

WHAT'S GOING ON?!

No. 19

Coyote

JUNE 2013



THEMES

Youth work / Knowledge / Policy

Youth Partnership

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



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Edito

by Mark Taylor

On behalf of the *Coyote* editorial team

Hello readers!

After a number of editions of *Coyote* devoted to single (if very wide) issues, we took the decision to look around and find out what is going on in the hearts, minds, structures and activities in the youth field these days. So we took the title of Marvin Gaye's song as our title, stretched our brains and spread the net wide.

You can find all sorts of insights and questions and inspiration for thinking and acting in a range of articles brought to you by activists, youth workers, researchers, policy makers, trainers and magical people. Our thanks to them for helping us to bring you topics such as:

- Impressions about what do others think we do?
- How do young people and youth work react to crisis?
- What comes after Spring?
- Where's my job (gone)?
- What are youth organisations doing for human rights?
- Can we change our language to respect perspectives on gender?
- Where does peace work fit in a violent world?
- What happens to young people when their families fail them?

Choosing is almost more about deciding what to leave out as it is about positively going in certain directions – so we know that it's not possible to cover everything here! Still, there is a lot to choose from! So wherever you read your *Coyote*, I wish you refreshing times!





Mobilisation of Arab youth:

an experience and a form of political participation

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Many names have been given to this movement: Arab Spring, Arab revolution, Arab uprising, etc. But whatever we call it, what Arab societies have experienced lately is not only a pivotal dynamic but also a crucial period for the region.

It is important to stress that the underlying problem is also economic and that, unfortunately, this dimension is absent from analysis of these developments because commentators – including the media – focus exclusively on the political factor. However, there is no denial of the corruption, the abuse of privilege and the misappropriation of resources by clans close to regime leaderships. Of course, similar phenomena are to be found in other countries and as long as they exist, these democratic movements will continue.



Photos by Marwa Turki



THE FACTS

Over the last few years, as a doctoral student conducting research into new forms of youth political participation, but also as a trainer-consultant interested in the development of youth in this region, I have been considering the following questions: are young Arabs committed to the societies in which they live? Do they feel that they belong to a community and share common values? Can they identify with their society, have confidence in its institutions and participate in its development?

- ♥ Low unemployment rates obviously mean better future prospects. In this region, however, the difficulties in finding employment have fuelled concern and continue to do so.
- ♥ Young people suffer to varying degrees from a general crisis of confidence in institutions and the elites, which has led them to adopt fatalistic attitudes.
- ♥ Young people have less confidence in national institutions than in the media or even NGOs.
- ♥ Young people no longer believe in the future because they feel they have been abandoned by the authorities.
- ♥ A lack of confidence in institutions does not lead systematically to youth disaffection, and the desire to participate may be expressed in different ways. Participation in the non-profit sector is significant, as is political involvement.



"Youth, a priority"

What we are seeing here are not traditional forms of participation, but "unconventional" ones such as strikes, demonstrations, ethical financing, etc. Young people are showing a keen interest in civic participation, but in new ways.

The protagonists of these movements are mainly young people and women who aspire above all to a democratic and prosperous society and are united under the banner of justice, freedom and dignity.

What typifies them is the image of young people who have lost all confidence in political parties but show great attachment to social values, the family, etc.

Hence, if we are to be fair and take an optimistic view of the future, it is important to recognise that the voice of the young people, their organisations and the peoples of the Arab region has not been heard. The reactions of the major powers (especially America and Europe) initially revealed a certain discomfort, although the issues at stake differed from one country to another. In one way or another, the major powers supported these regimes for a long period, not only for security reasons but also out of "immigration concerns". But the will for change, the values of freedom and the fight against inequality eventually brought about a change in their way of co-operating with the region. And this is only the beginning.

Mobilisation of Arab youth: an experience and a form of political participation

This uprising, this “Arab Spring” led by young people in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Morocco, Jordan and other countries of the region, has had the following direct results:

- the emergence of new youth movements (Mohamed Bouazizi's act of desperation and the unprecedented protest movement by Tunisian youth, 25 January in Egypt, 20 February in Morocco, 17 February in Libya, etc.);
- the beginnings of a democratic transition;
- constitutional reforms;
- the emergence of young parliamentarians in Morocco;
- a new era and new hopes;
- awareness of a different way of doing things with and for young people;
- recognition and sense of young people's contribution to society;
- new hopes as to the usefulness of work done by young people, their involvement in society and their active citizenship.

The role of youth organisations is now starting to take new directions, not only to build and support democratic processes but also to guarantee the proper implementation of government policies and monitoring to ensure that the processes set in motion meet young people's real aspirations. It is a major task and a European partnership is eagerly awaited not only to enhance youth organisations' institutional capacities but also to share tools and methods for democratic management of youth organisations and in the field of good governance.

Nonetheless, it is important not to forget that it is high time that all partners of the youth sector were included. Indeed, many new youth organisations are active and present in the countries of the Arab world, but are absent from co-operation programmes, for subjective reasons or because of the security-based approaches of the past. There

is no doubt, however, that the mutual negative images are starting to change and that attitudes, too, are starting to shift, especially as regards the question of Islam.

Two important processes affecting the Euro-Arab region should be noted:

☞ On the one hand, the young people who use new technologies and new forms of political participation (including within youth organisations) which drove the Arab Spring are aware that their mobilisation has started to transform the societies of the Maghreb and the Arab region in general.

☞ On the other, economic recession has had a profound impact in Europe.

Both of these processes will no doubt have major repercussions for the development of the Euro-Arab region in the years ahead.

All these dynamics represent an opportunity for the Euro-Arab region in the youth field. A few one-off or annual activities are no longer enough and all indicators and the mutual needs of players in both regions (Europe and the Arab world) encourage the implementation of a co-operation strategy in the youth field with mechanisms to ensure its continuity. This is the strong signal awaited by youth work stakeholders in both regions. In a historic period such as this, means must be found to encourage opportunities for intercultural sharing and for co-operation on education for democratic citizenship, and a new governance model in the youth field.

It is equally important not to forget that this is an aspiration expressed repeatedly by youth organisations in both regions. The aim is to establish a framework for partnership and a sustainable mechanism which will support initiatives of young people in Europe, the Gulf states and the Arab countries towards sharing of practices and a better understanding of each other's management and working methods, via shared experiences that create opportunities for dialogue and mutual understanding.

The Arab Spring has ushered in a new era in the Euro-Arab region, a region at the heart of international developments. The recent changes in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya and the reforms in other countries such as Morocco and Jordan have opened up new prospects and created new opportunities. After years of autocratic rule which held back political and economic development, young people in the Arab world are looking hopefully to the future. People's, and especially young people's, expectations of change are typified by a desire for a democratic transition accompanied by economic and social development, peace, stability and prosperity in the region. Demand for this has been particularly strong on the part of Arab youth. In rising up against their regimes, young Arabs issued a call to the rest of the world for a more prosperous future based on job creation, economic growth, equality and democracy.

The challenge now facing the region's partners is to meet those expectations and respond effectively to that call. Changes in the South will inevitably influence many aspects of economic, social and political relations in the Euro-Arab and Euro-Mediterranean regions. Young people must find their place in this process because, in this new context, the direct repercussions both for economic relations between the two regions and for bilateral and multilateral relations are obvious, and this provides us with a unique opportunity to strengthen Euro-Arab co-operation. We can now work to turn these political changes into an effective partnership. It is time to work for an increased regional dimension in the youth field, for a co-operation framework which will facilitate co-operation on youth policies, capacity building and non-formal education.

In this new context, Euro-Arab relations should be based on four pillars: youth, peace, democracy and economic development. It is important to draw the attention of pan-European and pan-Arab

organisations to the need for further elaboration of a Euro-Arab agenda based on these four pillars. Nobody can fail to be aware of the important role which young people and civil society can and must play and it is therefore essential to involve them more fully in this new co-operation.

The European institutions, the League of Arab States' youth department and the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth have played a major role in these changes by creating opportunities for training, meetings and dialogue and promoting democratic objectives, peace and stability in the region. There is, however, a growing need to strengthen this type of partnership given the sheer size of the two regions (Europe with all the Council of Europe member states and the Arab region, including the Gulf states and the members of the Arab League far from the shores of the Mediterranean). There is also a need for new ideas and a need for an institutional framework with a sustainable mechanism, on the model of the North-South Centre, for long-term action as regards the promotion of dialogue between European and Arab countries and the sharing of experience and expertise. The Council of Europe's historic response to European youth in the wake of the events of May 1968 was to set up the European Youth Foundation and the European Youth Centres; it is such a response that we dream of hearing and seeing.

Personally, in the face of all this, I have feelings of joy and relief. Thanks to young people and their mobilisation, things are starting to move. They have challenged and changed entrenched attitudes such as political inaction, non-participation, despair and abuse of privilege. I am optimistic, therefore, that the forces at work in the Arab world and in the Maghreb can make further advances and begin to breathe freedom.



Arab youth

Mobilisation of Arab youth: an experience and a form of political participation

NEED FOR A COMMON PROJECT

Arab policy makers must believe in the need to build new images of youth. The Nordic countries offer an instructive example. In these countries young people are placed firmly at the heart of policy making and their engagement, creativity and critical spirit are regarded as a practical and socially useful resource. What is more, young people matter to us today for what they are today, and not just because they are necessary to the renewal of society, because they will be tomorrow's adults or because our pensions depend on their future employment.

There is a need for a common project, but it is as difficult to build as it is essential. Several delicate balances need to be struck:

- between a common national history and manifold individual experiences;
- between a long-term collective vision and the urgency of specific situations;
- between shared values and the diversity of stakeholders.

The aim being success for young people, the common project cannot be based on a policy of victimisation or categorisation. And in the face of changing values (related to society, employment and the family), the common project must be constantly renewed and rethought to give young people belief in themselves, in their personal future and in the future of society.

Young Arabs need to be listened to more and to be provided with mechanisms for integration and opportunities for participation in a dispassionate climate in which freedom, dialogue, diversity and civic responsibility, democracy in short, are the key principles that underpin young people's new relations with the state, society, the economy and the nation.

I have a feeling of confidence in the future, hope for a better tomorrow and equal opportunities for all. But between hope/optimism and reality there is a long road strewn with fears and uncertainties. Nevertheless, I remain happy that young people are determined to carry on the processes that have been set in motion. These are lengthy processes which will need to accumulate experience, bring in more and more people and, above all, set up education projects and programmes to support change and reform.

It would no doubt be easy to continue to define these possible responses and detail the necessary practical steps, but I also wanted to include the personal account of one of the many protagonists of these revolutions and processes of change. Here, then, is an excerpt from an interview with Karim Kasim, a young Egyptian.

Khalil: *Could you present yourself?*

Karim: I am Karim Kasim, an Egyptian, Arab, Muslim, Mediterranean, African and global citizen with multiple layers who cares about the poor and needy, who works in the development sector using Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), who believes in free and easy access to information and knowledge to all underprivileged people. Youth are the heartbeat of the world, they make change and they drive developments. Human rights, democracy and intercultural dialogue are some of the most important values I believe in to which I dedicate part of my work and life. I see that the shift of power to the hands of the people has started already. Young men and women change the world from their own squares of Tahrir and others around the globe. And I hope that I am a small part of this youth movement that is changing the world.

Khalil: *What can you say about the role of youth work (youth NGOs, formal and informal youth groups, etc.) during the Arab Spring in your country?*

Karim: I do believe that youth played the main and key role in the Arab Spring. They were the ones who organised and most importantly believed in the cause and worked hard to make Egypt a better place. Maybe they did not expect to oust dictators but they believed that they could do it, even though it looked impossible. They didn't know that it would happen but they believed it might happen, and that was enough to make it happen.

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Two things are important here. The first one is youth work and its accumulation for at least two decades was behind building the courage and momentum for this Arab Spring. It was not a stand-alone revolution but it was an accumulation of work and confidence. Also, working with many different actors in our Arab nations as well as internationally was key to learning and practicing human rights and advocating for them, which was key in the Arab Spring itself.

The Arab Spring and its success were more the results of the work of informal youth groups and initiatives rather than formal ones due to security reasons. Indeed, the dictator states were behind any NGO and youth organisations, making it hard for them to just do "traditional work". The absence of the rule of law was also key to hindering formal youth organisations. But young people always find ways to come together and social media and the Internet were the medium for that.

Khalil: *After the democratic youth movements, is there any consequence on Arab youth work in your context?*

Karim: Yes indeed. The main consequences and challenges are the lack of new transparent laws and regulations that govern and organise our work, in Egypt but also in many other Arab nations.

On the one hand, the democratic transition has not been smooth or productive yet and we fear the "reverse revolution" or the "failure of the revolution" and a crackdown on youth and youth organisations. On the other hand, the transition provided more spaces for more informal actions

and work on the ground. Many NGOs and youth-led work took to the streets and rural areas to do things on their own, which is great.

Khalil: *How do you see the future of the youth work in your context?*

Karim: I see pros and cons, of course. On the one hand, the positive side is that young people have gained a lot of confidence and belief in their own capabilities and that they can make changes. On the other hand, I am worried about the future because I do not see much of an enabling environment for youth to take part in real formal institutions such as the parliament and government among others. The elders still work in traditional ways, which do not give formal space to young people.

Khalil: *Do we need Euro-Arab youth co-operation?*

Karim: Of course we do! We live around one big lake that is the Mediterranean, which connects people and especially young people. Whether we like it or not, our youths are connected and – for instance, those from the south risk their lives in the sea to reach the other side thinking that it is heaven. Despite this sad and dangerous experience of riding the sea for a better future, I think young people should keep sustainable relations to make sure that equal opportunities are available to youth groups on both the northern and southern sides of the Mediterranean.

These should be opportunities for knowledge and capacity to make their own futures and not to wait for somebody else to tell them what to do, or how to do it.



Occupy European youth work?

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Occupy! Occupy Wall Street. Occupy Dame Street. Occupy public space in 95 cities in 82 countries. Occupy economics. Occupy the buffer zone. Occupy mainstream media. Occupy together. Occupy everywhere. Occupy everything. In 2011 a verb became a noun, but it also became an unconventional political movement, a refusal, a metaphor and a slim horizon of possibility. Developing from the physical occupation of symbolic public spaces such as Wall Street, the Occupy movement came to embody, over and above the different ideas of its actors, a refusal of the anti-human and anti-social “certainties” of neoliberal capitalism. Yet there is little new under the human sun; it was also a reminder and re-enactment of the historical tensions that exist between the representative democracy of the nation-state, and democracy as a direct mobilisation and claim to collective autonomy.

As a movement characterised by the central – but not exclusive – involvement of young people, Occupy is inevitably of interest to those forms of youth work concerned with the autonomy and dignity of young people, and the impact of social forces and political-economic processes on their lives and possibilities. But how and why it is of interest has received very little attention. So, does Occupy get a study session, or is it time for #OccupyStudySession, or both?



Occupy

Global meltdown

In his timely book, *Why It's Kicking Off Everywhere*, the BBC journalist Paul Mason describes the range of popular movements, protests, revolutions and civil wars that erupted between 2010 and 2011, and argued that what connects these developments – compared by some to the European revolutions of 1848 and 1989 – is a change in the nature of powerlessness. That is: “We’re in the middle of a revolution caused by the near collapse of free-market capitalism combined with an upswing in technical innovation, a surge in desire for individual freedom and a change in human consciousness about what freedom means.” (Mason 2012: 3)

That – broadly speaking – revolutionary conditions exist in Europe, and that they are profoundly shaped by the precariousness of the social futures available to young people across class positions, has long been known in European youth work, if not necessarily expressed in these terms. The 2008 Kiev declaration of the 8th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth, for example, makes explicit reference to the need to combat “the increased risk of precariousness”. However, not only does this now sound hopelessly understated, it was also declaimed on the cusp of the global credit crunch crisis. In 2008, and despite two decades of confident predictions of the world-historical durability of liberal capitalism, the global economic system came close to collapse.

A global property and credit bubble, facilitated by restless global flows of capital, and amplified by financial speculation conducted through unregulated transnational networks, forced world governments into drastic measures to “stabilise” their banking systems. Such was the evident panic of the corporate class that, as David Graeber points

out, it became possible to imagine the “beginning of an actual public conversation about the nature of debt, of money, of the financial institutions that have come to hold the fate of nations in their grip”. Of course, as he points out, “that was just a moment. The conversation never ended up taking place” (Graeber 2011: 15). By socialising private debts, many states had taken on crushing financial burdens that spooked powerful investors in government bonds. In Europe, “reassuring” the markets quickly came to involve a violent assault on the social contract, and thus the one-way conversation shifted to the necessary fiction of “bloated” public services, “lavish” social welfare and “spoilt” generations that expect “something for nothing”.

The events of 2011 were, in their different ways, precipitated by different attempts in captive nation-states to shore up a system of unequal power and privilege that had imploded through the weight of its own contradictions. The revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, the movement of the *Indignados* in Spain and Portugal, popular resistance in Greece, and the global Occupy movement are united by a profound challenge to dictatorial and democratic regimes that lost legitimacy by, as Wolfgang Streeck puts it, serving the sovereign of the market over the sovereign of the people (Streeck 2012). In issuing this challenge, the racist geographies that provide a dominant European lens on the “Middle East” were unsettled by the Indignados movement hailing the inspiration of Tahrir Square. In turn, the extraordinary flourishing of camps across Spain in summer 2011 was one of the inspirations for the occupation of Zucotti Park near Wall Street in autumn, on the 10th anniversary of the resumption of trading after 9/11.

» Occupy European youth work?

Real democracy, now

The alter-globalisation movement of the 1990s was characterised by the idea of “one no, many yeses” – that is, a collective rejection of the capitalist status quo, which in turn provided a basis for the hard work of arguing and working for differently conceived egalitarian and ecological futures. In many ways this phrase characterises the Occupy movement. However the “no” to capitalism was more conflicted. Instead the “no” gained its force from a rejection of the material inequality represented by the division between the “1%” and the “99%”. The idea of the 1%/99% also inevitably represents a division that threatens to undermine established democracies, as this scale of inequity cannot be resolved through representative structures in thrall to private power.

“We are the 99%” is a powerful slogan, and also one that, depending on your perspective, illustrates the weaknesses and strengths of Occupy. In the early days of Occupy Wall Street, as media inattention gave way to a somewhat condescending interest, the movement was dismissed because it could not be recognised and reported in conventional ways: Who is the leader? What are their demands? However, the logic of Occupy, in demanding real democracy, now, involved a fundamental refusal to be represented, and thus controlled, through precisely these conventional approaches.

The key to understanding this is recognising that the form, the very act of occupying public space, is every bit as important as the content (what people say they stand for). Occupy involved the making public of “public space” through shared political action, and a principled refusal to be dispersed according to the repressive logics of state and corporate power. In so doing, the idea of “occupying” combines established, historical tactics of popular mobilisation with a contemporary awareness



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that people become political by acting politically, by engaging as equals, by exchanging ideas, by collectively overcoming the fear of illegitimate authority, and by creatively refusing the supposed common sense of threadbare ideologies. As Dan Hind has written in his pamphlet on Occupy and “the new common sense”:

“The occupations of the last year show us that people are capable of awesome sophistication once they start listening to one another... Occupation was a shared risk that led those involved to believe that they were somehow consequential... politics ceased to be something that one watched from a distance and became something that one did. The decision to act created a shared freedom to shape events. The assembly provided a medium in which this freedom could be exercised. By acting as though they mattered, they discovered what had always been true – that the assembly of people is the beginning of power.”

REAL DEMOCRACY



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Occupy youth work?

It would take a far more comprehensive article to offer any assessment of what transpired over time in different Occupy sites: the different coalitions built, their relations with trade unions, left-wing parties and migrant groups, the class and generational profiles of those involved (see Howard Williamson’s comment at the end of this article), their treatment by the state and media, and so forth. But it is enough to note that the idea of “occupy” – as a logic of refusal and resistance, a challenge to the terms on which we are represented and through which we represent ourselves – now has a life beyond the physical gatherings of autumn 2011. This afterlife is sufficient to pose three questions for discussion among European youth workers.

To occupy is to participate, and to get involved without guarantees beyond the possibilities and frustrations of co-operation and co-resistance. To what extent does this vision of participation overlap with thinking about participation as a key value of youth work processes? To occupy is to be political, to attempt to occupy a future stripped of many of its promises and struggle for a shared flourishing. Can European youth work complement this political turn, especially given recent discussions of the need for more political education? To occupy is to refuse the legitimacy of structures that prevent or damage human flourishing. Inevitably, this will involve political conflict and popular struggle. How can youth workers involve themselves in young people’s struggles to reclaim their societies and their futures?

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Online enquiry

An online enquiry with a few youth workers from different countries provides insight – but obviously not thorough research – into what is going on out there and how youth workers and leaders view the Occupy movements, particularly in relation to the work they do with young people.

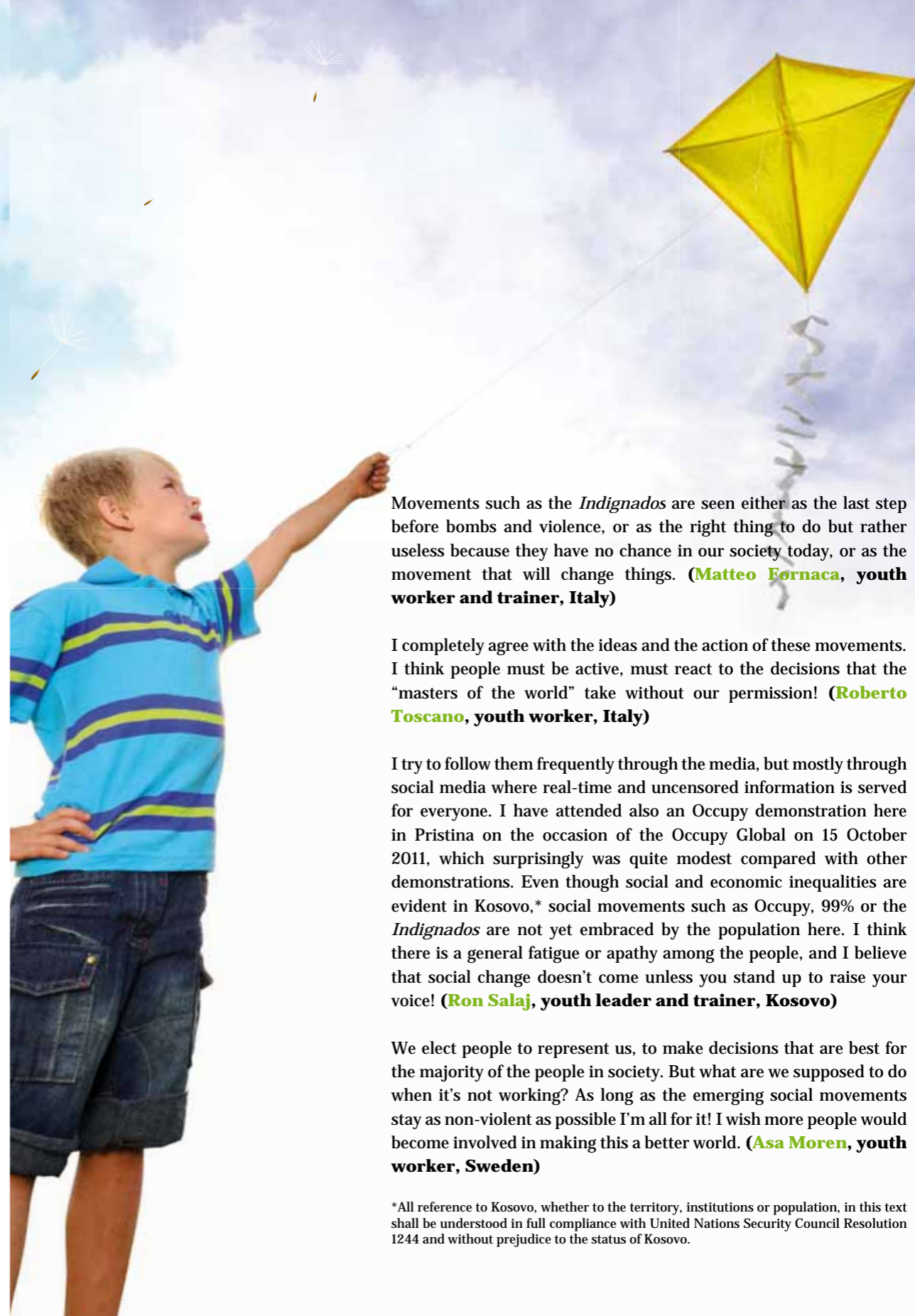
“Where do you stand in relation to emerging social movements and forms of politics, such as Indignados, the 99% or Occupy?”

I feel really close to the ideology these movements foster: social justice, equal opportunities, peace, etc. (...) I think the way they act is not well adapted to the reality of today's world, because for me sometimes it's too utopian. But I totally agree with their approach to the economic world situation. **(Riccardo Gulletta, youth worker and trainer, Spain)**

I agree with the majority of claims of these movements and I think that to occupy and to use public spaces for defending and fighting for human rights causes are a good starting point. Public spaces are public for all. And besides the freedom of expression and meeting, this new ownership (appropriation) of streets, squares, parks... is

one of the positive sides of these movements. (...) These movements could be also the appearance at the global level of a common “speech” and awareness for more justice, more democracy, more equality, for the fairest financial system and power relationship. (...) The challenge and dilemmas are how to transform these needs, wishes, dreams, ideas into really new actions, a new system, a new society. Should these movements create new political parties? How can we have a real impact against the capitalist financial system if these movements are completely part of it? To simplify (and provoke), everyone is against the big companies but everyone wants an Ipad and to use the Internet for free!!!! The journey is hard and complex... but another world is possible! **(Laure Dewitte, trainer, France/Portugal)**

This is a moment when youth should be empowered, not just supported when struggling with unemployment, lack of professional perspective and lack of representation at the political level. Although Occupy activists repeatedly put emphasis on their openness towards various worldviews, I perceived a general atmosphere of a left-wing tendency, which I personally do not share and which is not realistically compatible with the orientation of our organisation. **(Max Niessen, youth leader, Germany)**



Movements such as the *Indignados* are seen either as the last step before bombs and violence, or as the right thing to do but rather useless because they have no chance in our society today, or as the movement that will change things. **(Matteo Fornaca, youth worker and trainer, Italy)**

I completely agree with the ideas and the action of these movements. I think people must be active, must react to the decisions that the “masters of the world” take without our permission! **(Roberto Toscano, youth worker, Italy)**

I try to follow them frequently through the media, but mostly through social media where real-time and uncensored information is served for everyone. I have attended also an Occupy demonstration here in Pristina on the occasion of the Occupy Global on 15 October 2011, which surprisingly was quite modest compared with other demonstrations. Even though social and economic inequalities are evident in Kosovo,* social movements such as Occupy, 99% or the *Indignados* are not yet embraced by the population here. I think there is a general fatigue or apathy among the people, and I believe that social change doesn't come unless you stand up to raise your voice! **(Ron Salaj, youth leader and trainer, Kosovo)**

We elect people to represent us, to make decisions that are best for the majority of the people in society. But what are we supposed to do when it's not working? As long as the emerging social movements stay as non-violent as possible I'm all for it! I wish more people would become involved in making this a better world. **(Asa Moren, youth worker, Sweden)**

*All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

» Occupy European youth work?



“How are these movements relevant to the young people you work with?”

The young people I work with are quite far from these movements. They are always living in an “emergency dynamic”, fighting against poverty, for mobility and ICT access, for no discrimination, access to work, against domestic violence. Their frustration is similar to the young people in the UK or France who set cars on fire and steal materials and clothes from shops. They feel closer to these young people than to the *Indignados*. As educators we can “use” these movements to help them to understand the origins and reasons of their needs and problems, to motivate them to participate, to canalise their frustration in a productive and constructive way and to help them to lose their fear to express and organise themselves. On the other side we can also invite the activists involved in these political and social movements to learn more about these different realities and approach these young people to understand them better. I suppose that facilitating this bridge is one of my roles actually. **(Laure Dewitte, trainer, France/Portugal)**

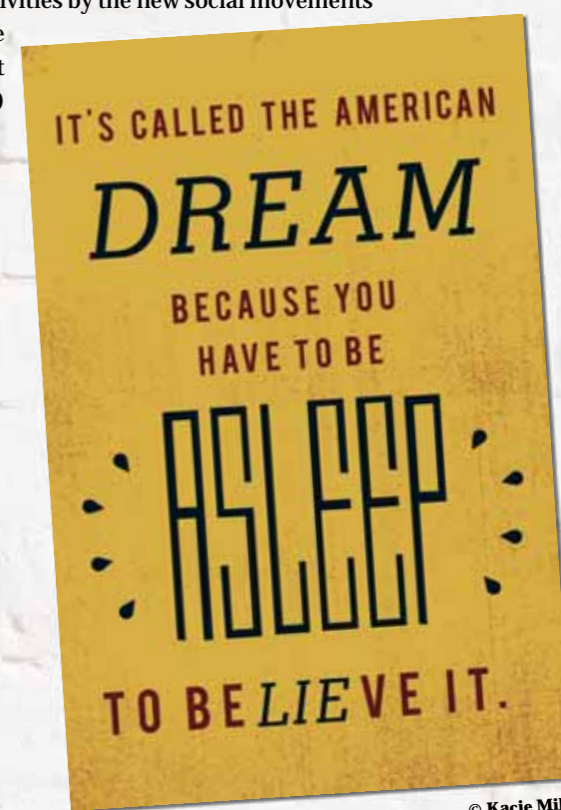
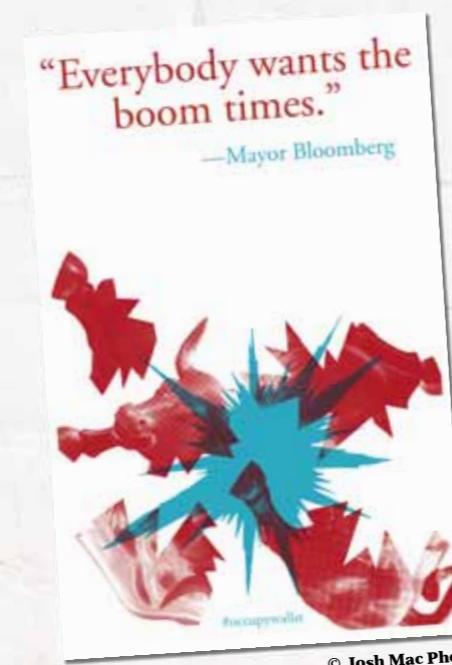
For the young people I work with in my association or in the project on youth policies with the Tuscany region these movements are a way of expression for the struggle for rights and of protesting. For other young people, totally disengaged with the political situation, that have lost their trust in others and themselves, these movements are empty, and will not bring any real contribution to change. **(Silvia Volpi, trainer and youth worker, Italy)**

When it comes to the young people I work with... I'm not even sure they are aware of the fact that these movements exist. Some of them, who have active parents, know what's going on in the world around them. But the average young person at this youth club is not very interested in politics at all. Unfortunately I think it's because they think it's something really difficult, and that they don't know how to express themselves. We've tried to have a few exercises, making them more interested to inform themselves about issues that concern them... but it's like they can't be bothered. I do believe that if we can get them a bit more “fired up” the different social movements definitely are relevant for them. On the other hand, the young people (mostly teenaged girls) that I work with within the equestrian organisation are quite involved in different matters such as youth participation and equal funding within sports. They have their own blogs where they express their opinions, they are active in different organisations and a few of them are politically active and once in a while get involved in different social movements. **(Asa Moren, youth worker, Sweden)**

How can youth workers involve themselves in young people's struggles to reclaim their societies and their futures? **(Gavan Titley)**

...and we also got some spicy input from a researcher

Where I stand is very, very clear – in a state of some confusion and uncertainty! The emergent social movements across Europe and the world, usually involving disproportionate numbers of young people, are a classic mix of both opportunity and threat. Much will depend on their capacity for creative self-discipline, as Occupy and, in the UK, UK Uncut, have done, so far. There is anger and opposition to the turmoil of contemporary political, economic and social arrangements. The young are especially aggrieved about their prospects for the future. There are potential alliances, perhaps almost for the first time, of what I crudely depict as the “socially disadvantaged” and the “intellectually disaffected”. The first group have had a hard time for a long time, but have rarely organised effectively. The second group, sometimes in fact from the first group originally, are those that have pursued their educations in response to proclamations about the future “knowledge-based economy” only to find that their labour market situation often seems – and increasingly is – no better than for those who have few or no qualifications and abandoned education at the first opportunity. It is this second group that has, arguably, greater potential to develop a well-organised, creative response, using the resources of social networking and political understanding. So such a mix may be healthy or toxic. We have seen both over the past year: camps, protests, campaigns and riots. Most public activities by the new social movements hold the possibility of any of these. It is how they are balanced that will ultimately shape the impact that they produce. **(Howard Williamson, researcher)**



Occupy





How are human rights put into practice by youth organisations?

Human rights education and contributions to a culture of human rights

by Gisèle Evrard
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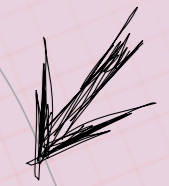


If one looks at international-level advocacy for human rights education in the last two years, there are at least a couple of reasons for joy: one is the adoption by the United Nations of a Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training in December 2011 and the second one is the adoption by the Council of Europe of the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. Little by little, the conversation about advocacy for human rights education is continuing. Activists should not ignore these two documents. They obviously complement the international human rights treaties in which articles constantly mention that education is also about knowing one's rights. They also steer and define a bit more clearly who is to do what when it comes to human rights education.

human
rights



BUT WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?



"Human rights education and training comprises all educational, training, information, awareness-raising and learning activities aimed at promoting universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and thus contributing to, *inter alia*, the prevention of human rights violations and abuses by providing persons with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviours, to empower them to contribute to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights."

"Human rights education and training encompasses education:

- (a) About human rights, which includes providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection;
- (b) Through human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners;
- (c) For human rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others."

(Article 2, UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/UNDHREducationTraining.htm>)

"'Human rights education' means education, training, awareness raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to empower learners to contribute to the building and defence of a universal culture of human rights in society, with a view to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms."

(Council of Europe, Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education)

How are human rights put into practice by youth organisations?

Human rights are not only for lawyers

This is one of the first things one can learn from the Council of Europe's youth programmes for human rights education.

Human rights education is simply about “education for human dignity”, to quote the title of a well-known work of Betty Reardon on the matter. And, as with human rights, it ideally “starts with breakfast”. In youth organisations, these simple words become projects dealing with human rights, human rights movements, educational programmes for people of all sorts, short-term or long-term engagements, or even processes aimed at reorganising institutions in order to make them more in line with human rights principles. It is a mosaic of practices.

Human rights education (hereinafter, HRE) in youth work also means to follow and apply the principles of non-formal education and therefore, to be learner centred and based on the needs of the group we work with, although within a larger societal context. This, combined with subagent HRE topics, has shown a more systematic development in recent years, at local, regional, national and international levels. A sign of this process, and at the same time very much the beginning of a path, is the adoption in 2010 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, a policy document whose potential for mainstreaming HRE in all member states of the Council of Europe, as well as in serving as an advocacy tool for youth organisations and civil society in general, should now be explored!

A conference in Strasbourg on “Human Rights and Democracy in Action — Looking Ahead” (29-30 November 2012) brought together 200 participants, including governments, civil society organisations, international institutions and education professionals. They discussed how democracy and human rights could be promoted through education, with the help of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. They identified key concerns and also proposed a way forward for mainstreaming HRE in formal and non-formal education. A roadmap for the next five years was defined on this occasion. Practitioners

have reasons to be happy: the European framework paves the road for mainstreaming HRE at national and local levels. Want to learn more? Have a look here: www.coe.int/edchre.

HRE does not exist in a vacuum. In other words, each educational process, beyond the impact of the learners—which extends from attitudes, values, skills and knowledge to capacity to bring about change in each person's life—also has an impact or is related to other processes, which are not only educational. HRE thus contributes and complements a variety of actions youth organisations can take. COMPASS provides the reader with a list of possible actions youth organisations can do or undertake for human rights, such as:

1. fighting individual violations of human rights directly by using existing instruments;
2. offering direct assistance to those whose rights have been violated;
3. lobbying for changes to national, regional or international law and/or regulations;
4. helping to develop the substance of laws and promoting new protection mechanisms;
5. promoting knowledge of, and respect for, human rights among the population;
6. changing the way we work in youth organisations, to make our work based on human rights;
7. research on human rights and human rights violations;
8. learning from other groups and building partnerships;
9. covering for the lack of government services for those whose rights are violated;
10. taking public actions to raise awareness.

Considering the above and because a story speaks more than a label can, we decided to explore, with the support of human rights activists and educators from youth organisations, how HRE is intertwined with other human rights work. The collection of responses is of course by no means exhaustive; it does not need to be. As human rights are a living instrument, so should a healthy human rights movement be a flexible, creative and adaptable movement.

Let's have a look at the responses and examples we received.



Youth democratic citizenship through the work of Dínamo

(Portugal)

For this association, “youth democratic citizenship as a human right at local level shall be more than words”. Many challenges arise when tackling youth democratic citizenship at local level, such as the lack of opportunities to learn about, through and for participation; institutional resistance to change; lack of mechanisms and of general conditions to ensure a friendly environment for young people to participate; misguided processes where “youth participation” turns out to be manipulative or have young people as the main “decorative furniture”; a lack of internal evaluation practices from local public institutions which compromises their ability to respond to young people's needs, often failing to be accountable for their human right to be equal actors in participating in social transformation.

As a local Portuguese organisation focusing on youth participation, Dínamo responded to these complex challenges by creating a complex strategy: “Sintra is also yours!” aiming to provide young people in the Sintra region with tools, competences, activities, conditions and alternatives to promote, motivate, enhance, strengthen and facilitate their active participation in the civil society in general and in the Sintra region in particular. In the framework of this strategy, Dínamo is implementing the project “Regional Networks for Meaningful Youth Participation” where a group of young people is given the resources and conditions they need to create a large network of social actors dealing with youth in the region.

The participants went through a first phase focusing on capacity building, an educational process that allowed them to learn together

about democratic citizenship (DC) and to better understand what rights they are not fully enjoying in their community. The next phase focused on empowerment and lasted about four months. The young people began to develop an ownership of the overall process, going from being highly dependent, to participation, to end up promoting and facilitating a one-day local meeting with about 50 participants (young people, youth workers, NGOs/institutions' representatives).

Not only did they succeed but they also managed to create a public Charter of Recommendations with the network members. As we write these lines, the next steps will be to further assess young people's needs on the ground to then evaluate whether those needs are satisfied. Given the right conditions and the opportunity, young people are the best defenders and practitioners of their (human) right to participate equally.

In the 37 years of the Portuguese democratic state, there is an irony of fate: young people end up finding their own way to build the conditions they need to participate as equals in transforming civil society, including securing their right to education (for DC). But for young people this still means competing with other obligations such as studies or the need to “work for money” which, often and considering the actual situation in Portugal, seem to have more of an inhibitive effect rather than the opposite. Whenever a state is failing to make it possible for young people to shape their own futures, there shall be an NGO providing conditions for young people to advocate for a change. That's what we do at Dínamo.

How are human rights put into practice by youth organisations?

LGBTQ rights through the work of ANSO

The Association of Nordic and Pol-Balt LGBTQ Student Organizations (ANSO) is an umbrella organisation working with young people and students in the Nordic and Baltic regions as well as Poland. Occasionally, it is possible for the organisation to get involved in campaigns and actions at national level in its member countries.

Such an opportunity occurred in January 2012 when a handful of Swedish LGBT organisations started a campaign in order to abolish legislation regulating recognition of a new legal gender for transgender persons in Sweden. According to the law, in order to have their new legal gender recognised, transgender persons are forced to undergo a

surgical operation that results in permanent sterility. After the Swedish Government, influenced by the conservative Christian Democrats, refused to alter the discriminatory law, the campaign against the law was born. In a true activist spirit, several organisations working for the human rights of LGBT persons came together to fight against discrimination, ANSO was one of them.

The campaign had many elements: from articles to blogs, to meetings, to lobbying, to one of the biggest petition actions ever, run by the organisation AllOut.org, which turned out to be a huge success with over 70 000 signatures from all over the world. What would activism be without mobilising people, demonstrations and powerful speeches? On a cold morning in early January, the demonstration gathered around 400 people who wanted to express their disapproval and listen to many empowering speeches given by activists and politicians. Despite the winter weather and freezing cold, the atmosphere was hot.

In order to keep the activist spirit alive, we organised, after a few weeks, an evening activity for the community. It was a safe space full of performances, food, music, and time for mingling and planning revolution! It was a very empowering evening which connected people coming from various organisations, experiences and paths of life.

“What about results?” one may ask. After a few weeks of intense campaigning, the Christian Democrats issued a statement saying that they had changed their position on the law. This was received by the LGBT movement with a sense of relief, but also impatience to see tangible proof of the promised changes.

This ad hoc campaign proved that if there is a will and people who believe in change, anything is possible! And even though there were frustrating and stressful moments, we had loads of fun. Not only did we come closer to changing the discriminatory legislation, but we also empowered the LGBT community.



Girls' and women's rights through the work of WAGGGS

“Stop the violence” is a global campaign from the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) which aims to stop all forms of violence against girls and young women. Because WAGGGS believes any form of violence against girls and women is wrong and must stop, the organisation is gathering voices to help our message grow from a whisper to a shout.

Some 45% of women in Europe have experienced gender-based violence. Girls in every country across the world are being subjected to many forms of violence: from forced marriage and female genital mutilation in some countries to domestic violence and bullying in others.

At this stage, nearly 7 500 people from over 80 countries have added their voice to the “Stop the violence – speak out for girls’ rights” voice counter, with more added every day as we work towards a target of 5 million voices.

On top of adding their voices to the campaign, Girl Guides and Girl Scouts worldwide are taking action in different ways, speaking out and acting against violence. Girl Guides associations in the UK, Denmark, Malta and Finland are piloting a non-formal education programme which teaches girls and boys, young women and young men about girls’ rights, helping them develop the skills to claim those rights for themselves and others. In Cyprus, they held a convention to discuss these issues while facing their communities and decided on an action plan to stop violence. In Malta, they officially launched their “Stop the violence” campaign in March 2012, in partnership with the National Council for Women, the Commissioner for Domestic Violence and the Maltese Confederation for Women Organisations. Last but not least, with the support of the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe, the Europe Region WAGGGS is organising a training programme on the campaign for Girl Guides and Girl Scouts leaders in Europe to help them develop action plans for the campaign at national and local levels.

Wherever you live, you can help us to make a difference by sharing your voice with our campaign.

Please add your voice to the campaign counter at www.stoptheviolencecampaign.com.



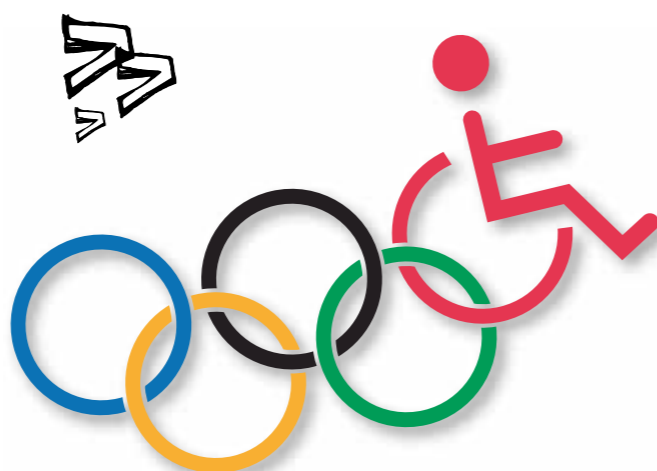
How are human rights put into practice by youth organisations?

Inclusion through sport with a focus on young people with and without intellectual disability, promoting social inclusion on and off the playing field, through the work of Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia (SOEE)

The Special Olympics' core activity is sport for people with intellectual disabilities. One of the key goals is to change attitudes towards people with intellectual disabilities and to achieve their social inclusion through the means of sports and related initiatives. The Special Olympics Youth Unified Sports® programme is essential in the work of Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia to reach this goal.

Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia is a regional branch of the global Special Olympics organisation with 58 accredited national programmes¹ in Europe/Eurasia. Unified Sports brings together young people aged 12 to 25, with intellectual disabilities (athletes) and without (partners) in equal numbers on inclusive sports teams for regular training and competition following a specific concept to match players with similar abilities on the same teams.

Youth Unified Sports became a focus for SOEE in 2004 as a response to the increasing demand for inclusion in European societies, reflected for example in moves towards inclusive education and anti-discrimination legislation for sport clubs. But in many countries in Europe the reality of inclusion is far from the standards set in legally binding documents such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Educators, coaches and institutions lack tools and expertise to put the right to inclusion into action. Special Olympics Unified Sports became a widely recognised tool to fill this gap. Youth Unified Sports has successfully grown from 1 000 players in five countries in 2005 to 30 000 in 30 countries across Europe in 2011. It is the starting point for inclusive youth leadership programming in Special Olympics in Europe: young Unified Sports players with and without intellectual disabilities go far beyond playing sports together, they become "advocates for change". They go out to spread the word about how great and easy inclusion can be; they go out to grow Unified Sports opportunities and inspire others to join; they play sports together and show how inclusion can work beyond the playing field.



The main goal is to empower the young people with and without intellectual disabilities to jointly take responsibility for raising awareness of, and covering for, the lack of government services for people with intellectual disabilities whose rights are violated, using as a reference Articles 3 and 30 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. People with intellectual disabilities face a lack of opportunities to participate in community life including local sports structures. Inclusive education is still in early development stage in most countries which means most youths grow up segregated from each other and platforms to interact are missing inside the education system as well as in community life. Educators, coaches and other adult leaders – even in countries that have implemented inclusive education – lack tools to facilitate and guide inclusion inside and outside the classroom, on the sports field and in community structures.

In Special Olympics, the youth leaders have various opportunities to develop themselves as people, leaders, messengers for inclusion and active European citizens through dynamic and non-formal learning.



Ending human rights violations by police officers through the work of Russian human rights movements

The "day of watching for documents" is a part of broad campaign on the observance of human rights violations by police officers, with a large part of these violations taking place in the streets through stopping people to ask for their documents and pressuring them to pay money for release. This is often accompanied with threats and sometimes illegal searches of people directly in the streets, which is totally against Russian law. At the same time, the new law on the police requires all police officers to wear a badge with photo, name, number of police station, etc., as this would make it easier for people to understand who this police officer is and how to appeal his or her action in case of pressure or a violation of rights.

Hence, the action "day of watching for documents" was especially developed to find out how many police officers wear their badges and as well to ask for their documents, with the argument that citizens may do this freely, while the police should have serious reasons for asking for people's documents in the street.

The action took place on 22 April 2012 in various cities of Russia and especially in Moscow where this illegal police practice is very common. During the

action, people went into the streets, approached police officers to ask for their documents and badges, filming them and providing them with awareness-raising leaflets about civil watch and police obedience.

The whole action was managed by a group of people from youth human right movements and other organisations that developed the idea as well as material such as leaflets and instructions for all the participants. The instructions were filmed and uploaded onto YouTube while information about the action was widely shared through social networks and the Internet so as to make it available to as many people as possible. Each city had its own co-ordinating group that distributed the guidelines among local participants, trained them if needed, consulted and provided support.

All the cases where police officers were to be found without a badge could be considered as a violation of the law. In fact, the whole action was meant as an awareness-raising tool for violators and their possible victims, fixing existing violations and promoting the general idea of civil society watch and of a human rights culture.

Once again, these are only a few examples among many others. And you, what do you do to support the human rights movement?

Language (r)evolution:

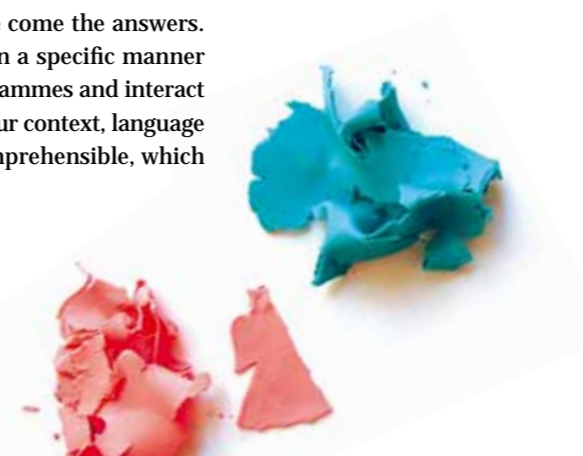
gendered, gender-less, gender-neutral, gender-free

micah.grzywnowicz@gmail.com

"Have you ever taken for granted the person who answers the questions you prepare?"



Now, one of the potential questions that some of you may have is: “How do I speak or write then?” We managed to advance our communication from using only the male form as the default one, so that nowadays we use “he/she” together to make sure everyone is included. I think we should take a step further! This is not as complicated as it may seem. It all depends on the situation that one is in. In writing, for instance, you can use three different pronouns (he/she/zie) when talking about people in general or people you do not know. The same strategy would be highly appreciated when addressing your readers, as you cannot know who reads your articles, and you do not exclude anyone. *Coyote* has already tried it out and it only added quality to the publication (*Coyote* No. 16, p. 44).



>>> Language (r)evolution: gendered, gender-less, gender-neutral, gender-free

During training programmes or speeches we also need to make sure that everyone is addressed and that we speak to everyone in the room. To make it a bit more tangible I will give you an example from an event I took part in. It was 2009, Budapest at the Forum on Human Rights Education organised by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. As you can imagine there were quite a few opening speeches and people addressing the participants. Speech after speech after speech – one could say there was nothing unexpected about them. I was sitting there whispering to my colleague when, suddenly, I heard, “ladies, gentlemen and others”. I stopped gossiping to the person next to me, I raised my head and tried to figure out who was the person speaking to me and others who do not consider themselves as “men” or “women”. As it turned out it was Antonia Wulff, the chairperson of the Advisory Council on Youth at that time. As you can imagine, Antonia had my undivided attention during her speech. One may say: “Yes, great, but probably not everyone in the room understood it!” Probably this person is correct in saying that

there were many people who did not understand the reason behind using such an expression. However, what was and is the most important in such situations is that people who are addressed by such inclusive language understand and hear it. It makes an amazing impact and difference. I think it is time to start discussing it and start using it more. It’s high time for (r)evolution!

Reactions to it vary depending on the context, country, group, culture and so on. There are sometimes extremely different and opposing opinions to the proposed changes, from euphoric and positive reactions emphasising inclusion and the ability of everyone to participate, to negative opinions foreseeing the great fall of languages as we know them. The crucial element of the discussion on gender-neutral or gender-sensitive language is that it is not about getting rid of the two existing personal pronouns “he” and “she”, while it sometimes is misunderstood as such. It is about using one more, “zie”, in order to recognise gender diversity in our societies and to enhance participation and inclusion.



	Subject	Object	Possessive Pronoun	Possessive Adjective	Reflexive
Female	SHE	HER	HER	HERS	HERSELF
Male	HE	HIM	HIS	HIS	HIMSELF
Gender neutral	ZIE	HIR	HIR	HIRS	HIRSELF



As trainers, youth workers, researchers and people who work with young people we need to realise that we do not only work with girls and boys, women and men. We work with young people who have a variety of identities, experiences and backgrounds. Our language can easily be gender-free so that it does not assume, does not label and does not exclude. It is so easy to speak about “partners” instead of “boyfriends” or “girlfriends”, or “parents” instead of “mothers” or “fathers”. We just need to be aware of it. Not only is such language inclusive of transgender persons, but also those who may live in different family structures than us, are in a different relationship than us or are of different gender identity than us. Everyone is different.

To support this, one has to bring up what has been already discussed in *Coyote*, “gender is a key factor in the distribution of power, privileges and possibilities, which effects progress towards equality in societies.”¹ Therefore, the next step in reaching equality and inclusion is to make the gender discussion wider and not focus only on men and women, as they are not the only representatives of our societies.

All this is also connected with accessibility in a broader understanding, which is not only about physical access to, for instance, a training space by

a person using a wheelchair. It is also about, for instance, our power points, amount and size of the text on each slide, colours and sounds. Making an activity accessible means also that everyone in a group is provided with proper meals, even if they are vegetarian or vegan. Accessibility is about paying attention that everyone in a group can take an active part in an activity. I believe that we, trainers, should actively discuss and challenge our competences and skills, and at the same time ask ourselves what we do to make our activities accessible for all. Language and gender awareness, discussed in this short article, are just two elements of many which are needed to make trainers even better and for young people to enjoy their activities even more.

I think *Coyote* plays an important role here.

Can you imagine how amazing it would be, if *Coyote* started to use regularly gender-sensitive, gender-neutral and gender-inclusive language? It would be the first magazine on European level targeting such a wide audience using inclusive language! It could, then, even influence different institutions, as people would become more and more used to the idea of gender-neutral language! This would be definitely the true beginning of (r)evolution! Who’s in?

¹ Gülesin Nemutlu, “Woman-i-sing the convention...or gendering it” in *Coyote* No. 16, p. 45.

How can one ENTER the land of social rights?



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An article on social rights is not something one would be looking forward to writing. Or reading for that matter. Clearly, the realisation of social rights – just as of all human rights – is at stake in moments of economic crisis. And what many countries in Europe and beyond are facing tends to be a generalised and here-to-last form of crisis. One could almost believe that this is the default setting of our very society.

But good news! This article wants to give an example of how something can be done and how long-term work on social rights and social inclusion is, either from the youth policy or from the youth work perspective, a must. In addition, we very humbly asked young people what they identify as problems and where the solutions could be. Not surprisingly, their input confirms that most of the time those who are suffering the most are, if suitable conditions are provided, the ones who can best identify solutions. At the same time, they need to be taken seriously. Empowered. Supported. Involved.



ENTER! A PROJECT ON ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE FROM DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOODS

In 2009, the youth sector of the Council of Europe started the Enter! project with the aim of sharing experiences and developing innovative and effective youth work and youth policy responses to exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people in multicultural, disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The project used the approaches of non-formal learning and training of youth workers in order to explore ways of responding to challenges faced by young people and youth work institutions.

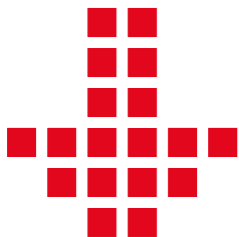
Enter! has combined different types of activities and youth interventions which, while rooted in the realities of young people and based on youth work practice, sought to influence youth policies in Europe from local to national levels. Among the key activities there was a long-term training course (LTTC) for youth workers, several expert seminars, local youth projects as well as the development of a youth policy recommendation and educational tools for access to social rights.

In April 2012, a meeting was organised in order to evaluate Enter!, so as to look back at achievements and shortcomings, in view of planning for the future. The meeting gathered 30 participants with different roles and functions during the project: participants in the activities, particularly in the LTTC; trainers or facilitators; researchers on social rights and social exclusion and policy makers involved in policy development.

Some lessons we can easily draw from this meeting are of particular relevance for the way ahead.

- The Enter! project developed a lot of knowledge, expertise and a model of interventions on access to social rights for young people. This needs to be acknowledged, celebrated and used for future processes!
- The participation aspect of the project: engaging young people in the policy making and the development of a policy recommendation was an ambitious process, and needs to be continued and strengthened. It is important to involve young people directly! Nothing for them without them!

How can one ENTER the land of social rights?



Young people and youth workers involved in the project developed competences that otherwise would have been very difficult to acquire or improve. Learning about rights is a first step to empowerment and Enter! helped participants make progress on this. The recognition of these competences and of the youth work intervention on access to social rights needs to be strengthened through appropriate strategies at all levels.

The training course for youth workers was a key activity in Enter! and should be continued and supported, especially in its relation to other interventions, such as policy making and local youth projects. Using a rights-based approach for social inclusion in the area of training multipliers remains, in the eyes of the participants in the evaluation meeting, a key feature for the future!

There is a need now to focus on the interventions in the follow-up to the Enter! project. Specific focal points are to be sought within the social human rights framework. Research needs to become more engaged in the process as well.

There is a need to move outside the youth work context and engage with local, regional and national authorities. Most decisions on social rights are taking place at these levels and youth work needs to enter into a dialogue with these structures. The word dialogue here is key, as often the problematic situations are also due to the dependency of youth work on political will to reach out to young people who face the most severe problems in accessing their rights. Support from the European level in this process should also be sought.

Monitoring progress on social rights should be, in the new project following Enter!, a key dimension, in order to make the policy recommendation a known reality and a tool for advocacy for youth work and youth organisations.

Use the rights-based approaches more often and more consistently! It is relevant now to also engage more partners from youth organisations whose main mission may not necessarily be only linked with social rights. Engaging with national youth councils, for instance, is very important. As one participant said in the meeting, we need to speak out to others, because we really need everyone in this process!

The next step in the follow-up to the project is to set up a new long-term training course for youth workers! Stay tuned on the Enter! website for more information to come soon: www.coe.int/enter.



WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUTH WORKERS SAY?

A series of interviews was done in the framework of the follow-up to the Enter! project on access to social rights for young people. Some of those interviewed have participated in the project, others have not but are either youth workers or young people confronted with the problem of access to social rights for young people.

It is worth noting that a couple of observations are similar, either from participants or not, or expressed by young people and also youth workers. One of them is the lack of knowledge on the part of young people themselves about their rights. This links automatically to the issue of the information available or given to them. Another common issue is the fact that, as answers from young people and youth workers tend to show, policy makers see young people as a problem and not as a resource, especially if they come from specific neighbourhoods, or with a difficult school past.

Young people are not recognised as a value, and sometimes this comforts them in a negative attitude: "It is useless, they will not listen to me." Hence some declarations or observations that services, and in particular social services, are unsuitable or inaccessible to the reality of these young people. They are not at all "youth-user friendly"; they are complicated and sometimes also contradictory in their criteria.

From the point of view of the youth workers, they clearly see their support and assistance role as

crucial in the process of helping the young people to know and to fight for their social rights. They also acknowledge the utmost importance of networking with other actors in the youth or social sectors. They are the ones who can listen and be recognised as "friendly" in the eyes of young people. So, the training of youth and social workers is considered as essential in this process.

As far as participation in Enter! is concerned, everyone considered it to be a wonderful experience.

Lysiane talked about personal and professional enrichment, but also as a way of taking a step back and reflecting on her practice and on the policies developed in her city.

On the young participants' side, they are happy to have been given opportunities to express themselves, to meet other young people but also to have been "accepted" and listened to by an international structure. They were at the centre of interest, which is not often the case in their daily lives.

They have learned new things, things that you don't learn in school. Their way of thinking has been positively affected.

They have made wonderful contacts, too.

As they say, this experience was of "enormous value", was "irreplaceable" and it is difficult to talk about it: "YOU HAVE TO LIVE IT."

How can one ENTER the land of social rights?

SOME QUOTES

“This project allowed me to discover Europe through the meetings with youngsters from other countries. We exchanged and discussed our problems, our difficulties, our experiences. Thanks to this project, I had the feeling the Council of Europe really got interested in our issues.” (young participant in the Enter! youth meeting)

“Through this project I managed to make a difference between what I learn in school and what I can learn in the real life.” (young person)

... for Bachir, a youngster living in Brussels, the problems are...

- ⇒ language barriers;
- ⇒ extremely long procedures, for example in the access to health care, often with no serious follow-up of the requests by the state services;
- ⇒ lack of trust in the services, especially for the youngsters without regular papers;
- ⇒ not enough personnel working in the services related to social rights, so bad communication;
- ⇒ different treatment according to where you live in the city, the rules are not the same for all;
- ⇒ young people cannot even physically access these services: for example, a young person without regular papers cannot take the bus because of the risks;
- ⇒ policies are not always clear and do not make sense: sometimes to have access to social aid you need to have a regular rental contract.

... for Bilal, a youth worker in Brussels, the problems are:

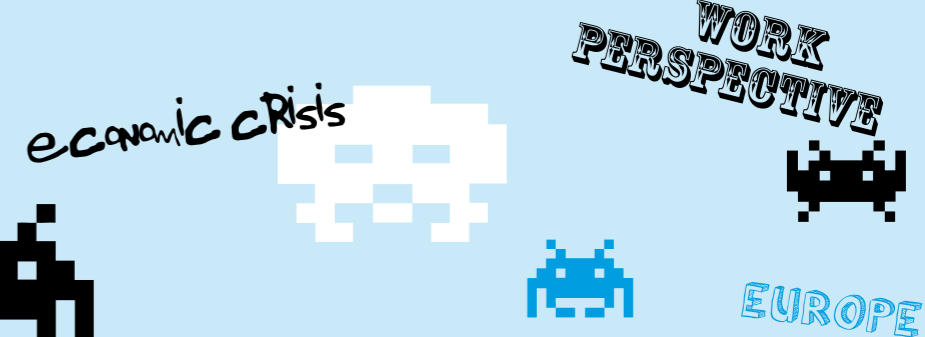
- ⇒ the bad self-image young people have. Even before kicking something off, they think it will not work out, it will be too difficult, there is no chance to do anything;
- ⇒ Islamophobia;
- ⇒ in their daily lives, rights mean little. As a young person was saying, we only have the right to hand over our ID.

... and the solutions should be the same procedures for everyone;

- ⇒ more interpreters;
- ⇒ training for professionals to accompany youngsters in their access to services;
- ⇒ more competent personnel;
- ⇒ more organisations and more trust between organisations and young people! For example during events a dialogue can start with young people, and social workers can go beyond just doing administrative work;
- ⇒ inform more young people about social rights in detail: where to go to claim these rights, how to start a procedure for this, etc. Using videos could be an easy way to pass the message.

... and access to rights can improve with

- ⇒ using the good examples of other young people living in the neighbourhood and who managed well in life;
- ⇒ entering a dialogue and long discussions with the youngsters; for example, by explaining to them that the bad image that people have of immigrants is not a destiny;
- ⇒ explaining that there are possibilities. We just have to explain to them that they can do things, that they have the same right to do things as any other youngsters;
- ⇒ the first step would be to improve access to work;
- ⇒ improving the work of building trust between youth workers and youngsters. Accompanying young people, supporting them when needed is really important! Making them self-reliant.



SOCIAL RIGHTS

... for Lysiane, social worker, the problem is that

- ⇒ young people from the neighbourhoods are sometimes forgotten by political representatives.

... the solutions should include...

- ⇒ youth workers acting as a support for young people of the neighbourhoods as soon as they become aware that they can be actors of projects;
- ⇒ communication, networking of the associative youth sphere and meetings with politicians can be important factors in order to improve the situation.

... for Sylvie, social worker in a rural area, the problems are

- ⇒ the lack of knowledge on how to claim social rights;
- ⇒ inappropriate services, where young people encounter disdain and lack of respect.

... and solutions should include

- ⇒ accompanying the young person to claim his or her rights;
- ⇒ improving the services, particularly by training the personnel to be able to properly welcome young people.

... for Teodora, a young person from the “former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia”,

- ⇒ the main reason why young people don't take advantage of their social rights is because of ignorance that they exist. The first problem appears in the definition of disadvantaged young people and what exactly they are lacking. Also, a problem could appear when young people claim their rights, but no one is listening just because they are young and have no experience.

... and the solutions?

- ⇒ What the everyday citizen can do is educate peers on social rights, the institutions that are representing them and the ways to get them. The setting of this little “lecture” is not as important as the message and the way in which it is delivered.

1, 2, 3, 4, unemployed, 1, 2, 3, 4...

by Dr Beatrix Niemeier
niemeyer@uni-flensburg.de



THE FIGURES

One in five young people in the European Union is unemployed. The average youth unemployment rate hovers around 20% and it is twice as high as the average unemployment rate for the whole working population. In spite of a wide provision of education and training it takes years to find a full-time job that pays a living, and it is difficult to keep it. The economic crisis has hit young people harder and adds to the risks faced by young Europeans on their way towards independent living. Often enough it is not just a temporary delay on the individual pathway from learning to work, but 28% of the unemployed young people under 25 have been without a job for more than 12 months. The risk of unemployment is not spread evenly throughout the EU member states. While in Spain for example, the latest figures went up to almost 48%, countries such as Austria or Germany, the Netherlands and Norway with youth unemployment rates under 10% are already haunted by the skills shortage that is expected as a result of future demographic changes.

These figures are alarming for a couple of reasons. They are strong indicators for social, economic and individual risks. They are even more disturbing because they haven't changed despite the fact that for more than two decades now a system of schemes has been developed and funded, aiming to close the gap between school and the labour market. A variety of programmes support the so-called youth at risk with learning, training, work, competence and skills building, offering social support and career guidance. Yet, when looking at the latest Eurostat tables it seems as if labour and education policy aren't able to improve young people's chances of entering the employment system. Neither intensified and targeted career guidance nor the individualised support strategies guarantee better chances on the job or apprenticeship market.

For a long time therefore the prioritised strategy has been to provide extra training of work skills for those young people who were considered to be "low achievers", "slow learners", "disadvantaged" or "at the risk of becoming disaffected". Lately the discourse is changing. Instead of the familiar blame-the-victim argument calling for better learners the awareness of the social risks and costs of large-scale youth unemployment is rising.

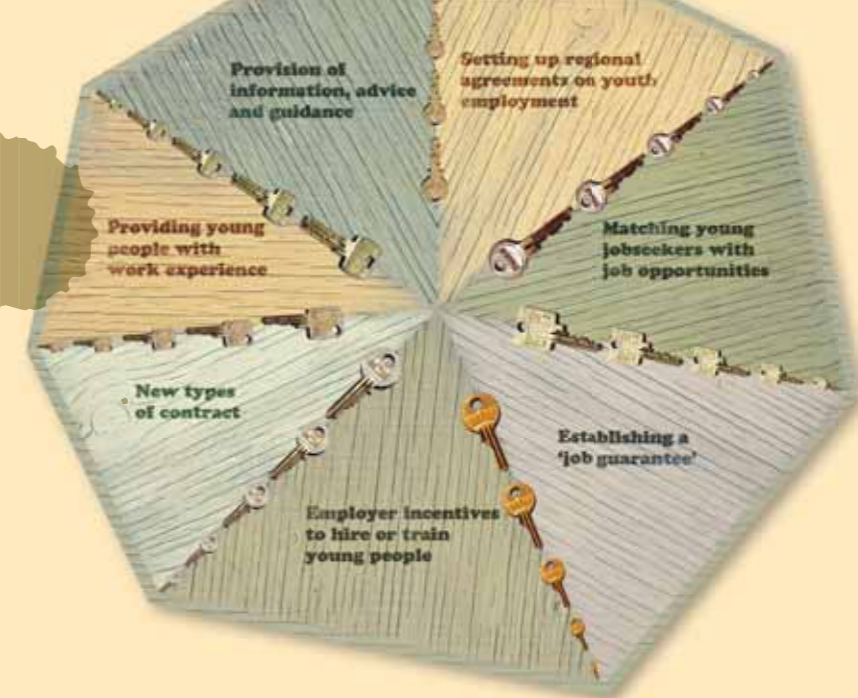
Unemployment at a young age creates a sense of uselessness for those concerned and could lead to delinquency, mental problems or drug abuse – these were the warnings of the International Labour Organization when commenting the worldwide development of youth unemployment on the International Youth Day in 2009. Adding to these social risks there is also considerable economic damage related to the exclusion of the next generation from the labour market. Savings may shrink as may the domestic demand for goods in general; social security systems will not have their premium payers.

Furthermore, exclusion from employment impacts other dimensions of social inclusion. While exclusion from the labour market certainly is the most important dimension of social participation, there is also economic exclusion, social exclusion, cultural exclusion, institutional exclusion and spatial exclusion, which determine one's ability and possibilities to engage in active citizenship. And even if young people are in employment, the terms and conditions of work leave them more vulnerable. In 2009 for example, 40.2% of the young people under 25 were on a temporary contract and 27.6% were involuntarily in part-time work. Being without employment often goes along with reduced access to social security or welfare support. In most of the member states the entitlement to unemployment benefits is related to a minimum of work experience, which young people usually don't have. Furthermore this precarious situation is not necessarily covered by social security systems.



BEHIND THE FIGURES

So there are many good reasons to place combating youth unemployment as the highest priority in European politics. But what works, and what doesn't?



In addition to the general lack of jobs and training places there is a mismatch between the educational system and the labour market. Closer links between education, training and the labour market, as seen in the apprenticeship model for example, seem to smooth the road into employment. The way how this linkage could be provided however, differs again according to national specificities. It depends on how vocational education and training are organised, who has responsibility for it, etc. In many EU member states, vocational education and training are considered to be the second best choice while the mainstream educational pathway leads to university. Improving the attractiveness of vocational education and training (VET) therefore is also an important aim. Again this applies to individuals but also refers to the recent reforms of VET which aim to improve the quality of work-based training and to create more places.

so-called disadvantaged young people or early school leavers to successfully apply for an apprenticeship. These schemes and programmes are not usually the result of an organic process but have been implemented very often with the financial support of the European Social Fund. They are special programmes, which run parallel to established forms of VET. The participants of these programmes are stigmatised as being something special, too. Although programmes widely differ in their educational approach (Evans/Niemeyer 2004), they can generally be seen as a kind of collecting basin for unemployed young people, which works as a safety net for both individuals and society. They serve to compensate for the evident and growing mismatch mentioned above and to keep young people occupied. They can be organised in a way that they offer individual support and enhance the development of personal and technical competences and the staff may be very committed to the educational aims. However, seen from a macro-perspective these schemes are inclusive and exclusive at the same time. They help to fine tune the selective mechanisms of the (vocational) education system. Participating in such a scheme still means being excluded from the "real", that is established and socially acknowledged, training and labour structures. Very often the young participants are well aware of this reality.

>>> 1, 2, 3, 4, unemployed, 1, 2, 3, 4...

The first and most common reaction was to extend schooling. To prolong school time serves as a kind of first aid for individuals who chose to continue education as a legitimate way out of a blocked road towards training and work. On the general level of educational policy the extension of the age of compulsory schooling also is the first solution to channel young people towards learning in times when there is not enough work available.

Policy approaches to combating youth unemployment for a long time have concentrated on education, training and career guidance. Recently, however, programmes targeted at the employment sector have been introduced in some of the EU member states. "Some countries have developed specific active labour market measures for young people. These span from the provision of information, advice and guidance (e.g. France, Malta and Iceland), to new types of contract (Luxembourg), employer incentives to hire or train young people (Luxembourg, Serbia), matching young jobseekers with job opportunities (the Netherlands), setting up

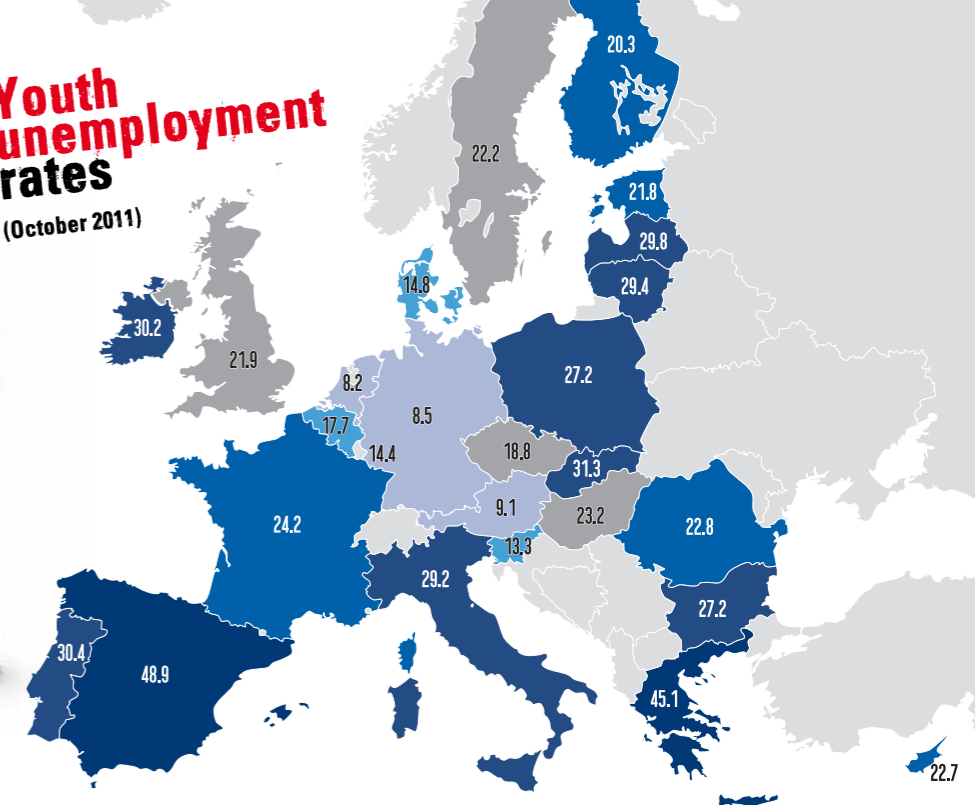
regional agreements or 'covenants' on youth employment (the Netherlands), providing young people with work experience (Slovakia, Sweden, as well as those countries mentioned above and establishing a 'job guarantee' for the young unemployed). In some cases, young people cannot claim benefits if they do not participate in the programmes on offer to them (the Netherlands, Iceland)." (European Employment Observatory Review 2011: 18)

In addition to these programmes the following activities are to be identified in the member states:

- improved and intensified career information, advice and guidance;
- incentives for employers hiring people aged 24 and younger;
- regional networks of stakeholders;
- support for self-employment;
- internships and early job placements may also facilitate access to the labour market – however they still may leave the young workers in vulnerable positions. And unfortunately the economic crisis impacts exactly on this most successful instrument.



Youth unemployment rates (October 2011)



Even if it seems as if young people have no right to make demands as to the quality of their job, it is important to think about the long-term effects of precarious working conditions and the growing accommodation to long-term internships. This type of job-orientation programme may rather reinforce labour market segmentation instead of smoothing young people's way into employment. Are programmes preparing young people to work under precarious conditions or are they enabling personal engagement and active ownership of careers? Do they provide the time and space which is necessary for orientation or do they rather frame and control those transitions, which are risky for both the young individuals and the society?

Just to clarify: even the best training programme and the most engaged pedagogical approach will

not be able to create one single job or solve the economic crisis. In a country where almost every second young person is without employment, support strategies on the pathway towards work need to be diversified and comprehensively targeted at all dimensions of social inclusion – placement rates won't work as a quality indicator then. Training teachers and trainers also goes into this direction.

Apart from training problems there are severe social questions related to youth unemployment. Given the crucial relationship between employment and social inclusion the question is how to enable the mass of young unemployed people to evolve and develop a sense of belonging instead of longing to belong while becoming used to the idea that there simply isn't a job for everyone?

Further reading:

- European Commission (2011) European Employment Observatory Review: Youth employment measures, 2010, <http://www.eu-employment-observatory.net/resources/reviews/EEORReview-YEM2010.pdf>, accessed 21 April 2012.
- Niemeyer, B. (2012) "The Impacts of European social Inclusion Policy on National Educational Systems", in: Stolz, Stefanie, Gonon, Philipp (eds.), *Challenges and Reforms in Vocational Education. Aspects of Inclusion and Exclusion*, Bern, Peter Lang.
- Niemeyer, B. (2007) "Between school and work – dilemmas in European comparative transition research", *European Journal of Vocational Training*, No. 41, pp. 116-137.
- Evans, K.; Niemeyer, B. (eds) (2004) *Re-Connection. Countering Social Exclusion through situated Learning*, London, Kluwer Academic Publishers.



Still waiting for peace...

by Ragıp Zık

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and Cécile Barbeito

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Almost 70 years after the Second World War, and more than 20 years after the end of the Cold War, peace is still an issue. Ragıp Zık and Cécile Barbeito reflect on how youth work can contribute to peace.



"We want peace", but what kind of peace?

Cécile Barbeito

Peace means different things for different people: Eastern cultures focus on inner peace, while Western cultures stress social justice more. There are also differences depending on gender: young men are usually more directly affected by wars (they die more) and by military service. Young women suffer from sexual violence and domestic violence (when fathers or partners come back traumatised from war). Youth work for peace can therefore take many different forms.

Ragıp Zık

As Cécile says, when we talk about peace, we should take into account different perceptions from different regions. Conflict as a concept has various meanings depending very much on where people are from. While some young people still breathe the air of armed conflict, some others

picture a conflict as related to discrimination or social and economic rights. Is it possible to address such various conflict perceptions properly? That's a question which remains on the agenda of youth work. Although we can state some principles, one-size-fits-all solutions should not be expected. Youth work for peace is never detached from human rights education. Taking universal human rights principles as a starting point, various strategies and programmes can be developed according to the local or regional reality. In order to talk about peace, firstly, the conflict situation needs to be acknowledged. Youth work can play a significant role for peace only if the conflicting parties are involved in the process. They need to express the singularities of their reasons, feelings and expectations. They should feel that their concerns and needs are well understood. Only then can we develop solutions addressing local realities.



Why is peace still an issue? What are the main threats to peace in Europe today?

Ragıp Zık

Today, apart from the armed conflicts and temporary cease-fire situations in Europe, post-war tensions and the armament industry are serious threats for peace and stability. Even in countries not involved in a war, racist and discriminatory discourse spreads through xenophobia and hate speech, driving societies to intolerance towards ethnic, sexual, linguistic and religious minorities. While the space for freedom of expression is shrinking, cultural assimilation policies against immigrants and historical minorities are still on the peace agenda.

Cécile Barbeito

As Ragıp has just mentioned, military spending and the bad management of conflicts, either within states or outside European borders (attacks on foreign countries through NATO or other military coalitions) threaten peace. Internally, poverty, increasing inequality and discrimination against specific communities are also major threats to peace. Both levels are connected, and are a matter of priorities and political will: inequality exists because many policies prioritise the profit of a privileged minority over collective needs. In parallel, military budgets subtract from funding for social welfare. In 2010, \$236 were spent for military purposes for each person in the world. Whereas more than half of the world lives with less than \$2 a day, such military spending is far from acceptable.¹

Is peace still on the agenda of youth work and training? Is it old fashioned to talk about peace in youth work?

Ragıp Zık

It is easier to talk about peace when war is obviously out there. In the past, we used to define peace as the absence of war, which is actually a situation that still exists in a number of countries in Europe and the world. However, there are also other subtle struggles going on. When there is a subtle conflict, it is more difficult to talk about it. A major part of today's societies fail to recognise the covert threats for peace as they are eclipsed by explicit conflicts and wars. Youth work that aims at youth empowerment and participation can help young people build skills to recognise these threats as well as take action to minimise them.

Cécile Barbeito

In some contexts, peace education is considered naïve or "hippy". In others, it can be seen as a highly political stand. Generally speaking, in youth groups peace is considered a priority in principle (Girls and Boy Scouts federations, or Service Civil International,² for example, consider peace a priority), though in practice peace activities are often more symbolic (celebrating the day of peace, 21 September) than deeper reflections, training in conflict resolution, etc.

¹ Data from SIPRI yearbook 2010 and World Bank Yearbook 2010.
² www.sciint.org/



Still waiting for peace...

Does youth work have anything to do with peace building, and how? What are the limits?

Cécile Barbeito

Youth work can build peace. But it can also do the contrary (as some fascist youth groups did in Italy and Germany in the 1930s, for example). To contribute to peace, youth groups should adhere to some prerequisites, such as promoting open-mindedness, positive curiosity towards differences, co-operation, empathy, etc.

Ragıp Zık

Young people are the main actors of societal changes. The impact of a group of young people's peace-building activity can be really big. Young people working for peace have done many things in the past. From collective letter writing to street protests, from summer camps to cross-border sports encounters, young people used their creativity throughout history in various conflict zones. What they usually do is a symbolic model

of peaceful coexistence, mutual understanding and reciprocal respect. They show how things can be different at the micro-level and mostly received support from the locals. They challenge the given values and beliefs of the society and question the underlying reasons for the conflict.

Born as a concept and methodology from faith-based movements in the 19th century, youth work was extended to community-based services and student clubs in the early 20th century. The pioneering youth movements and organised youth work for peace emerged after the two World Wars such as Service Civil International and International Voluntary Service. However, it would be too much to expect that youth work can change the conflict situation in one day or make an immediate political impact.



Has youth work ever managed to make a contribution to peace? What are good examples?

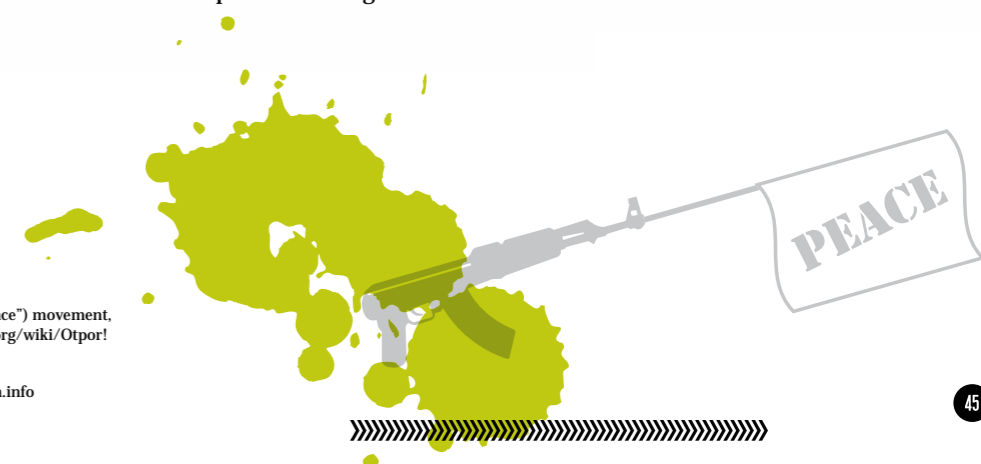
Cécile Barbeito

It is difficult to say, as young people have usually been away from the decision-making arena, and are not so visible (there is no youth movement that has received a Nobel Peace Prize, for example, while adult initiatives on youth have, such as Shirin Ebadi's defence of women and children's rights, awarded in 2003). But youth initiatives are usually known for the strength they bring for change (ideas of conciliation demand to overcome the past and look to the future), to train in important values and skills for change (intercultural learning, empowerment, such as Peace Links³ in Sierra Leone empowered youngsters to prevent them from becoming child soldiers) or activism (as the youth movement Otpor!⁴ did in Serbia). Other interesting examples are Vredes Actie⁵ in Belgium, which denounces NATO and corporations that profit from war, or International Peace Brigades,⁶ which succeed in protecting threatened human rights defenders.

Ragıp Zık

This is a hard thing to assess because you cannot achieve short-term results through youth work. It is a rather long process that can only be evaluated through the impact on young people. In a conflict situation it is very possible that the conflicting parties employ a discriminatory discourse, dehumanise the "other" and shut down channels of interaction. Youth work for peace, in most cases, includes encounters of conflicting parties to re-open these channels and create platforms for dialogue. A nice example can be found in Cyprus, located in the UN Buffer Zone in Nicosia, Home for Cooperation⁷ organises several bi-communal programmes and events for young people. Youth work aims to bring positive changes to young people's attitudes and behaviour. In many cases of armed and social conflict, youth work has managed to bring young people from different conflicting parties and helped them develop positive images about each other as well as mutual understanding and tolerance. Youth Initiatives for Change⁸ in Armenia still organises many activities for young people from Armenia, Turkey and Azerbaijan, and involves them in peaceful dialogue.

3 www.peace-links.org
4 About Otpor! ("Resistance") movement, see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Otpor!>
5 www.vredesactie.be
6 www.peacebrigades.org
7 www.home4cooperation.info
8 www.yic.am



What does youth work need to consider while developing answers for enhancing peace?

Ragıp Zık

While working on the topic of peace it is important to give voice to the ones that do not always represent the mainstream in the conflict such as young women, kids or minority groups. Launched by women from Turkey and Greece in 1998, WINPeace⁹ still works for betterment of relations between Turkey and Greece as well as Cyprus. This movement later gave birth to another initiative called the Turkish Greek Society of Youth that organised several cross-border gatherings and seminars. This type of youth work might have a smaller target group but can build strong networks based on commonalities among the conflicting parties and can easily become a solid example of a step towards peace.

Cécile Barbeito

An important tip is to reach the structural level: in youth work, more than in any other sector, there is a high rotation of volunteers (it is difficult to stay young forever!). This means that youngsters need to make sure their efforts will last even if they are not there, by training others, setting up formal organisations, influencing youth policies, etc. In parallel, organisations should make sure that the means they use are in accordance with peace. This can be done by taking care of all members' opinions, making sure that decisions are taken by consensus, that there is a co-operative distribution of tasks, etc.

Tips to promote the right to conscientious objection:

Send protest letters to authorities that don't respect the right to conscientious objection to military service by subscribing to the War Resister's International Alerts at: www.wri-irg.org/node/2360.

Write letters of support to imprisoned conscientious objectors. Find lists of these people and their addresses at: www.wri-irg.org/node/4718.

What is the situation of conscientious objection and civil service in Europe?

Cécile Barbeito

A peace issue that affects specifically young people is conscription. In most Council of Europe countries, there is a professional army, which means there is no need to do military service. However in 15 member countries, there is still conscription for the military service. Among those, in recent years seven countries have put young people in jail, violating their right to conscientious objection.¹⁰ Claiming the right to refuse to kill and supporting conscientious objectors are some of the tasks that young people can do for peace.

Ragıp Zık

While conscription violates the right to conscientious objection, civil service is often presented as an alternative. Indeed, considering how the military uniform transforms someone from an individual into a soldier, civil service remains a “good” alternative. However, this option is challenged by the rights and duties that stem from the concept of citizenship: fulfilling all political, economic and social duties. Why does one still has to serve the country at a specific position for a specific period of time, as if the rest of those efforts are not counted as service?

Useful links for peace and conflict transformation:

To become familiar with peace-building issues and conflict transformation a good starting point is:
www.beyondintractability.org

For networking, finding various resources and being inspired for peace, you can follow:
www.internationalpeaceandconflict.org

[illegible]

Youth work in countries of crisis

Spotlights on the consequences

by Aleksandra Maldžiski

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"7 000 professionally qualified staff...
30 000 trained youth support workers...
half a million volunteers... all under threat of demolition."

This is a quote from the homepage of chooseyouth.org. “Choose youth” is a campaign in the UK against the cancelation of youth services that is very likely to happen as a result of budget cuts in public spending. This will, according to the campaign supporters, lead to “destroying years of professional expertise committed to partnership and volunteer working”. It seems as though the financial crisis that struck Europe a few years back has taken its toll on youth work and the negative effects of this are already quite visible around the vieux continent.

Youth is no longer a priority

It looks like youth issues have been put at the top of government lists only when it comes to reductions in public spending. The youth sector has been among those the most at risk of losing institutional and financial support recently. As a result, in Portugal the youth institute has already stopped all support to youth organisations. This institute will join the sports department and many governmental youth workers will be reintegrated into new functions. Moreover, the local governments have seen their budget reduced, which forced them also in turn to decrease or even to freeze all the support traditionally given to youth organisations and informal groups of young people. On top of that the government-supported volunteering activities for young people have been cancelled. "In general youth is no longer a priority. It's considered unprofitable", says Dulce Marques, co-ordinator of OKUPA-Espaço Juventude. "Youth organisations

used to have some support from municipalities to pay the rent or some general activities. At the moment, generally speaking, all of this is over. In Palmela, two years ago, the municipality, besides the logistic and human resources support, had a budget of €25 000 to support the celebration of the Youth Month (March), where all organisations connected with youth could develop a special activity for and with young people. In 2012 this budget was zero! Some local organisations, youth theatre groups and the like just decided to close down. Others changed their activities in order to be profitable; the activity plan of the organisations changed to a smaller one or to simple activities without expenses; the youth workers are invited to leave the organisations and the work is developed by those already working in the organisation who are not necessarily qualified youth workers," Dulce explains.



9 www.winpeace.org

10 Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (2012). "The right to conscientious objection to military service should be guaranteed in all parts of Europe." Press release - CommDH007(2012).

» Youth work in countries of crisis

Choose youth

The situation on the other side of the continent doesn't appear to differ significantly. The youth services in the UK are already an example of consequences of the financial crisis. Some local authorities have cut publicly provided youth services altogether. As a result of this they are replaced by voluntary groups in some cases, while in others there is simply nothing. "It has certainly stimulated a debate about whether youth services should be targeted or universal and whether they should be left to the market. One development we welcome is the government's policy emphasis on the role of youth voice in the process. They are calling on young people to influence quality and delivery of services, by holding decision makers to account. Of course this depends on how effective and resourced youth participation is locally", says James Cathcart, a former youth worker, social worker and justice worker, now CEO of the youth participation network the of the British Youth Council. "A large coalition of providers, trade unions and youth voice groups has come together under the 'Choose youth' banner to campaign against cuts – especially where they are rushed or unfair and there is some local evidence of decisions being reconsidered. However at a time of rising youth unemployment, rising debt for students and a double dip recession the mood is one of resignation as well as defiance."

SPOTLIGHTS ON
THE CONSEQUENCES



Young people facing consequences

The atmosphere in the Balkan region is not much different to that in the UK. The lack of organised, institutional and educational support to young people has apparently been affecting their active participation in society as 40% of young people in the "former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" feel apathy, 56% are not active while 25% consider themselves to be socially excluded. Furthermore, the lack of youth work support has been affecting the relationships among young people in general, according to Ivana Davidovska and Stefan Manevski from Intercultural Dialogue. "The last interethnic and violent tensions and incidents among young people are one of the examples of it. The only support to young people and their personal and social development in the 'former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia' are several youth organisations working with young people. There is lack of support systems for young people at local level, meaning here there are no youth centres, youth clubs, or other type of youth services", they say. "In general there are no specific funds supporting youth work development in the 'former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia', granted by the government on local and national levels. Ever since the crisis hit Europe, different budget cuts were introduced, especially in the youth sector, and even this little support is gone now. The main cuts have been introduced in the Agency for Youth and Sport, in the budget for implementation on the National Youth Strategy, so the implementation of this strategy has basically been stopped."

It might be early to say where all of this will lead youth work and young people but the prognostic based on the current trends is not very promising.

According to James Cathcart: "It's still too early to assess impact, and indeed many of the means of measuring services are also not being resourced. The government is consulting on guidance about the statutory levels of youth services that are required and how best to provide them. Whatever is decided many young people will only experience the cuts in their locality and will not be aware of the bigger picture or trends, but analysts are warning about the connection between an erosion of services and support for youth in general and some unmet targeted needs in particular and general levels of discontent by a section of the population that was least responsible for the recession and need to make cuts in the first place."



Where do we go from here?

Youth work carried out in Portugal, the "former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and the UK or elsewhere is always aimed at providing a space for the personal development of young people and focuses on active youth participation in society. It is also supposed to aim to improve the status of young people and to increase the level of their representation and active participation or build their capacity to undertake such actions. But how do we achieve this when the conditions for carrying out youth work are as limited as they appear to be in the countries of crisis?

"On one hand I consider that youth work and young people are in limbo. Everybody is ... waiting. The feeling is: 'There is nothing we can do', 'The solutions aren't in our hands!', 'We have some demonstrations in the streets but with no impact...' In another way, I think that this crisis also can help young people to give more value to everything that they have or had! It can motivate young people to change their behaviour, to become more creative, to change their paradigm/modus vivendi. Soon, part of the youth will be able to understand that if they want to participate in a youth exchange or to organise a summer camp, they should be more active, they should participate, they should work together and be creative!" says Dulce.



When family support fails: reducing the risk of social exclusion of young people

by Dagmar Kutsar

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Between 2008 and 2011 a cluster of five research projects on the social inclusion of young people was financed by the Socio-Economic Sciences and Humanities Programme (SSH) of the EU 7th Framework Programme (EU 7FP). Based on the results of these research projects a policy review "Social inclusion of socially excluded youth: more opportunities, better access and higher solidarity" was written by Dagmar Kutsar and Helena Helve.

In order to complete their work they analysed the final reports, policy briefs, working papers and published articles based on the five research projects. Two associated experts, Professor Beatrix Niemeyer and Dr Ewa Krzaklewska, members of the Pool of the European Youth Researchers for the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth were involved in the finalisation of the review.

The young people who were the subject of the EU 7FP research projects¹ on social inclusion, analysed in the policy review by Kutsar and Helve,² are characterised by disadvantaged backgrounds. They often come from dysfunctional, poor or socially isolated families; they lack family support, and/or have low dominant language proficiency. The research revealed that the limited life opportunities of these young people exclude them from fully participating in society in terms of further education and entrance to the labour market. Even if they have ambitious goals concerning education or professional life, they can only achieve these (if at all) in the face of significant odds, due to fewer opportunities, more limited access to services and low solidarity in the relationships between these young people and the wider society.



¹ The present research note discusses policy-driven research of a cluster of five research projects on the social inclusion of young people: homeless (CSEYHP, see: www.movisie.nl/homelessyouth), from or in public care (YIPPEE, see: <http://tcru.ioe.ac.uk/yippee/>), the young unemployed (YOUNEX, see: www.younex.unige.ch), and with migrant origin (EUMARGINS, see: <http://www.iss.uio.no/forskning/eumargins/>, and EDUMIGROM, see: <http://www.edumigrom.eu>). The projects were financed from the Socio-Economic Sciences and Humanities Programme (SSH) of the EU 7th Framework Programme in the years 2008-2011.

² To read the policy review "Social Inclusion of Socially Excluded Youth: More Opportunities, Better Access, and Higher Solidarity", Policy review of the Youth Research Cluster on Social Inclusion written by Dagmar Kutsar and Helena Helve, see: http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/news/news_338.html

1
The research has revealed two directions of youth policy challenges: (1) the reduction of the risks of social exclusion for children and youth from an early age; and (2) successful transitions into independent living of youth with low personal resources and facing institutional and structural constraints, assured by the development of integrative policy measures.

In contemporary European societies an increased dependency by youth on their parents has become apparent. Support from the immediate family appears to be critical during the transition to working life, independent living and family formation. Setbacks in transitions (or yo-yo transitions) result in young people needing to carefully navigate between periods of autonomy and dependence on their families.

The research confirmed that the capacities of families play a powerful role in shaping youth outcomes, starting from their early years. Educational prospects after compulsory education have roots in participation in quality pre-school education, and in early educational allocation systems. This causes an educational divide among children and youth. Roma children, as well as children of migrant background and poor families, are usually highly affected by poor access to pre-school facilities and allocated to more disadvantageous segments of the education systems. Young people in and from public care are negatively affected by multiple changes of schools. Placement instability has a negative impact on their achievements at school and diminishes their prospects of continuing in post-compulsory education. Open access to education for all children and young people from an early age should be politically acknowledged as their social right and receive relevant policy responses.

The policy review of Kutsar and Helve touches on an issue of social comparisons that young people, as a rule, make, but in the case of youth with disadvantaged backgrounds this phenomenon uncovers a negative outcome for them. In effect, they feel disfavoured, deprived, or set apart from peers in the school environment. The accompanied labelling of children and young people by professionals – teachers, social workers and others – results in confirmation of the low self-esteem and undervaluation of the importance of education in the young person's life. As an example, after leaving care, the lack of encouragement from school and care professionals puts young people on a track towards immature transitions to independent living, namely prioritisation of financial independence through work above further education, which later limits their professional opportunities and leads to lower socio-economic positions. However, many young people in care, the homeless and with migrant backgrounds fully understand the importance of education and are frustrated by the obstacles they have to overcome after dropping out or finishing compulsory education. Namely they are in need of support from trusted adults who would be a stable point of encouragement and counselling and would broaden their educational perspectives.



» When family support fails: reducing the risk of social exclusion of young people



2

The groups of socially excluded youth (the migrants, homeless, those in public care) face a glass ceiling against their potential aspirations and positive life careers due to their disadvantaged backgrounds and legal and institutional barriers.

National policies in Europe differ, in particular through the division of responsibilities between the individual, the family, the state, the market and the third sector. They also differ in the extent to which welfare provisions, education systems, employment policies and migration policies support individual aspirations. In the Mediterranean countries the reliance on parents as welfare providers is the highest; young people are staying at home longer than ever, and longer compared to other European countries. However, even the universalistic Nordic welfare system that mostly relies on state support welcomes the presence of family support.

The policy review calls for more recognition for young people with disadvantaged backgrounds in state policies. These groups of young people (such as homeless, in care or migrants) are often not sufficiently or accurately represented in national statistics and reporting. They are overlooked in policies and lack intervention practices. The researchers express the need for caution when reading the published statistics, especially concerning the population groups whose particular circumstances have not yet secured enough political recognition. The available statistics may fail to reveal the full picture of the processes of inclusion and exclusion among young immigrants for example. The unemployment rates can be lower for immigrant young people than for indigenous young people, according to official statistics, because immigrants often work in the informal sector where they have fewer rights and are thus excluded legally. The collection of statistics annually, at national and local levels using EU indicators, about both the current situation of vulnerable groups and the most recent improvements in the field, is essential for reasoned policy making.

The recommendations for breaking educational barriers stress early-age prevention programmes and targeted interventions that can be used as functional tools for overcoming the biographical disadvantages of young people and support the creation of their personal resources. Interventions should be directed towards ensuring access to and retention in education irrespective of the material resources of the family or their ethnic or migrant background. In the case of migrant youth, additional neighbourhood-based actions of informal and non-formal learning addressed to all ages and for both migrant and non-migrant community members, are suggested as means of broadening solidarity within society and for linking migrant or ethnic minority families with the wider community.

Young people themselves display capabilities and resilience that could be empowered with political measures. The promotion of access to social rights of civic and political participation can contribute to the promotion of equal opportunities and social inclusion. With the internalisation of these rights comes a sense of empowerment that can help young people to realise their potential, if institutionally supported. Civil society organisations uncover underexploited capacities to involve young people,

and to develop subsidy schemes and scholarships for young people who have been actively engaged. Political parties can consciously recruit migrant youth with the objective of developing relevant political issues and agendas and carrying out campaigns.

To summarise, the policy review based on the research projects revealed existing institutional weaknesses – the presence of exclusive labour market and educational policies, the underexploited role of the civil society and, last but not least, a weak or missing link of welfare provision with education and labour market policies. Education, employment, equal rights and opportunities for citizenship, participation and solidarity between youth and society are the key agents in the capacity of European youth policy to achieve improvement in the inclusion of European young people at risk. Securing their acceptance and support at the level of national politics remains an important political objective. Realisation of this objective will allow recognition of the educational, economic and political needs, as special transitional needs of these young people, who require additional institutional support for relieving their disadvantages and broadening their life chances.

3

- Take into special consideration the needs of youth with disadvantages (those without any or with poor and limited family support, young people in or from public care, those with ethnic minority or migrant backgrounds), when drawing up social inclusion, education, youth, family and childhood policies.
- Improve collaborative efforts of schools, welfare agencies, vocational training and labour market institutions, NGOs and the families of youth with the aim of reducing their yo-yo effect (dropping out of school, college course and training).
- Establish an effective partnership of key institutional agents (education, justice, social services) to support children and youth with weak or missing family support.
- Recognise the inequality of educational opportunities as a children's rights issue and intensify efforts to reduce differences in the conditions and quality of schooling for children with disadvantaged backgrounds.

What do they think we do?

by Darko Markovic
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“Hey, you’ve done well with Gaddafi out there, but this Assad is tough”, one of my best friends said to me upon my return from a training course abroad. With all these “trainings”, “meetings” and “travelling” somehow my friend became convinced that I actually work for – the CIA! It all started as a bar joke, but it shows the clear lack of understanding of what I do for a living by those closest to me. And he is not alone. My father, a mechanical engineer, has been saying to his business partners, when introducing his family, that his son “is a psychologist, but mostly selling fog”. Certainly, talking about recognition of non-formal education, one could say that this is not the most appreciative environment. Then I asked my 8-year-old son to tell me what he thought I did. “Travelling to different countries, flying by plane and stealing my LEGO blocks”, he said laughing in the back seat of my car. “All true”, I thought, “my office is full of toys and certainly that’s much better than being a subversive element in revolutions all over the world”.

For sure “youth work has blurry boundaries” (see F. Coussée’s article in *Coyote* No. 16) and “numerous forms”, thus it is often not easy to put in words. In addition, in many countries learning is still considered as the exclusive property of formal education institutions. This all makes it a bit more difficult to position youth work in the social landscape, leaving the dilemma of whether it is more about its identity or – its image. Perhaps we could do a nice self-perception exercise in our little world (read the Declaration of the European Youth Work Convention in Ghent), but let’s see how others see us and if we can learn from it.

After a recent seminar, the hotel manager approached the colleague who was in charge saying: "I don't want to be indiscrete, but with all these things that you do, do you actually get paid for this?!" He laughed back. I am not on Facebook, but have heard of a fun application about exactly this topic and following this thought, I have asked other trainers in Europe to do a little "research": to ask those closest to them about what they think trainers do. Receiving the responses elicited tons of laughter and provided good food for thought. Some of the most exciting responses they received you may find below.



Mother:

I thought you were working, but you are just cutting papers, sticking them around and having fun.



Daughter:

My father is a clown.



Husband:

You and your
"youth things"...



Father:

What?! You mean the government pays you to leave the country all the time on those youth work things!! Be careful, my boy, they might ask you for the money back!



Friend:

You are trying to include youth from SEE region in, let's say, non-governmental sector, which will bring them prosperity, education and democracy, that they normally don't have, or something like that...



Daughter:

You make different workshops, like "My dream job", for young people to learn what the world is about.



Friend:

It seems clear you help people; you show them new perspectives, new ways to look at themselves, to look at their work, their lives. Not paying you a favour I tell you it seems cool. And you in fact "win your bread" with that.



Daughter:

I think you work very well and you're very dedicated, but I think you sometimes work too much.



Friend:

You make seemingly unimportant things important. You teach us to listen and that talking is not about filling time, but about making thoughts become truths. I believe you manage to make strangers friends and single people groups.



Mother:

You aim at making a difference wherever you are, promote creativity and give hope, promote justice and equality of opportunity for all and motivated by love of people.

It seems, after all, that recognition of what we are doing is on the right path, but there's a lot more to be done. As one of the colleagues expressed, "when you try to explain what we do, you get to the point only after a couple of beers". However, if you prefer more alcohol-free strategies, consider taking your beloved ones on a job-shadowing mission to one of your courses. Or perhaps we should consider changing the name of what we do. Recently, during one of those hilarious trainers' meetings, an idea popped up that we should give up the contested term "trainers" and create a new professional identity and become ... "capacitators[®]". Finally, one thing that struck me the most about the above-mentioned exercise is that all the colleagues that did it found it very rewarding and even flattering to receive such feedback. So after reading these, you are strongly recommended to – TRY THIS AT HOME!

The short story

by Mark Taylor

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"Marker" is a regular column in Coyote, written by Mark Taylor, looking at issues in something-to-be-discovered and hoping to encourage debate, questions and a certain regard.

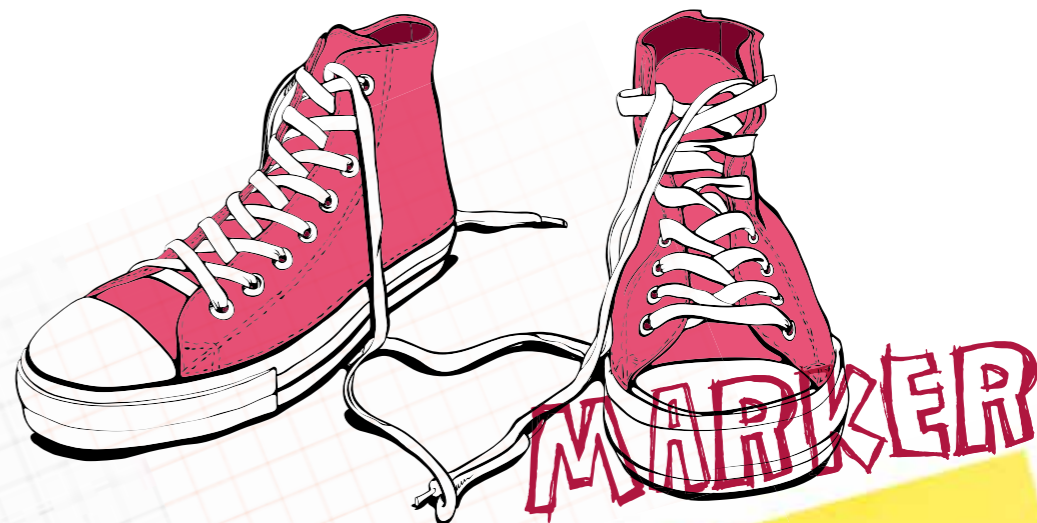
For reasons of space, this "Marker" is much shorter than previous editions. Normal service may resume in the next issue.

Change your ways...

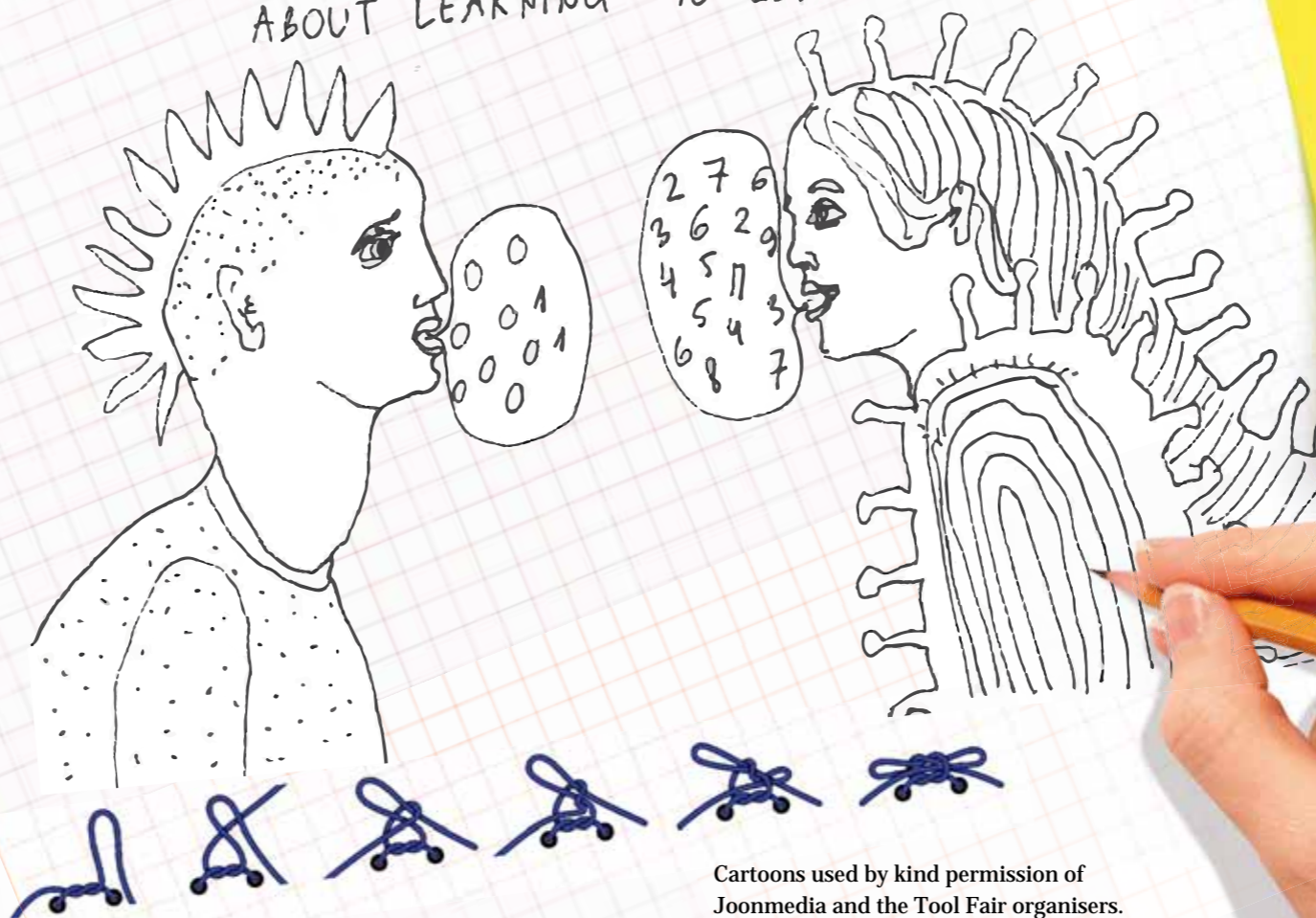
Walking at speed with my long-legged best friend a couple of months ago I had to stop every few hundred meters as my shoe laces kept coming undone. Slightly irritating. What to do? I wondered. He told me, "after a while the laces lose their friction and get loose; the solution is to reverse the way you tie them initially: instead of putting the right-hand end of the lace over the left and pulling them tight, you do it in reverse. This is hard to do initially, but does the trick. The lace stays tied." It's perhaps incredible, but true! My problem is that I learnt to tie shoe laces when I was four years old and have done it the same way ever since. Whenever I put on shoes, my hands seem to have a built-in memory and guide themselves... So now I have to a) remember that I have changed my practice and b) force myself to tie the laces in what is still an unnatural way.

Try it yourself. Who knows? Maybe this tip could change your life in the profound manner that resulted for some people when following advice about unpeeling sticky notes in "Marker" from *Coyote* No. 16. At least you won't trip up in the same way again.

You might wonder what this has to do with professional discourse. Someone wise said that you have to repeat something 42 times before it becomes naturally integrated into your behaviour – so why do we imagine that people can learn something after only doing it once in a training course?



MOST OF PEOPLE RUN OUT OF WORDS WHEN TALKING
ABOUT LEARNING TO LEARN



and finally

Thanks to those who write or give informal feedback. Next time we consider heat and the "pataphysics of badges".

Sounds, words, inspirations

Bill Hicks (1997): *Hicksville! An Introduction to the Genius of Bill Hicks*, Rykodisc, RCD 10427.

John Cage (1952): 4'33.

Cartoons used by kind permission of Joonmedia and the Tool Fair organisers.

For more, go to their websites:

Joonmedia: www.drawingmedia.blogspot.com

Tool Fair 6: <http://toolfair.eu/tf6/>



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Thierry Dufour is currently a public officer in the youth international department of the Ministry of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles and is in charge of funding programmes and co-ordinating training activities and international representation (including Council of Europe youth activities and meetings).

Gisèle Evrard has been working as a project co-ordinator and freelance trainer for about 16 years. In addition to her work, deep beliefs in alternative educational systems, a passion for photography and the English Renaissance, Gisèle is also involved with two colleagues and friends in the creation of Taaluma, an international training and education organisation. A *Coyote* editorial team member.

Mara Georgescu is an educational advisor in the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, working mostly in Strasbourg. She is involved in running the education and training activities of the youth sector. Her major work areas are: social inclusion, training and non-formal education, human rights education, youth work, etc. In her free time she is a curious reader, a cinema lover and occasionally a good cyclist. A *Coyote* editorial team member.

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Dr Beatrix Niemeyer has a strong background in youth work, both as a volunteer and professional, with European exchange programmes and intercultural experiences being one of her favourite activities. In her current position as professor for adult and further education at the University of Flensburg in Germany she is engaged in the research, politics and practice of working and learning in Europe. The focus of her research and teaching is on youth transitions from school to work, career orientation and vocational learning such as strategies against youth unemployment in Europe in general.

Khalil Raihani is working on a doctoral thesis about new forms of political youth participation at the University of Reims. He has worked as a consultant-trainer with the Council of Europe's Directorate of Youth, Isesco and the League of Arab States. His training expertise is in participation, youth policy development, intercultural dialogue, human rights education, conflict and mediation. He has been active in several local, national, Moroccan and European NGOs.

Gavan Titley teaches on issues of media and society in the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. His most recent publication, with Alana Lentin, is *The Crises of Multiculturalism: Racism in a Neoliberal Age* (Zed, 2011). He has a long history of working with the Council of Europe on youth training and research.

Ragıp Zık has been involved in civil society and youth work since 2001. He has experience in the fields of human rights education, migration, active citizenship and intercultural dialogue. Currently, he is working at Anadolu Kültür, which is a culture and arts organisation based in Istanbul, as project co-ordinator on Turkish-Armenian reconciliation.

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Mark Taylor is a trainer and writer and is grateful to be part of both the Unique network and via Experientia (the International Academy of Experiential Education) as they make life challenging and even a joy. A *Coyote* editorial team member.



The Adventures of Spiffy

Mark Taylor • The Big Family

No. 86b
[sic]

Spiffy gets hot...

Nearly a year since we last saw Spiffy.
Searching always searching...



Detective Spiffy's team return
from their investigations

How to write a T-Kit:

virtual training course
organised by Spiffy
Partnerships, sponsored
by Friend Chips. Optional
modules include: how to
write with people who
forget how to write; how
to cope with an editor
who changes every single
sentence you write.



What to watch?



How to write a T-Kit (No. 4):

(Currently in preparation).
New modules include:
coping with the
psychological effects
of seeing your work
translated into your
own language; writing
a T-Kit and revising
a T-Kit – what is the
difference?



Some like it hot!



And do you see what
Marilyn Monroe is doing?!

Do you see how the whole film
changes when she plays the ukulele?!



Could that be the answer
to the first question of the day?



Could this be the beginning of
the ukulele education revolution?





"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.

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 can be received free of charge (subject to availability; please contact: youth-partnership@coe.int) and is available in an electronic format at:
<http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/>

Coyote is not responsible for the content and character of the activities announced in this magazine. It cannot guarantee that the events take place and assumes no responsibility for the terms of participation and organisation.

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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