



ADVOCACY CARDS MANUAL

Inspiration cards for
advocacy action for
youth work
development and
recognition



Youth Partnership

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



INTRODUCTION

The **set of seven decks of action cards** is a practical tool designed to guide and support individuals and organisations in advocacy for youth work development and recognition. There are **five main decks** and two slightly different **supportive decks**. Each deck has a deck description card and is distinguishable by its colour.

Each card is easy to read and grasp the key action at a glance. The card format has the following elements:

TITLE: Brief name of the action card.

STEPS TO TAKE: A bullet list of step-by-step approaches to action.

SUCCESS TIPS: Practical tips or quick wins for executing the action effectively.

FOLLOW-UP TIPS: Ideas of what to do after the action is taken to sustain impact.

RESOURCES: Suggested resources or tools to make the action easier.

COLOUR CODING: Different colours for each of the areas.

ILLUSTRATIONS: Each thematic area has an illustration for better or faster recognition of the cards.

The action cards are designed to spark ideas and offer practical tips for those of you passionate about supporting youth work development and recognition, particularly those engaged in advocacy for youth work. You may be a youth worker, part of a youth (work) organisation, a policy maker or a supporter and ally to youth work finding yourself in other roles (see more in the **publication “WHO”**).

Each card provides actionable steps to help make your advocacy efforts more impactful and meaningful and includes a **step-by-step breakdown of actions, helpful tips and follow-up ideas to keep you moving forward**. But remember, these action cards are for **inspiration** and to **help you start**; they are not suggesting there is one way to go about advocacy!



TIPS

- **Adjust** all the ideas from the action cards to your context!
- **The goal** is to keep things simple, stay aligned with your advocacy goals, and move forward with confidence.
- The publications in this kit are a good **starting point**, providing many suggestions from the action cards.

KEY FOCUS AREAS



The five main decks of action cards connect each step on the roadmap of a youth work advocacy process:

- ▶ identify **WHY** there is a need for advocacy for youth work development and recognition
 - ▶ follow a sequence of **WHO** advocates, **ON WHAT**, and **TO WHOM**
 - ▶ all link with practical **HOW** to – with a specific focus on youth work development and recognition, giving a practical toolkit to guide and support you through your advocacy process.

These action cards help you stay focused and organised, from understanding why advocacy is the way to proceed, to taking action and building support for bringing about desired change.

The additional two decks support you with this advocacy roadmap:

- ▶ **“BEFORE ADVOCACY”** deck, which helps you determine if advocacy is the way to go (this deck should be used first).
- ▶ **“RESOURCES”** deck, which offers relevant resources to further strengthen and inspire your advocacy.

Here's what you'll find inside:

“BEFORE ADVOCACY” DECK

Action cards on determining if advocacy is the way to go



Action cards on determining if advocacy is the way to help you determine if the advocacy process is the right approach for achieving the desired changes.

Have you explored other alternative and shorter activities that could bring about the same goals for youth work development and recognition? Would they be more suitable at this time?

These cards are helpful before you start planning and engaging in a long-term commitment to the advocacy process.

“WHY” DECK

This deck consists of two sections of action cards, both within the wider “WHY” category:

1.Action cards for identifying the purpose of and needs for advocacy; and

2. Action cards for raising awareness about youth work impact.



Action cards for identifying the purpose of advocacy support you in identifying the critical needs behind your intended advocacy effort. Why do you want to advocate for youth work, what kind of change and in which area of youth work do you want to bring this about?

These cards provide you with a more structured way to understand the foundational “why” of your work, helping you stay focused on meaningful, well-supported advocacy efforts.



Action cards for raising awareness about youth work impact focus on helping you determine (and then communicate) why youth work is important, and what its value and impact are on individual young people, communities and society.



Why would others want you to advocate for youth work and why would they support you in those efforts? What is the “why” behind the cause, the issue that is motivating support and action?

These cards outline ways of communicating youth work’s value and impact, providing awareness-raising activities that showcase why youth work matters. They provide the core arguments that may help both to motivate and build your community that is advocating for youth work, and convince the intended target audience.

“WHO” DECK

Action cards to determine who the advocates are for youth work development and recognition



Action cards to determine who the advocates are for youth work development and recognition outline the steps for building the competences, including the skills, knowledge and confidence of those who will advocate for youth work development.



Who is best positioned to engage in advocacy efforts for youth work development and recognition in your context? Which competences do they (you) have and which might still be missing?

These cards offer guidelines and tips for improving your skills in advocacy, as well as actions to equip you with the skills to advocate effectively, enabling you to discover “who” is best placed to take on the advocacy efforts.

“ON WHAT” DECK

Action cards to determine what focus an advocacy effort should have



Action cards to determine the focus of an advocacy effort provide a guide to identifying and prioritising key topics and challenges in youth work that need change.

What kind of change do you want to see? Which area specifically needs an advocacy effort? And what should you focus on?



These cards are designed to help you pinpoint specific issues within your youth work ecosystem and the needs of your youth work community of practice, in order to clarify the “what” of your advocacy.

“TO WHOM” DECK

Action cards to understand who the advocacy is targeted to



Action cards to understand who advocacy is targeted to offer engagement strategies and tips for connecting with different audiences and tailoring your message to those who can bring about a desired change in relation to youth work.

Who needs to hear your advocacy “ask”? To whom is your advocacy message primarily intended?



These cards help you identify different audiences for your advocacy efforts, understand their specific needs and interests, connect with them and engage them in ways that make advocacy efforts more impactful.

“HOW” DECK

Action cards to show how to take an advocacy action



Action cards to show how to take an advocacy action outline the practical steps for using policy, evidence and partnerships to make advocacy efforts more effective. How do you show the impact of youth work? How do you build an advocacy plan? Which tactics do you apply?



These cards offer specific actions as examples and inspiration that can help amplify your message, build momentum and create a lasting impact in youth work advocacy.

“RESOURCES” DECK

Action cards on advocacy resources



Action cards on advocacy resources equip you with the key resources to elevate your advocacy efforts.

Key European policy documents and legislation: Which policy documents provide essential support for advocacy efforts on youth work development and recognition? Which tools could be used?

Successful advocacy practices for youth work: Which real examples of youth work advocacy practices could show the way?

Examples of counters to common misconceptions about youth work: Which evidence-based arguments, data and testimonials about youth work’s impact may be relevant to support specific advocacy efforts?

Advocacy target personas: Illustrative examples: Could inspiration come from examples of target personas of advocacy



for youth work? Or perhaps from examples of communication and engagement strategies?

List of Resources on youth work in Europe: Which other publications, studies and research may be relevant for supporting advocacy for youth work development and recognition?

These cards offer quick access to the information you need and resources to support your advocacy efforts.

HOW TO PLAY



Take a card – read and reflect on the key actions.



Look through the decks. Cards are colour-coded so choose the cards that you need.



Shuffle the cards in a way that makes most sense to you. **Combine elements** from different cards, scribble on them and, in any way you find suitable, make them your own. The recommended order of cards is only given in the “Before advocacy” deck.



Use them as it suits you best – when you need fresh ideas, a new perspective, insight from others or just confirmation that you are on a positive path!