

ADVOCACY FOR YOUTH WORK
DEVELOPMENT AND RECOGNITION

USER GUIDE



Youth Partnership

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



A-Kit: the advocacy kit for youth work development and recognition

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Original concept

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the A-Kit! The Advocacy Kit for youth work development and recognition is designed to provide practical tools and resources for those advocating for the recognition and development of youth work at local, national and European levels. It aims to empower the youth work community of practice with knowledge, strategies and tools for effective advocacy, to promote the value of youth work and support its long-term development. The A-Kit is built upon European policy frameworks and standards.

The A-Kit is designed to support users in identifying an issue in relation to youth work that they would like to address, to assess whether advocacy is a suitable method and if the answer is yes, to offer practical know-how and tools to support their advocacy efforts.



OBJECTIVES OF THE ADVOCACY KIT

The Advocacy Kit aims to support users by offering:

- ▶ **a practical advocacy toolbox** to the youth work community of practice. It provides a set of offline and online tools for youth workers, organisations and policy makers to support youth work development and recognition in their respective countries. It helps to ensure that youth work is recognised, supported, and made widely available;
- ▶ **a resource for competence development** on advocacy and communicating about youth work. It provides advocacy planning templates, and guidelines, as well as inspirational case studies and useful evidence-based arguments for youth work;
- ▶ **an adaptable-to-context approach** to advocacy for youth work development and recognition. It includes adaptable tools that can be tailored to national contexts, contributing to youth work advocacy in countries with a range of emerging to established youth work structures;
- ▶ **a support to youth work visibility and collaboration** between youth work practice, policy and research, as well as cross-sectoral. It refers to related policy instruments of the European institutions and to the Youth Partnership's existing tools.

INTENDED USERS

This kit is designed for a wide range of stakeholders, including:

- ▶ **youth workers** who wish to enhance the recognition of their profession and impact;
- ▶ **youth organisations** advocating for policy change and greater support;
- ▶ **policy makers** working to align national strategies with European youth work policies;
- ▶ **cross-sectoral stakeholders** interested in understanding and supporting youth work advocacy.



CONTENTS OF THE A-KIT

To support effective advocacy, the A-Kit contains the following tools:

1. Four booklets



Each booklet corresponds to the key advocacy questions (WHY, WHO, ON WHAT, TO WHOM) and provides theoretical background, strategies and practical applications. **Check each booklet description for details of what is inside.**

2. Inspiration cards for advocacy action

A set of practical cards to inspire advocacy actions.



2.1. A set of 49 practical cards offering guidance on advocacy actions and helping users implement strategies efficiently.

2.2. List of references to key European policy documents and legislation

Card containing a QR code linking to a web page with relevant European legislation, policies and research supporting youth work advocacy.

2.3. Successful advocacy practices for youth work

Card containing a QR code linking to inspiring examples of successful youth work advocacy initiatives across Europe.

2.4. Practical support materials

These cards provide quick-access resources to strengthen advocacy for youth work. Each card contains a QR code linking to:

- ▶ **“Counters” to common misconceptions about youth work**
An evidence-based set of arguments, data, and testimonials showcasing youth work’s impact.
- ▶ **Advocacy target personas: Illustrative examples**
Examples of potential target personas for advocacy in youth work, along with communication and engagement strategies that can be tailored to your own context.

2.5 List of resources

Card containing QR code linking to a web page with relevant publications, studies and research supporting advocacy for youth work development and recognition.

3. Foldable roadmap

A visual tool to help users plan their advocacy journey, outlining steps for a structured approach to advocacy on youth work.



4. Advocacy plan template

A ready-to-use template designed to assist users in creating a strategic and context-specific advocacy plan.

5. Identifier tool

A tool to help with identifying an advocacy focus and a starting point in advocacy efforts.



HOW TO USE THE ADVOCACY KIT

The Advocacy Kit is designed as a **flexible resource**, allowing you to navigate and use it in a way that best suits **your needs and context**. Whether you are just starting your advocacy journey or looking for ways to enhance existing efforts, the kit provides tools and insights to support your process.

Here are some possible ways to approach it:

- ▶ **Start with your needs:** Identify the advocacy challenge or opportunity you want to address. What challenge or gap in youth work development or recognition are you trying to tackle? Use the WHY booklet to reflect on the purpose and urgency of your advocacy efforts.
- ▶ **Assess whether advocacy is the right approach:** Use the identifier tool to determine if advocacy is the most effective way to address this issue, and if the answer is yes, where to start from.
- ▶ **Explore the tools:** Skim through the booklets, roadmap and action cards to get a sense of what's available. Pick what resonates best with your advocacy goals.
- ▶ **Follow a step-by-step approach:** If you prefer structure, you can use the foldable roadmap and advocacy planning template to guide your journey.
- ▶ **Adapt to your context:** The tools are designed to be adaptable. Modify templates, personalise personas, and adjust strategies to fit your specific advocacy landscape.
- ▶ **Reflect and evolve:** Advocacy is an evolving process. Use the checklist to assess progress and make adjustments based on your experiences and outcomes.
- ▶ **Mix and match:** You don't have to follow a strict order! Combine different elements, such as case studies for inspiration, illustrative personas and evidence-based "come-backs" to refine your messaging.
- ▶ **Take it with you!** Advocacy doesn't just happen at a desk – it happens in meetings, conversations and spontaneous moments. That's why the **Inspiration cards for advocacy action** are designed to be portable. Keep them handy and use them whenever you need inspiration or a strategic nudge in your advocacy journey. Carry them with you to:
 - *spark ideas and discussions*
 - *find quick guidance before engaging with stakeholders*
 - *remind yourself of key advocacy strategies on the go*
 - *scan the QR code card to access European policy documents and legislation, as well as other relevant resources whenever needed.*

Ultimately, the A-Kit is here to support your advocacy journey, not dictate it. Choose the approach that works best for you, and feel free to revisit different sections as your advocacy evolves!

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The member states of the **European Union** have decided to link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

<http://europa.eu>

The **Council of Europe** is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all 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.

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