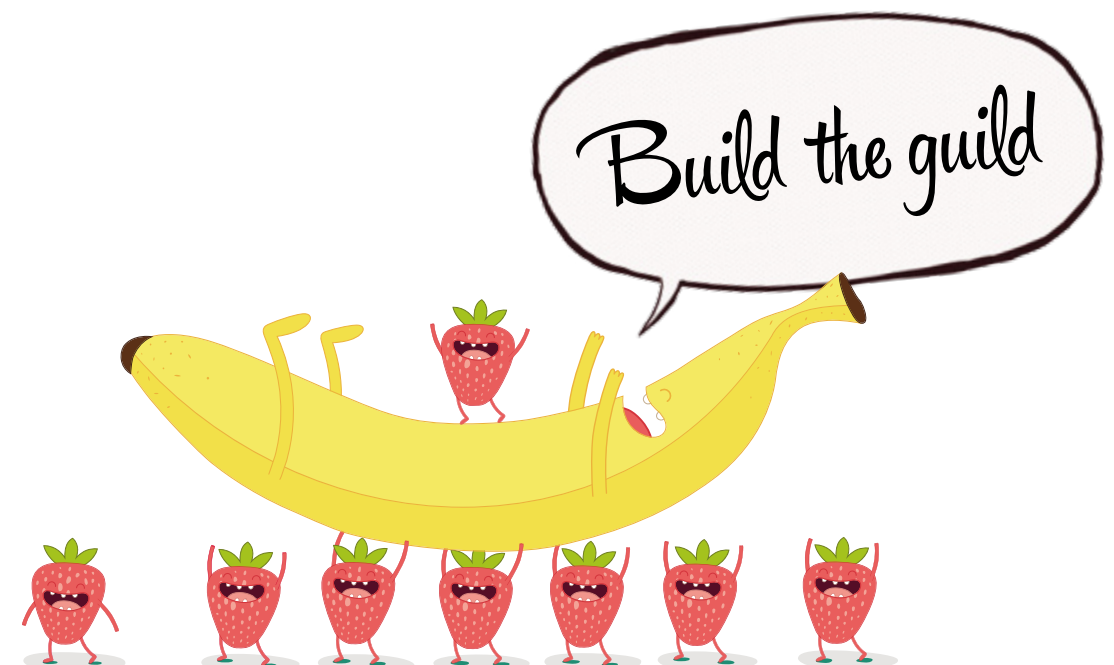
“An independent supportive community of trainers in the youth work sector that advocates on behalf of and contributes to each other’s professional development.”

And the other is on what “we” do.

Members aim to ensure defined quality standards in delivery of training activities. The network endeavours to have a positive impact on youth policy and non-formal education as part of lifelong learning at all levels within Europe and neighbouring regions. It will do this by communicating recommendations to decision makers and advocating on behalf of its members.

We also at this point defined the name of the guild through a public vote of the people attending the group and so the IYWT Guild (International Youth Work Trainers Guild) was born.

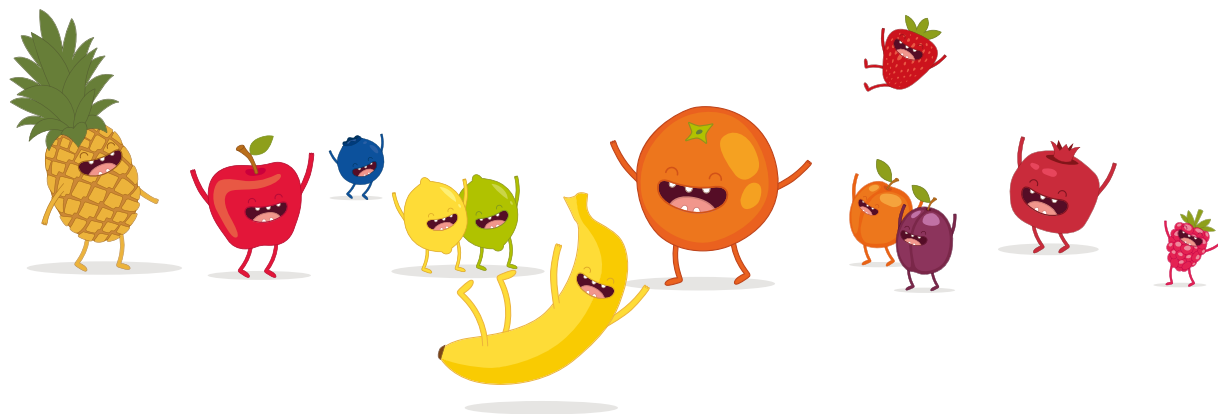
At the end of the three days, the group also elected a steering group following a process of nominations. Twenty of the participants voted to accept the nominations with only one abstaining. The newly formed steering group included Sabrina Apitz from Germany, Buzz Bury from the UK, Zora Csalagovits from Hungary, Mieke Neven from Ireland, Yuliya Stankevich from Belarus, Natalia Nikitina from the Russian Federation and MarCus Vreecer from Austria. It was agreed that this group would be responsible for co-ordinating the network and moving it forward towards its goals but could change when the organisational structure was more defined or through elections at annual assembly meetings. It is also important to mention that the steering group has been supported by a flock of fellow trainers providing expert input on various issues.



One small step for trainer-kind

February 2015 and the steering group for the guild are meeting in Blackpool, UK to further developments. This is a focused and very practical meeting as teams work on the membership and application process, website development, statutes and the process for the IYWT Guild to be officially registered and recognised in Germany. The guild was starting to feel real and possible, but who could know what was round the next corner?

So with positive thoughts and wishes an IYWT Guild statute was presented to officials in Germany in the middle of 2015. They came back with comments and questions and we have been working to finalise the official registration ever since. However as an organisation officially in the process of registration we were able to move forward with opening a bank account.



"Oranges are not the only fruit"

December 2015 and the steering group and several other supporters who have been a part of the journey manage to find themselves together again in Budapest for Tool Fair X. So in break times, in the late evenings, people met to continue with the website, membership process and with preparations for an official launch as part of the Tool Fair activities. As the market place opened and the customers arrived with empty shopping baskets and high expectations for innovation the IYWT Guild was launched. People registered interest, buying an array of fruit and vegetables with some IYWT Guild currency and thus contributing to the process of consultation. The market place and launch concluded with a celebratory glass of bubbles, people were happy with what they had created.

Then like driving without fuel the vehicle came to a stop, the membership forms on the website were working for some but not for all. As people who thought they had the technical knowhow voluntarily worked on trying to resolve the issues, it became clear the system was just not working. It was here we realised the importance of having somebody on board the guild with some technical expertise, and the classic challenges of working purely on a voluntary basis. We are still faced with some technical issues with the membership process but are working to resolve these in the near future. At the same time the individuals who had already tried to register offered feedback on the application process, which we have taken into account for the new process to be implemented.

Ireland - Testing the 360

One thing the IYWT Guild agreed they wanted to explore was a 360-degree appraisal and reflection tool for its members. So in April 2016 a "gang" of trainers (what do you call a group of trainers?) met in Ireland to explore and test a process of professional development for trainers through feedback and reflection. The method will include collecting feedback from four sides – the trainer, colleagues, participants of the training courses and commissioners. The assessment will be based on the ETS trainer competences and will aim to provide a full 360-degree perspective to help trainers to plan further their own professional development.

This tool was identified by the trainers who created the IYWT Guild as a starting point for its members and a space to create common ground. It is seen a process that promotes individuals using reflection and feedback as a means for trainers to take responsibility for their own professional development, improvement and practice as well as positively influencing the quality of training programmes delivered in the future.

Where to next? Can you read the signposts?

The journey that has brought us to where we are now has not been an easy one; it was often three steps forward and two steps back. We are still working and growing the guild and it is a work in progress. Those involved are learning a lot about themselves, each other and the commitment it requires to create something like this. As you can imagine, communication and time are our two nemeses when trying to move forward. We are finding our way, exploring ways that "we can manage time and not let time manage us" and working towards improving communication between the guild's steering group, its members and the wider world.

"Communication leads to community, that is, to understanding, intimacy and mutual valuing." Rollo May

We are here even if the adventure is far from over and we would very much like to thank the people who have been a part of the journey so far and those who have been a part of working groups, written applications, dedicated time, offered encouragement and so much more. We are working towards finding that common voice; creating a platform for exchange; building a home of inspiration, support and innovation; identifying opportunities to represent and lobby; painting a picture of quality in our work and championing the professional development and identity of trainers.

See you all in a training room somewhere, sometime with some people soon.

Are you interested in joining us and becoming engaged with the guild?
We now have three levels of engagement; Subscriber, Associate and Member.
Check out the website for more information.

Find us:

www.iywt.org

Follow us:

<https://www.facebook.com/IYWTGuild/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/InternationalYouthWorkTrainers/>



A historic farewell, gadgets and banners, and a thought for the future

By Mark E. Taylor

"Marker" is a regular column in Coyote, hoping to encourage debate, questions and a certain regard. With the hope that this will be a foundation for rhyme or reason...



Bye bye and hello, Hanjo

Karin Lopatta-Loibl, Youth Policy Unit of the Commission thanks Hanjo at a recent symposium

He's going to leave us and he'll be back in different guises over the next years, I'm sure. After nearly 12 years in the Partnership, Hanjo Schild is retiring. Embodying the Partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission required a ton of dedication and inspiration. Together with colleagues, Hanjo has been a moving force in the drive for recognition of (international) youth work. One of the most stimulating seminars I ever experienced was in a favourite place in Blankenberge, Belgium which was the start of a great series of reflection, investigation, analysis and thoughts for the future. Now in its fifth volume, *The History of Youth Work in Europe* series does a wonderful job of synthesising the different strands which make up youth work today.

Have a look at the covers of those books... Where is Hanjo?



Your favourite gadget

On return from a training course in the olden days, I would open my luggage and one of the first things to pop out would cause a familiar reaction from members of my family: "Ah! What the world needs now! Another t-shirt to add to Mark's collection!" Yes, I have kept them. Then came anti-stress balls, USB sticks, bags-bags-and-more-bags, note books with sticky notes... My favourites at the moment?



Multi-adaptor plug from the Italian Erasmus+ National Agency



A magical musical instrument (with optional coloured finger nail) used for empowering learners in an increasing number of activities

And speaking of PR materials...

Brexit = Trexit?

Note: **"Brexit"** is shorthand for "Britain leaves the EU"; **"Trexit"** could mean "trainers leave".

On the 23rd of June I took my parents to vote in the UK referendum on whether to leave the EU (I was not allowed to vote, having lived outside the country for more than 15 years). Like millions of others I awoke the next day and could not believe my eyes or ears. The consequences for society, for Europe and beyond are still very difficult to estimate. In the micro cosmos of European non-formal education it looks like our ambiguity tolerance will be tested pretty severely over the next few years. Zillions of questions pop up immediately! On a purely practical level, what does this mean for trainers and young people from Britain in the future? Will they be able to participate in EU projects? What about UK contributions to research, to pedagogical approaches, to our favourite "European Citizenship"? Much will have to be negotiated at political levels. AND when a system is shaken up to such an extent there are many opportunities to work on these issues – we should take up the responsibility also.

And finally

Thanks to those who write or give informal feedback. Next time we consider the "pataphysics of will there be a next time"...

Sounds, words, inspirations

Genesis Breyer P-Orridge (2016), Try to altar everything. (See: <http://rubinmuseum.org/events/exhibitions/genesis-breyer-p-orridge> - accessed 19.7.16)
Slim Harpo, *The Excello Singles Anthology*, HIP-O Records
The Dead Weather (2015), *I feel love every million miles*, Third Man Records

Banner gone to heaven?

*Билјана Василевска
Трајкоска in front of
symposium banner.*

Have you noticed the marked increase of banners, roll-ups, posters, etc., etc. on photos of international youth work activities – everything from an info day, to a youth exchange, to a training course, to a conference? Naturally with prominent place given to all sponsors. Nothing new of course, it just seems that we are getting very "professional" these days. I just wonder what happens to all of these PR materials AFTER an event? Are they recycled? Is there a "banner heaven" somewhere?



Photo by Szilvi Pető





Notes on contributors

Buzz Bury is a youth and community worker and trainer living in Blackpool, UK. Buzz is one of the initiators of the IYWT Guild and presently a Steering Committee member.

Daniel Briggs is Professor of Criminology at the Universidad Europea in Madrid, Spain and a poet.

Duncan Hodgson is a marketing and promotions manager for an arts organisation in Blackpool, UK. Duncan has been the digital reporter for all the IYWT Guild's development meetings and events.

Jacques Spelekens is Corporate Social Responsibility Co-ordinator Benelux for ENGIE.

MarCus Vrecher is a trainer and consultant working from Vienna, Austria. MarCus is a Steering Committee member and has worked for the registration of the IYWT Guild in Germany.

Marine Manucharyan is project manager/co-ordinator for the NGO Civic Forum in Armenia and a trainer/facilitator in non-formal education. Coyote editorial team member.

Mark E. Taylor is still editor of Coyote, based in Strasbourg and making the most of his experience as a trainer and writer.

Marlies Pöschl is a visual artist and film maker currently based in Vienna. Her work is centred on questions of language and education, as well as the relation between text and image. Coyote editorial team member.

Özgehan Şenyuva is an associate professor at Middle East Technical University, Ankara.

Snežana Bačlija Knoch is a freelance trainer and facilitator, active in the European youth work field. She is motivated by diversity of thoughts, values and beliefs and inspired by travelling, playing, cats and clown noses. Oh, and a lot of questions! Coyote editorial team member.

Søren Kristensen is from Denmark and has for many years been occupied with learning mobility, both at national and European levels. He is currently working as an independent research professional, based in Copenhagen.

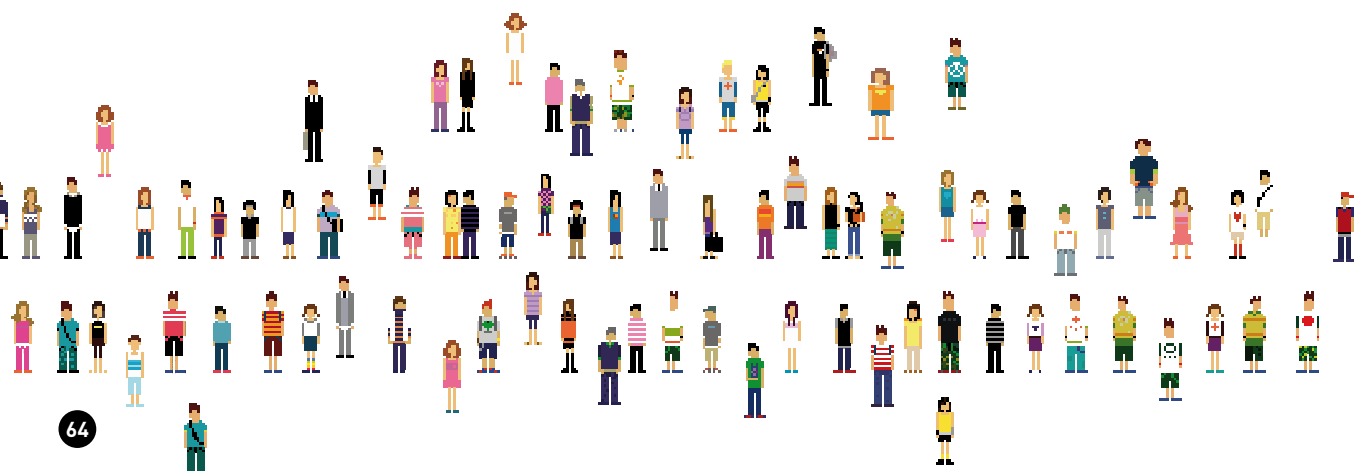
Susi Nicodemi is a freelance international youth work consultant living in the UK.

Tali Padan runs her own organisation, Mellem Education, in Denmark and delivers training courses on how the personal connects with the political.

Yörük Kurtaran is a researcher in İstanbul Bilgi University's Youth Studies Unit.

Triin Ilves is a journalist and project co-ordinator in European Youth Press' *Orange* magazine. Seeking new opportunities and experiences, she joined the Coyote editorial team to discover the world of youth work.

Yuliya Stankevich is a trainer based in Minsk, Belarus. Yuliya has been a committed supporter of the IYWT Guild since her participation in the Ireland seminar and is also a Steering Committee member.



The Adventures of Spiffy

Mark E. Taylor • The BigFamily

Nº @ € %
[sic]

Spiffy gets poetic...



SPIFFY NEWS

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Chisanga, T et al (2014), Enacting Reflexivity through Poetic Inquiry – thanks to colleagues from the University of Iceland for their guidance here! For more, see : www.reflecting.eu

The end!

«Coyote - a resourceful animal whose blunders or successes explain the condition of life in an uncertain universe.»

(In: Jack Tresidder, *The Hutchison Dictionary of Symbols*, 1997)

Coyote is a magazine addressed to trainers, youth workers, researchers, policy makers and all those who want to know more about the youth field in Europe.

Coyote wants to provide a forum to share and give new insights into some of the issues facing those who work with young people. Issues relate to diverse training methodologies and concepts; youth policy and research; and realities across this continent. It also informs about current developments relating to young people at the European level.

For more information on *Coyote*, please contact: youth-partnership@partnership-eu.coe.int or see <http://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/>

Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth
c/o Council of Europe / Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation Youth Department / F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex, France

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

www.coe.int

The European Union is a unique economic and political partnership between 28 democratic European countries. Its aims are peace, prosperity and freedom for its 500 million citizens – in a fairer, safer world. To make things happen, EU countries set up bodies to run the EU and adopt its legislation. The main ones are the European Parliament (representing the people of Europe), the Council of the European Union (representing national governments) and the European Commission (representing the common EU interest).

<http://europa.eu>

Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of youth

