

Youth Partnership

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



SYSTEMS FOR FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND VALIDATION OF YOUTH WORKERS

ENLARGED EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON

RESEARCHING EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER PATHS FOR YOUTH WORKERS

An Analytical Report

Authors: Tomi Kiilakoski

PhD, Adjunct Professor, Finnish Youth Research Network

Correspondent to the European Knowledge Centre on Youth Policy

Co-ordinator: Tanya Basarab

Disclaimer: The content of this document, commissioned by the EU-CoE youth partnership, is on the entire responsibility of the author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of either of the partner institutions (the European Union and the Council of Europe).

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Introduction..... | 4 |
| 2. Formal education on youth work..... | 6 |
| 3. Non-formal learning on youth work..... | 10 |
| 4. Experiences of international youth organisations..... | 12 |
| 5. Policy structures | 14 |
| 6. Identified challenges | 17 |
| 7. Conclusions..... | 17 |
| 8. References | 19 |

This paper is based on the presentations of the following experts: Joaquim Freitas, Marzena Gawenda, Liz Green, David Hayrapetyan, Marko Kovacic, Anna Ostrikova, Birgit Rasmussen, Jelena Stojanovic, Hilary Tierney, Carly Walker-Dawson and Gerمو Zimmermann. The author wishes to thank all the experts for their input. All the presentations and documentation from the meeting can be found on the EU-CoE youth partnership website: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/expert-group-meeting-on-researching-educational-and-career-paths-for-youth-workers>.

The research contributes to the implementation of the Council of Europe Youth Work Recommendation CM/Rec (2017)4 and improving the quality of youth work objective under the EU Youth Strategy.

1. Introduction

Studying or analysing the educational and career paths of youth workers requires looking at two things simultaneously. One has to understand how youth work is understood, recognised and supported in different states and regions. This in turn is dependent on how different policies, strategies, welfare systems and allocation of resources are organised in a country or in a region. Following Stephen Kemmis, these can be named “practice architectures”, a concept which emphasises that different elements or arrangements all “hang together” and form a totality. This totality affects what educational paths people are able to follow. The diversity of the youth field in Europe has been noted extensively in the studies of youth work conducted in recent years. This makes comparing the systems somewhat difficult: the concepts used, the resources allocated to and the basic missions of youth work differ considerably.

Also, educational paths are dependent on the wider educational policy in the state or region. While the structures of formal education might be easier to compare, there are plenty of difficulties in comparing these as well. The field of comparative education has analysed extensively the troubles in comparing different national systems of education. Looking at these even cursively is likely to be fruitful in understanding what are the challenges identified by a scientific discourse in adopting a comparative perspective.

According to the *OECD Handbook of Internationally Comparative Education Statistics*, it has taken 25 years of development to come up with the recent state of comparison. According to the handbook, “fundamental to this development is the quality of underlying data which is itself driven by the clear concepts, conventions and methodologies and the calculations of the indicators” (OECD 2017, 14). This points out well how difficult and time-consuming it is to actually come up with reliable measures in comparing education systems. Even the perspective of “economy-oriented educational policy” “strongly promoted by OECD” (Mittell 2009), which is influenced by mathematical models of economics, cannot be compared in a reliable way if the quality of the data itself is not sufficient. In the field of youth work, there is a need to further investigate how well the concepts and methodologies actually help in providing a common European perspective.

In Europe, educational policy in general is a matter of national sovereignty while at the same time there is an on-going process of Europeanisation in education policy. To explain how independent states are starting to adopt the same European ideas, concepts and practices the concepts of “integration”, “harmonisation”, “convergence” and “domestic assimilation” of European policy have been presented. European policies on education are based on a horizontal soft mode of governing. According to Rosario Sergio Maniscalco, sometimes instead of policy changes there may be policy stability. When some countries implement the common European framework, and some continue with their national paths, the result may be in fact be divergence of educational policies (Maniscalco 2015). Besides Europeanisation, the impact of globalisation and different cultural configurations have challenged the traditional comparative perspective of looking at the national education systems only (Mitter 2009). Some scholars are paying more attention to the dynamics of policies than to taxonomies or to the contexts in which different educational actors function rather than to the educational systems (Kauko et al. 2012).

All in all, comparing is difficult and there are likely to be methodological issues. One should at the same time understand the national realities not only in education, but in cultural, economic and political spheres as well and the international trends which affect how educational systems are developed. While the overall coverage of this paper is only partial, it is suggested that further research should pay attention both to the national and regional realities while at the same time identifying the themes and topics and ideas which bring about convergence and harmonisation in formal and non-formal youth worker education.

The enlarged expert meeting in Brussels highlighted the youth work education structures in eight countries and regions – in alphabetical order Armenia, Croatia, Estonia, Germany, Ireland, Serbia, Scotland and Ukraine. Three youth organisations with extensive international experience (the International Falcon Movement – Socialist Educational International; Youth for Understanding; and the World Organization of the Scout Movement) presented their educational paths as well.

In an earlier paper, *Diversity of Practice Architectures on Education and Career Paths of Youth Workers* (Kiilakoski 2018), a theory of practice architectures was used to categorise different European models for youth work education. In that paper, four different groups of youth work architectures were identified. This categorisation is also a background for this paper in analysing the presentations of the enlarged expert meeting. Of the countries represented in this paper,

Estonia, Germany and Ireland belonged to a group with strong practice architectures. Scotland was not analysed in that paper, but both UK (England) and UK (Wales) belonged to this group. Based on this and the material of the presentation, Scotland is analysed as being part of this group. Serbia was analysed as being part of the group which has “strong practice architectures, [and] room for development to a certain degree”, Armenia was analysed as being part of the group where “some part of practice architectures have been developed” and finally, Ukraine and Croatia belonging to a group where “practice architectures are in need of development”. For the purposes of this paper, these four countries are grouped together to pinpoint how different practice architectures are being developed at the moment.

The themes of the enlarged expert meetings are analysed using the following categories: formal education on youth work; recognition of non-formal education; relevant policy programmes; advocating for youth work and challenges identified.

2. Formal education on youth work

According to earlier research, degree-level courses at the university level are available in less than half of the 43 countries and regions (Kiilakoski 2018). Four countries presented had university courses and also a vocational route for youth-work education. These countries included Estonia, Germany, Ireland and Scotland. In all the four countries and regions mentioned, there is more than one educational institution providing youth worker education. The education of youth workers is backed by other policy structures supporting youth work. The presentations identified existing educational programmes and other national programmes supporting the learning paths or recognising prior learning of youth workers. This way learning paths of youth workers can be expressed in clear and transparent terms.

- In Estonia, the universities of Tallinn and Tartu provide youth worker education. Tallinn University has both an applied science degree and a master’s degree in youth work. The University of Tartu has an applied science degree, which has since 1999 provided a Leisure Time Manager-Teacher degree in the Tartu University Viljandi Cultural Academy. In the Tartu University Narva College there is at the moment an applied science degree in youth

work. Youth work curricula should be in accordance with the national occupational standard for youth workers. Most of the university programmes are in the process of developing their curriculum based on the national occupational standards. Youth work education seems to be developing, since the fifth university degree in youth work in Estonia, a bachelor's degree at Tartu University, will open in 2019. Estonia has a dual sector model in higher education, meaning that there are both academic and applied degrees in youth work.

- In Germany there are three formal education paths for youth workers including university and university of applied sciences, vocational education and theological education institutions. At the university level, youth work is connected to social work and social pedagogy. There are viable working careers for youth workers in youth centres, in schools, in churches, international youth work programmes, street work and schools. German science council and private accreditation companies validate the standards.

In vocational education there is a programme for educators and child care workers. The latter is certified by the state. There is a national core curriculum for vocational training for educators. There are viable working careers in the above-mentioned fields of youth work. In addition to this, there are opportunities to work in kindergarten and child care.

There are theological institutions offering education in faith-based youth work. Christian youth workers, youth deacons and youth pastors are able to get education in the theological education institutes. The students learn the practice of Christian youth work and gain hands-on experience.

- In Ireland six different universities, one of which offers faith-based youth work education, provide degree courses in youth work. According to a Mapping the Work Force study (2013) presented during the expert meeting, one third of the youth workers had a degree above level 5 (out of 10 levels) in youth work and 28 per cent had other qualifications in youth work. The study also revealed that two thirds of youth workers work as full-time paid youth workers. The North/South Education and Training Standards Committee for Youth Work (NSETS) works to ensure quality standards and fitness-for-purpose for youth work, support best practices and facilitate professional mobility and peer learning. The unique feature of this committee is that it spans both Northern Ireland and Ireland, and tackles issues of mutual concern (NSETS Professional Endorsement, 7).The universities

mentioned above are endorsed by NSETS. The objectives of youth work and youth work education are clearly spelled out by NSETS.

- In Scotland there are different programmes up to PhD degree in youth work and community learning and development and community education. The Scottish matrix of youth work education starts from initial courses. There are several programmes above level 5. There are, for example, a modern apprenticeship in youth work at level 6, a BA degree in Community Learning and Development/Community Education, a Postgraduate Diploma in Community Learning and Development/Community Education (level 9), a Master's degree in the same subject (level 10) and PhD studentships. The Community Learning and Development Council validates courses.

As is clear from the above, in all these countries youth workers are able to choose between different alternatives in youth work education. The content of learning and the curriculum is based on national standards. To use a theory of practice architectures, the formal education structures in these countries clearly “hang together” with policy structures and allocation of resources. There are different programmes for teaching youth work. These curricula have relation to other discursive sources, such as the occupational standards of youth workers in Estonia or competences for Community Learning and Development in Scotland. All the countries and regions have established a discourse on how to talk about youth work and official documents with which to talk and think about youth work. These include different curricula, national strategies, programmes, research papers and competency description. This way there is an articulated basis on what youth work is about, what are the competences needed to do youth work and what youth work contributes to society. These are shared and officially recognised forming the basis for youth worker education. The state subsidises youth worker education. Education is available at different levels of the educational system. There are resources and facilities to learn how to do youth work. There are also identifiable and sustainable career paths available for those who decide to study youth work.

Four of the countries and regions are in the process of developing their youth work education. Some recent developments show that it is possible to promote youth work through the involvement of different stakeholders.

- The Youth Work Institute of Armenia provides training for youth workers and also delivers certificates. Training of youth work professionals includes a basic course which is organised in a long-term multidimensional training format. The programme consists of a number of training sessions and during these periods the participants are able to learn through supervised practice. In addition to the basic course, thematic courses can be organised in different fields of youth work as well as in specific target groups (e.g. rural youth, people with disabilities, refugees) and community-based fields. Developing and submitting an educational programme on youth work to the Ministry of Education and Science is planned to take place in 2022. Participants in these courses receive certificates signed by the minister.
- In Croatia there are no university programmes on youth work. There are, however, different university programmes for those who work with young people. These programmes (social work, social pedagogy, pedagogy, primary education) may have youth work components. There is a Youth in Contemporary Society programme. What makes the case of Croatia highly interesting is that an international programme on youth work is currently being planned. Examining closely the case of Croatia might reveal some valuable insights on how to create professional structures for youth work.
- In Serbia, there is a need for the recognition of youth work and securing the quality of youth work programmes. The National Association of Youth Workers has developed different programmes which are to some extent recognised by the government.
- In Ukraine, there is a training programme called “Youth Worker”. This programme was launched in 2014 by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, State Institute of Family and UN Development Programme in Ukraine. The course is one of the priorities of the National targeted programme “Youth of Ukraine” and is part of a road map for reforming youth policies. 1 500 certified programme graduates from all regions of Ukraine have been trained. 200 youth workers were trained using an online platform.

In the four countries mentioned above, the degree courses are not yet available. The need to offer training for youth work has been recognised, and different programmes have been developed or are currently being developed. The need to gain recognition of youth work and its contribution to society was emphasised in all the presentations. The involvement of governmental institutions varies. Recognition of youth work is an issue in all these countries, as seems to be the funding of

youth work. For this reason, career paths of youth workers appear fragmented. However, looking at the cases of Armenia and Ukraine shows the value of convincing the governments about the value of youth work and on the need to provide training for youth work. The cases of Croatia and Serbia probably highlight the value of professional associations and the strength of the youth field when academics and practitioners share the same values and ideas about gaining recognition. Both formal and non-formal learning are explained.

3. Non-formal learning on youth work

The countries and regions that have established strong structures of formal youth work education have also developed thought-out structures on how to recognise the learning of youth workers and youth leaders with no formal education in youth work. According to my interpretation, this highlights the fact that the practice architectures of youth work on which youth work education is developed and youth work is recognised are strong on non-formal learning as well.

- In Estonia the Estonian Youth Work Centre validates the learning of youth workers regardless of how it has originally taken place, either formally, non-formally or informally. One has to be able to prove that one has the competences described by the occupational standards and that one is at least 18 years old. 195 certificates have been given since the system has been put in place. Validation is based on national competences on youth work described in the Occupational Standards and it is voluntary. In most municipalities, validation is voluntary when getting a job as a youth worker. The Youth Workers' Association provides coaching as a form of on-the-job support. There are 7 000 youth workers in Estonia, out of which 3 370 people have either professional or partial professional valid certificates.
- In Germany, the Jugendleiter/in Card (JuLeiCa) gives federal level recognition for youth leaders volunteering in youth work. It also sets standards for quality youth work and legitimises youth work and this way youth leaders can gain recognition of their competences obtained in youth work. The JuLeiCa card brings about other benefits, and this way the value of youth work is clearly visible to youth leaders as well.
- In Ireland with 1 400 paid youth workers and 40 000 volunteers, youth organisations (the main providers of youth work in the country) have had training programmes for some

time. The National Youth Council of Ireland has developed a common induction programme for volunteers (Devlin 2017).

- In Scotland a Community Learning and Development Standard Council has developed a set of competences for youth workers. Different educational levels are available and the courses given by the organisations themselves are also validated.

In the countries mentioned above, there are clearly defined procedures on how to gain recognition for learning in youth work. There are clear and accessible tools on validating the learning taking place in youth work. National strategies, established curricula for formal and non-formal learning and policy programmes are connected to youth worker education. There are organisations responsible for promoting youth work and validating learning experiences. These organisations have an understanding about youth work. This means that youth worker education can develop with added perspectives. There are different legislative documents and strategies which give framework for youth work, covering also education and employment of youth workers. Some of the existing courses were mentioned in the previous section, which some would classify as non-formal learning.

- Armenia: Meetings and events for youth workers are organised.
- Croatia: There are different non-formal programmes organised by youth organisations. There are training activities funded by the Erasmus + National Agency.
- Serbia: NAPOR,¹ a union of organisations delivering youth work, has developed three vocational standards of youth work: two separate non-formal learning programmes for youth leaders and youth workers and the formal programme for Specialist for Youth Work and Policy. Learning combines online learning tools and learning by doing in youth work practice. NAPOR also gives certificates for acquired competences. Certificates are recognised by member organisations, as well as by the Ministry of Youth and Sports.
- Ukraine: There is a competition on the best practices in youth work. Training materials are made available for youth workers.

Different programmes and training are organised in the four countries above. Governmental support seems to be emerging. In Armenia and in Ukraine there is funding for these programmes

1. Homepage of the organisation www.napor.net/sajt/index.php/sr-yu/, accessed on 2 October 2018.

and they are supported by government. In Serbia, NAPOR provides resources and support for the training of youth workers using elaborate tools. In some of the countries decision makers have been supporting youth work as a result of youth work advocacy. It is my understanding that the recognition of non-formal learning in youth work is likely to require further advocacy and development.

4. Experiences of international youth organisations

Besides nation states, international youth non-governmental organisations deliver courses to the members of their organisations. All international youth organisations presented a linear educational path within an organisation, consisting of:

1. initial socialisation into the organisation through participation in the activities;
2. learning to be a voluntary worker; and
3. at the later stages perhaps working as a paid worker within an organisation.

People involved in the organisation are familiar with values, practices and methods and also organisational structures based on their prior experience. This means that training of youth leaders is based on the existing culture and ethos of the organisation. This differed from national countries where the career paths of youth workers seemed more varied and are not necessarily based on the commitment to the ethos of one organisation.

Two kinds of processes were presented. All the organisations saw an internal challenge in educating the volunteers and in validating the learning, thereby also controlling the quality of the work done within the organisation. The Scouting movement talked about human management. This internal challenge is coupled with an external question: how to gain recognition for a wide variety of competences learnt during the process?

Internal processes Different competency descriptions and other tools have been developed to recognise learning taking place in the learning span of the volunteers.

- Different national Scouting organisations are responsible for recognising the qualifications of the individual. Different trainings are offered, and the organisations have developed a holistic strategy in helping the adults to volunteer in the Scout movement. Examples from France concerning self-assessment and recognition were presented. These measures offer a detailed analysis of learning taking place in the organisation and equips the learner to be able to communicate that learning using terms accepted on the labour market, i.e. outside the youth sector.
- Youth for Understanding provides European-level courses built on the basis of the Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio, and some national organisations also provide courses, depending on the size and resources of the organisation. Volunteers have their own career paths within the framework set by national organisations. The learning is recognised using self-assessment tools, by giving certificates and using Youthpass.
- IFM-SEI is an umbrella organisation for child and youth-led socialist education movements all over the world. There have been difficulties in promoting accreditation and evaluation within organisations, since the principles of the organisation such as voluntarism, democracy and equality can be taken to mean that the decisions should be made on the local level only. There have been efforts to promote more systematic ways of evaluating learning within the organisation; however, maintaining a proper balance between the ethos of the organisation and structured ways of recognising learning and/or improving quality is a delicate question.

Challenges in the internal process included that some of the volunteers are likely to see themselves as youth leaders, not as youth workers. This also makes it sometimes difficult to talk about youth work competences. Some of the volunteers, especially in the Falcon movement, might be opposed to formal structures of quality assurance or validation or evaluation. Also, the quality of assessing the volunteers properly needs to be maintained.

External processes Youth for Understanding and the Scouts talked about the need to gain recognition for the learning that people accumulate within the organisation. One may remark that this could be seen as a logical consequence of the internal process: when an organisation is able to recognise different learning paths inside the organisation and has gathered information based on this for a long time, it is able to start demanding the recognition of learning by the wider educational community as well. It seemed that the external process was clearly thought out, but

the outcomes were still in the future. However, recognition and validation were identified as challenges by the Scouting movement, and by Youth for Understanding.

The organisations presented have a long history and rich tradition in youth work. For some, this tradition clearly supports talking about validation and accreditation whereas in some organisations the tradition and the value base might make this more difficult. Based on these three examples, it seems that the organisations are able to organise and manage the learning paths inside the organisations. However, there is clearly a question as to how these learning processes could be validated. The internal question clearly can be dealt with inside the organisation, but the validation question is dependent on the educational policy in different countries and regions. Similar challenges raise a question whether the organisations should aim to advocate together to make learning experiences validated.

5. Policy structures

According to the theory of practice architectures any practice (such as education and training of youth workers) is based on practice traditions, which consist of three dimensions. First, people need to be able to think and talk about the practice. This might require professional, specialist discourses and certain semantic spaces where people are able to debate, defend or articulate what youth work is about. Second, there are material and economic conditions which affect what people are able to practise. This makes activities and work possible. Third, there are different relations of power and solidarity. This opens different ways that people and organisations can relate to each other. One can also talk about “stakeholder relationships” where different actors take interest in the field in a certain manner (Kemmis 2014: 22-26). Examining policy programmes and initiatives perhaps sheds light on the way youth is recognised, talked about, reflected and even financed. In the presentations different policy structures which support education were presented. It should be noted that the list of structures is not conclusive, but is likely to offer a glimpse of state involvement in and policy structures supporting youth work education.

- Estonia has national standards for youth workers which were updated in 2017. There is a registry of youth workers who have qualifications managed by the Estonian Qualifications Registry. The Estonian Youth Work Centre validates the competencies of youth workers. Also, the Estonian Youth Workers Association, Estonian Association of Open Youth Centres and Estonian Youth Council provide courses and take part in activities.

- Germany has a national framework for social work, which also guides youth work education. There are official bodies such as the German Science Council providing validation. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration studies themes relevant to youth work education. The JuLeiCa card, a tool for recognising youth work, operates on the federal level.
- The Youth Work Act in Ireland sees youth work as an educational activity, which is mostly provided by voluntary organisations. There have been national plans for developing youth work. There is a National Quality Standards Framework which establishes standards in the practice and provision of youth work among other goals. The North/South Education and Training Committee sets a professional framework for youth work education and training. The National Youth Strategy was created in 2015, and targets the years from 2015 to 2020. There is a National Policy Framework for Children and Young People. The Irish Youth Workers Association was established in 2013.
- YouthLink Scotland is a National Agency for Youth Work in Scotland. It is a representative body which has over 150 members and partners. They are a key partner in the delivery of the National Youth Work Strategy 2014-2019. **The** National Occupational Standards for Youth Work, which are used in the whole of the UK, and the Competences for Community Learning and Development in Scotland offer guidelines for youth worker education. The Community Learning and Development Council has a mandate over guiding professional learning. An outcome-oriented and evidence-based policy context is perhaps reflected in the creation of a detailed framework for the outcomes of youth work. There are plans to create new structures.

In the above countries there is a governmental involvement in guiding youth work. This means both support and control over the content of youth work education. When these structures are connected to formal and non-formal learning opportunities, it would seem clear that these practice architectures form a totality which supports different educational paths of youth workers. According to Stephen Kemmis, different features of practice architectures affect encounters an individual has during his or her career. Through education certain dispositions are formed, which help individuals to acquire capacities and commitments through which they say and do certain things and relate to other professions and the world in particular ways (Kemmis 2014: 24-25). Policy programmes and educational initiatives mean that there is a social context that recognises

youth work as a profession. Although resources are an issue in Ireland and Scotland, in the four countries above, it is possible to have a linear career path as a youth worker. There exist different routes for getting youth worker education and there are working opportunities in the future. There is non-formal learning. This means that career paths can be both long-term and linear.

- Armenia is creating structures for youth work. There is a strategic goal to provide information on youth work in magazines, journals and web pages in the Armenian language. There is a Youth Work Institute Development Programme, which is approved by the government. Information on youth work is spread and the recognition of youth work is promoted. There is government support for youth research.
- In Croatia, the Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy has funding schemes for youth clubs and youth centres. The National Agency provides trainings. A new National Youth Strategy is being developed. The Act on the Croatian Qualifications Framework sets standards for recognition of non-formal and informal learning.
- UNDP Ukraine (2014) launched an educational “Youth Worker” Programme Ukraine, in co-operation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine and the State Institute for Family and Youth Policy. Youth policy in Ukraine is being developed, and the earlier conceptions, which may be seen as paternalistic, are being replaced.
- In Serbia there is at the moment no official recognition of youth work. NAPOR as an organisation is working towards creating conditions for quality assurance and recognition of youth work.

The role of youth work in different networks is closely connected to how (or sometimes if) youth work is seen and recognised as a distinct profession. Armenia and Ukraine described programmes and initiatives which were supported by government, while Croatia and Serbia wished for more support and recognition. Looking at the practice architectures in these countries shows clear differences compared to other groups. The training opportunities seem scarce in comparison. Validated programmes exist, but their scope and recognition are not as detailed or long-term. The official role and government support also varies. The possibilities to make a living as a youth worker sound limited compared to other groups of countries. It can probably be concluded that the ability to have linear educational and career paths is likely to be more limited. Therefore it is assumed that in these countries fragmented educational and career paths are likely to be the

norm. This problem was formulated as follows in discussions during the enlarged expert meeting: “People will go away if they are not offered a secure job.”

If this is the case, it also means that social capital is lost if youth workers do not have the possibility of contributing to society on a longer basis and developing as communities of practice.

6. Identified challenges

The presentations on countries, regions and organisations identified common problems:

- establishing a shared understanding between the work done with young people and youth work, so that the distinct value of youth work could be shown;
- scarcity of resources available;
- lack of recognition of youth work, and in some cases even the non-visibility of youth work as a distinct profession; no official definition of youth work/youth worker; no quality standards on youth work; no certification system; lack of ethical guidelines;
- having a proper balance between the ethos of civil society and the principles of the organisation, and structured ways of recognising learning, evaluating the non-formal learning processes and/or improving quality of the youth work done in organisations;
- official recognition of learning taking place in youth work activities in different organisations.

7. Conclusions

Based on the preceding analysis, the following observations can be made:

1. The educational or learning paths of the professional youth workers and volunteers should be explained better in the research on educational pathways of youth workers. Some of the countries, regions and organisations have made a clear separation between the learning paths of volunteers and paid youth workers, often corresponding to the concepts of youth leaders and youth workers and have constructed different tools to recognise their learning paths. The question of how to approach the European learning paths of youth workers seems to require further inquiries on how to talk about competences learnt in volunteering (perhaps more general competences on working with people in general?) and

in being a paid youth worker (perhaps having more to do with youth work community?). While it should be noted that this division may easily lead to value judgments about worthy youth work, it seems that if this question is not settled, both conceptual and practical problems are likely to emerge.

2. Theory of practice architectures talk about how different elements “hang together” and create a totality. Looking at the examples examined, it is easy to see that educational opportunities and paths are dependent on the policy documents, allocation of resources and relations youth work has. Therefore the question about the relations of youth work seems to be of importance. Understanding which networks youth work is part of probably explains at least some aspects of educational pathways of youth workers as well.
3. Looking at how the formal and non-formal educational paths of youth workers are organised in different countries highlights the fact that those countries which have strong structures for formal learning on youth work have also developed strong structures for non-formal learning and recognition of prior learning on youth work. The recognition of non-formal learning in youth work in the countries which do not yet have formal degree programmes is likely to require further advocacy. Closely examining Croatia, which is building a university programme for youth work, might offer insights on what to take into account when education of youth work is promoted.
4. In the linear career model youth workers can move from education to work, in the fragmented one there are likely to be disruptions or breaks in one’s professional career. In the four countries and regions examined, youth workers had plenty of possibilities in the initial phase of their career, and also had a change of accessing continuous education in the latter stages of the professional career. In the other four countries examined, the training paths are less clear. The long-term promotion of youth work in the countries developing their practice architectures should probably pay attention to creating degrees and possibilities for continuing education.
5. The presentations did not spell out the different curricula of youth work. Examining the content of curricula (different theories, concepts, methods, practice links, the role of on-the-job-learning) and the connection of curricula would probably help to find further common European themes in youth work.
6. There is a lot of variety in youth work practice architectures around Europe, perhaps more so than in the field of formal education. There is a need to further investigate how well the

concepts and methodologies currently developed at European level actually help in providing a common European perspective. It is suggested that further research should pay attention both to the national and regional realities while at the same time identifying the themes and topics and ideas which bring about convergence and harmonisation in formal and non-formal youth worker education. Examining the career paths available for youth workers with a different educational background would also be needed to analyse what is needed to build a sustainable education for youth workers.

8. References

- Devlin, Maurice (2017), "Thinking about youth work in Ireland", in Hanjo Schildt, Nuala Connolly, Francine Labadie, Jan Vanhee and Howard Williamson (eds), *Thinking Seriously about Youth Work*. Youth Knowledge#20, Council of Europe and European Commission, 81-90.
- Kauko, Jaakko; Simola, Hannu; Varjo, Janne and Kalalahti, Mira (2012), "What Could a Dynamics Perspective Contribute to Comparative Research?" in Joel Kivirauma, Arto Jauhiainen, Piia Seppänen and Kaunisto, Tuuli (eds), *Social Perspectives in Education*, Turku: Finnish Educational Research Association, 219-33.
- Kemmis, Stephen (2014), "Education, educational research and the good life of human kind" in Hannu L. T. Heikkinen, Josephine Moate and Marja-Kristiina Lerkkanen (eds), *Enabling Education*, Turku: Finnish Educational Research Association, 15-67.
- Kiilakoski, Tomi (2018), Diversity of Practice Architectures on Education and Career Paths for Youth Workers in Europe. An Analytical Report. Youth Partnership. Available online: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/10059673/Kiilakoski-final/525aef72-4871-1855-8fb2-72f2b7824d74>, accessed on 5.10.2018.
- Maniscalco, Rosario Sergio (2015), A post-ontological and post-regulatory approach for the analysis of Europeanisation of the educational policy. In Suvi Jokila, Johanna Kallo and Risto Rinne (eds), *Comparing Times and Spaces*, Turku: Finnish Educational Research Association, 129-57.
- Mitter, Wolfgang (2009), "Comparative Education in Europe" in Robert Cowen and Andreas M. Kazamias (eds), *International Handbook of Comparative Education*, London: Springer, 87-100.

NSETS Professional Endorsement (2013),
www.tagpalycw.org/NSETS%20Professional%20Endorsement%20Criteria.pdf, accessed on
10.9.2018.

OECD (2017), *OECD Handbook for Internationally Comparative Education Statistics: concepts, standards, definitions and classifications*, OECD Publishing,
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264279889-en>, accessed on 10.9.2018.