

Issue 8 - February 2004

COYOTE #8

Y o u t h • T r a i n i n g • E u r o p e



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Coyote theme: **Inclusion**

Focus:

**Youth Researchers
and Youth Workers**

**Euromed training
strategy Turkey**

**Training
methodologies**

**50 : 50 course in Armenia
Young Touch**

The Coyote Spirit

**Demystifying spirituality
in training**



PARTNERSHIP
COUNCIL OF EUROPE & EUROPEAN COMMISSION
TRAINING-YOUTH

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Coyote

Carol-Ann moves on

The editorial team were very sad to say goodbye to Carol-Ann Morris during the production of this issue. Carol-Ann was a founder member of the Coyote Editorial team in 1999. She brought incredible energy and enthusiasm into the role; always on the look out for possible themes and interesting people to write for the magazine. Carol-Ann's caring style and marvellous sense of humour enabled her to motivate and coach a wide range of authors.

Carol-Ann was a conscientious team member; taking responsibility for many articles over eight issues of Coyote and representing the Youth Forum in the Editorial team.

Carol-Ann, we'll miss you but we know that you have moved on into a fascinating area of international youth work.

We wish you well in your new adventure and send our love and thanks for all you've contributed to Coyote. No doubt we will be in touch soon with an invitation to contribute an article!

Council of Europe Award "Young Active Citizens" 2004

"Participation of young people in the prevention and fight against violence in everyday life"

For the third year running, the Council of Europe organises the "Young Active Citizens" Award, promoting active participation of young people in society.

Any concrete and sustainable measure, action or project in support for young people's active participation on local and/or regional level in the prevention and fight against violence in everyday life is welcome to apply!

Look for the application and guidelines at www.coe.int/youth or send an e-mail to: leen.laconte@coe.int

"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 dealing with issues around «youth - training - europe».

It is addressed to trainers, youth workers and all those who want to know more about the world of youth worker training in Europe.

Coyote wants to provide a forum to share and give new insights into some of the issues that trainers face in their work, issues related to the diverse training concepts, methodologies, practices and realities across this continent. It also informs about current developments in this field, especially at European level.

Coyote is published by the Council of Europe and the European Commission within their Partnership in the youth field, with the aim to strengthen networking among trainers involved in European youth worker training and to promote the value of European level training for youth workers.

Coyote comes out twice every year. It can be received free of charge from the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg (subject to availability) and is published on the Partnership web site under <http://www.training-youth.net>.

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.

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**Many thanks to all those who
have contributed to this issue
of Coyote.**

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and ideas at the same address.

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Welcome to Coyote!

Welcome to Coyote Number 8!

The theme in this issue follows on from the European Year of people with disabilities 2003. I wonder what impact this had on the European Youth Training world.

Did it increase our awareness or change our training methods?



The Coyote Theme expands our thinking into a wide range of social and economic disadvantage: **Tom Croft and Bea Roberts** challenge us to think about the realities of having a voice in the European scene.

Karina Chupina gets down to the realities of including those with disabilities into training events and the Arts while **Anne Storz** describes a multi-lateral long term project involving disabled young people and sport; and both **Mariane Schapmans and Louis Leroux** consider the implications of financial disadvantage on training, EVS and mobility in Europe.

My hope is that disability and disadvantage will not be something that is forgotten after 2003 but that we will constantly review our efforts to make training and work with young people truly inclusive.

Arturas Deltuva's article on spirituality in the training situation will I hope be the first of several contributions exploring this often neglected topic. The pair of articles linking youth training and youth research will also hopefully be the first of several in coming issues.

This issue does not contain a Coyote interview; we hope to bring this feature back next time. We do however have a useful insight into the life of a National Coordinator through **Asuman Goksel's** review of the development of Turkey's involvement in the EU Youth programme. In the training methodologies section there are two articles describing very different pieces of work:

JP Restouiex describes a training programme involving a mixture of people from youth organisations and civil servants responsible for youth affairs; **Geoff Cooper** describes the Young Touch programme which develops environmental and intercultural awareness through an active, participant led programme. Both of these articles enable us to share in the learning gained from running similar programmes over several years.

So, another full issue! We welcome your comments and feedback – both on the content and on the presentation. My apologies for inaccuracies which crept into the last issue and my thanks in particular to **Carol-Ann Morris** who left the Editorial team in December. All the team will miss your input and caring enthusiasm. ■

Jonathan Bowyer



by Bryony Hoskins

F O C U S

A NEW PARTNERSHIP ON YOUTH RESEARCH: DEVELOPING THE LINKS BETWEEN RESEARCH POLICY & PRACTICE

The partnership programme on youth research that began in April 2003 aims to connect the research knowledge of the needs and lifestyles of young people in Europe to inform European youth policy and educational practice. The activities in this partnership support the European Commission follow-up to the White Paper on Youth and follow the priorities set out in this text that are influential across all European, national and international youth policy making; for example, this years' seminars were based on the priorities of the fight against racism and xenophobia, participation and non-formal education/the YOUTH Programme. These priorities match the Council of Europe priorities on intercultural dialogue and peace and their interest in the quality development of non-formal education. The seminar audiences are predominantly researchers with a smaller group of policy makers and educationalists. The researchers are asked to give inputs from their research in the form of papers, panel discussions and debate. **The policy makers and educationalists are there in order to open up a dialogue with research and to consider how to translate the research findings into practice.**

The first seminar following the European Commission priority of Anti-Racism and the Council of Europe priority of Intercultural Dialogue was called **"Resituating Culture: Reflections on Diversity, Racism, Gender and Identity in the Context of Youth"** and was held in June 2003 in Budapest.

The research developed a critique of the current understanding of culture as the answer to all questions of conflict and looked at the cross-cutting dynamics of power such as class, gender and sexuality. It highlighted issues within the debate on how to develop cross-cultural social justice. Below is a contribution from Gavan Titley and Sharon Holder who were both involved in this seminar. Gavan, a trainer and a researcher, was the convener for the seminar who helped to bring in current research and direct the debate on this topic. Sharon, who is a trainer on the SALTO UK Diversity Resource Centre training courses helped us to understand how the research could be used in educational practice.

Their contribution to this article is a dialogue between two different actors in the seminar.

The second seminar was called **"New Generation YOUTH Programme"**, and took place in July 2003 in Budapest.

At this event the audience was composed of youth researchers, practitioners and National Agency staff. This seminar had the purpose of evaluating the present European Commission YOUTH Programme in order to give recommendations for the future. It considered the future trends of young people in order to devise a programme that answered their needs. The necessity for funding research that helped support the YOUTH Programme activities was emphasised within the seminar. **The discussion focused on the need for collaboration between researchers, educationalists and policy makers in order to promote evidence-based practice in the context of the YOUTH Programme.** Paul Kloosterman, who attended the seminar to represent educationalists, and myself, a researcher in a European institution, have written about the potential and the difficulties of researchers and trainers working together.

The future research seminars that will be held will be on the topics of: political participation, voluntary services, non-formal education, social inclusion and employment. The next edition of Coyote will give more information on the details of the research covenant activities.

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by Bryony Hoskins & Paul Kloosterman

YOUTH RESEARCHERS

different cultures in the same field.

A few years ago during the coffee break at an event where both youth researchers and youth workers were present you could hear the following comments being made by a group of youth workers about the researchers: *"their documents and reports are unreadable and too fat", "they never meet real youngsters", "I would love to talk to the cute one over there but their language is like Chinese to me", "they are addicted to long speeches"*. At the same time in another corner youth researchers were addressing competences of the youth workers: *"well, they are nice and motivated but they just do", "they don't take any advantage of all the information which has been collected about their target group", "they don't seem to have any theoretical concept", "during a meeting they seem to need a game every ten minutes to keep their attention"*.

The youth sector is made up of a disparate group of actors, for example, young people, youth workers, trainers, NGO workers, youth policy makers and youth researchers. These different groups of people have different needs, skills and competencies and have their distinct cultures.

For example, they use different languages, codes of behaviour and practices that often create misunderstandings between the different groups. In this article we will highlight two of these groups: researchers and youth workers. We will then consider the question, **what are the benefits from greater understanding and cooperation between these two groups?**

Researchers, the first group of people that we will put under the microscope, often write articles and books that describe the complexities of the experiences of young people relating these experiences to sociological analysis of the present day such as the Risk society, globalisation, Late modernity or Post modernity. In order to describe the experiences of young people researchers use methods such as interviews with young people, systematic observation of young people in their everyday lives, the use of questionnaires and large-scale surveys giving statistics on such topics as people gaining employment, pregnancy rates and suicides. Some of the complexities arise from the comparison between different groups of young people: ethnicity, gender, class, youth cultures, periods of time and different countries.

The language used by researchers to describe youth experiences can be difficult to understand often using complex words and terminology developed within the research community that helps them to be more precise in their explanations.

On the other hand using this language can also serve to exclude others who do not understand the terminology from participating within the debates and using the research results. Within their work this group also spend much time referencing other researchers. **It is necessary for them to demonstrate their knowledge of theory and literature in order that their new research is taken seriously within the research community.** The complex language, the use of terminology created within the community and the referencing of other researchers are the expected practice within this culture and form the rules that need to be followed for them to succeed within this group. In many countries youth research has still to create its own identity and establish itself as a recognised field and thus in

many ways youth research has to follow these academic traditions in order to be recognised and taken seriously. As a result of the amount of time spent reading, analysing and writing as opposed to spending time with young people in the field researchers are often (mis) understood as not having spent enough time with young people to understand their experiences and – it has to be admitted - on some occasions this may be true.

Youth workers spend most of their time not describing the situation of youth, but rather working with the day-to-day needs of individuals or groups of young people. This group of people have a lot of experience of the difficulties and needs of specific young people with whom they work. Often youth workers feel very highly involved with these young people, which is a strong motivational factor for working with them. The social status of youth workers in most countries is not very high. More time is spent doing rather than reflecting, comparing or reading other peoples' analysis of the lives of young people.

There is the impression from researchers (which is sometimes justified) that youth workers do their practice based on conviction rather than evidence.

"Youth workers spend most of their time not describing the situation of youth, but rather working with the day-to-day needs of individuals or groups of young people."



YOUTH WORKERS



Youth workers also have their own language and rules of practice and methods to succeed. They base their work on the values that all people are equal, that it is important to discuss feelings, participation should be voluntary and that tests and formal qualifications are less important. The community of youth workers and trainers use their own terminology like "energizers", concepts such as "icebergs" and expressions such as the use of "for me" at the beginning of sentences. **For people who are not from this community, who work in another culture where the rules and values are very different it can be equally difficult to understand and to join in.**

Across Europe the youth sector is in a defensive position, always needing to prove itself and convince others of its importance in answering to the needs of young people. The lack of recognition of the youth sector often means that the funds in the pot are not large. This leads to competition between the distinct groups for the small amounts of money. What we need instead of competition is to work much closer together using the strengths of each group to benefit the youth sector as a whole and demonstrate its place in European civil society. The comments that were quoted at the beginning of this article are understandable and certainly there will be some truth in them, but they don't contribute to a cooperation between the two groups that could enrich and improve the quality of both research and practice. Below are two examples of where youth researchers and youth workers have successfully worked together.

In the Netherlands, between 2001 and 2003, a project was carried out which involved close co-operation between researchers and practitioners (social workers, youth workers and teachers). The central issue for the project was **"in what way can you motivate those youngsters that even drop out of special programs for dropouts?"**.

Starting with three months of research - literature research, plus interviews with youngsters and practitioners - initial conclusions led to the development of an action plan. Here, researchers and practitioners decided together about pilot projects to experiment with these first conclusions. After these pilot projects again youngsters and practitioners were interviewed followed by an evaluation process. The project produced a research report, a book for practitioners which was in a way a popular version of the report and a training manual for training practitioners. For all involved the result was very satisfying. Researchers profited from the input of practitioners when "designing" their research and could see a direct follow-up to their work in practice after the project. Practitioners were in a way forced to reflect inten-

Paul, why did you become a youth worker/ trainer?

The main reason that I decided to study youth work was that it combined all the things that I was involved in as an 18 year old youngster. As a volunteer I was active in the local youth centre and next to that I was fighting the world being part of the left wing movement. So when it was time to decide about my education I was nicely surprised when I found out that I could make my "life" a profession.

In those times being a youth worker was partly a political statement. To be honest we discussed sometimes more about Marx or the political situation in South America than the methodological concept of youth work. To empower youngsters to be ready for a new society was our idealistic dream in the beginning of the seventies.

The daily practice of youth work then brought us back to reality and made me focus more on the situation of these youngsters in their life, their neighbourhood, their families, their school or their unemployed status.

Paul, why did you start to work with researchers and policy makers?

When I take a closer look at the youth work in my country, the Netherlands, I have to admit that I'm not impressed by both the methodological concepts of youth workers and the reasoning behind policy decisions taken by youth work organisations. Choices are often made based on contacts with those youngsters who "happen to be there" in the youth centre, on personal priorities of youth workers or on accidental events. Also politicians don't contribute to a coherent policy in youth work by reacting strongly on "the news of the day". There seems to be a big lack when it comes to reflection and having a proper overall view on the situation and needs of young people.

Therefore, in my opinion, it's crucial to establish a better link with youth researchers in order to develop youth work policy, to better evaluate results and to be able to show the importance of the work done to the outer world.



sively on their work during the project and were provided with new methods and tools after the project. Both agreed that the cooperation increased the quality of the project. **Three months after the project, 85 % of the participating youngsters were in a job or vocational training.**

Evaluation work is another example where researchers benefit the youth work and youth training fields. The European Commission YOUTH Programme as a whole, the SALTO training courses and the Partnership training courses on European citizenship and the Advanced Training of Trainers in Europe have undergone evaluation research in different forms.

In most of the evaluations all the interest groups will have had a chance to input their views into the process. The results have given youth workers and trainers and policy makers the chance to have feedback on youth work and youth training in Europe. The feedback can then be used to implement changes and increase the quality of practice and also, importantly, to reaffirm where and when practice has been successful and of high quality. Thus when evaluation can show successful impact, for example, highlighting the benefits of the youth work for young people and show that the quality is high this evidence can be used in arguments to maintain or increase the number of activities for young people and youth trainers. Youth researchers then feel that they are actively contributing to the benefit of the youth sector.

Conclusion

In this article we have worked on one of the topics within the debate at the New Generation YOUTH Programme seminar: how to translate youth research into policy and practice. Through exploring the different codes and practices of youth workers and youth researchers we have tried to explain the reasons for why these cultures behave differently - in order to promote future cooperation between these groups. In the future YOUTH Programme we hope to see a greater involvement of researchers contributing to European youth work and training. This research should above all be directly useful for policy and practice. To facilitate this process we need to work on developing a better understanding of each other and improving the working methods between the different actors in the youth field. ■



Bryony, Why did you become a researcher?

The motivation of researchers is not that much different to youth workers - the reason that they go into this area of research is in order to create change, to empower young people and give them better opportunities. For me this was certainly the case, I became a researcher because I wanted to create greater equality between women and men and I wanted to put what young people said and felt into the field of research. Feminist youth research was an obvious place to start because it focuses on the lives of everyday young women and men and what they say; it places importance on personal experiences and puts an emphasis on the ethics of research.

The difference between researchers and youth workers then is not the commitment but in the approach to creating change. The research approach is to describe the situation of young people and to document the evidence of the difficulties faced and it is hoped that policy and practice will take notice.

Bryony, Why did you start to work more with youth workers/ trainers?

The difficulty that researchers face is in transmitting the results into the fields of practice and policy.

Journal articles, books and talks are often created in a language that is impenetrable and I realised more and more that the results of research filled libraries rather than made changes. Hoping that policy and practice would take notice was not enough and I wanted to be involved in the process of translating research into the worlds of policy and practice, to provide the evidence where needed to back up good policy and practice and to bring evidence to challenge policy when it does not fit the reality of young peoples' lives.

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by Gavan Titley & Sharon Holder

RE-SITUATING CULTURE:

seminar reflections

Gavan: "Re-situating Culture" is an oblique title that takes some explanation. The working premise of this research seminar - as it was originally proposed - was that it should be an exploration of cultural difference, yet its developers were not prepared to work with cultural difference as an evident mode of analysis. Fundamentally, it emerged in our discussions that our problems with cultural difference were grounded in even deeper suspicions of the tangled idea of culture. Given the central emphasis on intercultural learning in our broad field of European youth work, we agreed that a meaningful research seminar could be organised that aimed to analyse the power, properties, boundaries and possibilities attributed to culture in a range of contemporary discourses, and further aimed to assess the import of these discourses for working with youth in European societies.

I should clarify straight off – before iceberg models melt in the heat of discussion – that this pointed critique of culture is not to dismiss the importance and insights of thinking on culture, and nor does it under-value the important work done under the label of intercultural learning in a wide variety of settings. Instead it is based on a simple observation; ‘culture’ is everywhere, and when a concept appears to explain almost everything, then almost by definition it explains nothing also. Culture has long been regarded as one of the most complicated concepts in the human and social sciences, and it is also a ubiquitous and banal feature of everyday description. Culture may be deployed in relation to "ways of life" and life practices, collectivities based on location, nation, history, lifestyle and ethnicity, systems and webs of representation and meaning, and realms of artistic value and heritage. As Mark J. Smith argues, "Probably most of us apply the term across a range of overlapping meanings, depending on the approach being used, the questions being asked, and increasingly, the political point we wish to make".

The idea of re-situating culture, however, is not an attempt to sort out these tangled and historically embedded senses, but instead to argue that working with culture as a way of analysing human lives means engaging with the discursive nature of culture as an idea. Chris Barker expresses this neatly: "Culture" is both a name for the domain in which contestation over value, meanings and practices takes place and a tool by which to intervene in social life'. In other words, culture is not a series of realities out there waiting to be uncovered, analysed and even celebrated, but it is a discourse that allows us to both describe and prescribe human activity - to paraphrase U2, culture has to be believed to be seen. In our societies, an idea of culture as the more or less immutable and bounded way of life of national and ethnic groups persists because it has become the main prism through which identity and belonging is mediated in politics, public discourse, and in multi-cultural and intercultural education.

In this seminar, it was felt that such orthodox ways of using culture to intervene in social life are both descriptively inadequate and politically irresponsible. Descriptively, they fail to take into account the ways in which relationships between culture, territory and identity have become confused. Politically, they employ the same logic of discrete cultural groups central to right-wing rhetoric while often simplifying people's allegiances and identities to a horizon of cultural legitimacy. Intercultural learning is an extremely broad field, even within the network of practices that characterise European youth work. Within this, it is worth reflecting on whether certain practices – that centre models of culture without significant contextualisation and that accept difference as an obvious, accepted concept – are adequate for approaching the complexities of youth identities and contexts, or for reflecting on culture as a highly instrumentalised concept.

While the ideas and debates of the seminar could be discussed at much greater length, I think it is important to address the ways in which this research exercise is related to training practice. Bearing in mind the mutual misconceptions between researchers and trainers that Bryony and Paul discuss, it is crucial to emphasise that this initiative doesn't present research as a corrective, or higher form of knowledge. To do so would be to replicate the persistent and annoying division in training of the theoretical and the concrete, an artificial division that ignores the conditions by which social research is produced, and the ways in which "theories" lurk, perhaps subsumed and undeclared, within the principles and methods of practice.

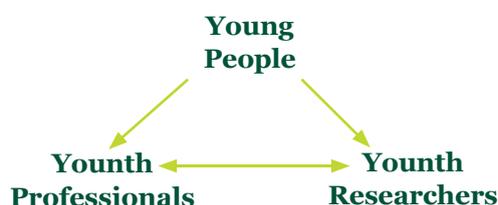
More to the point, research is partial and circumscribed in what it does, and can only attempt to offer insights and reflections that in turn have to be "re-situated" by the trainer dealing with culture as idea and context in their training. As the educationalist David Buckingham has pointed out, theoretical ideas develop through contact with the "messy realities" of seminar rooms and youth organisations. It is only in this translation that their veracity and usefulness in training becomes visible, as ideas don't walk in straight lines. Theory and practice are in conversation, not in conflict.

Sharon:

The idea of theory and practice being in conversation is one that the next few paragraphs will reflect on, in relation to the content of the seminar. Some of the ideas and opportunities that might enhance this dialogue exist as a consequence of the seminar and are presented later. Whether the conversation is happening at all can be debated and may reflect individual experiences of that; that the conversation is desirable is assumed for the purposes of this article.



The communication appears to be triangular, with three interested parties.



The relationship between young people and youth professional is visible and clear, whatever form this takes. Whether animateur, youth workers, youth leaders, social workers, youth educator, etc., however they are described and constituted in a variety of countries, these are the people doing regular face-to-face work with young people. Whether the same could be said of youth researchers is less certain.

So to those messy realities of seminars, training courses and work with young people and to how we might develop those theoretical ideas.

► BETWEEN YOUTH RESEARCHERS & YOUTH PROFESSIONALS

Finding the time to read academic journals may be unrealistic for many workers, yet being able to incorporate some of the current thinking on relevant topics would be invaluable. An irregular update or review of current thinking would provide a synopsis of the pressing points, with reference to more detailed literature for those that can and need to follow-up. The main aim would be to translate those ideas into something useable by workers – to better plan interventions with young people or support youth work training in this field.

Under the four panel discussions in the seminar, a number of relevant issues have been identified, namely:

Multi-culturalism and Inter-culturalism:

- Current models of multiculturalism.
- Multiculturalism, the solution to the problem or the problem itself?

Racism and Anti-racism:

- Diversity management and the role it can take in undermining the importance of anti-racist work.
- Anti-racism and "race" being subsumed under identity.
- Racism, nationalism & ethnicism – compare and contrast.
- Can monocultures be racist?

Gender and Culture:

- Diversity of Muslim women in Europe - a non-homogeneous group.

Youth, Culture, Youth Culture:

- Sub-culture, urban, tribe, crew – what's the difference?
- Hip Hop culture and its importance to youth culture.
- Roma young people - youth culture at what age?

► BETWEEN YOUTH RESEARCHERS & YOUNG PEOPLE

Black and minority ethnic communities often have strong cultural ties to the place of "origin", ties that are reinforced by themselves, as well as by others. What seems to be apparent is a shift amongst young people and how they see themselves, feeling more European than, for example, West Indian. This may indicate the development of a "Black" European identity, however that may be understood. This will mean different things to different people – a Portuguese person of African origin will feel different to an English person of West Indian origin.

This could provide the basis for investigations into this identity formation, as well as comparative studies, within and outside the national boundaries.

► BETWEEN YOUTH PROFESSIONALS & YOUNG PEOPLE

A holistic approach needs to be taken when working on racism. It should not be looked at in isolation of other forms of oppression, noticeably sexism and homophobia. This could link into a hierarchy of disadvantage or difference, does it exist and how is it maintained?

► BETWEEN YOUTH RESEARCHERS, YOUTH PROFESSIONALS & YOUNG PEOPLE

There have been some studies undertaken on the subject of "Whiteness" as an identity and a review of this work could be an invaluable resource for those working with young people.

It would also be important to discuss "Whiteness" in relation to "Blackness", as well as other forms of "otherness". Whether young people recognise themselves in this work could be debated as part of a training seminar for young people, especially those who have shown an interest in being active in this field. The young people could also be those who have been targeted by former participants of training courses run by the partnership organisations over the past few years.

Youth professionals are clearly important in this debate. It would be important to bring the historical context into the debate, particularly for the European countries with a history of colonialism or imperialism.

There are also some more general and personal reflections that the seminar raised, on which I will close this article:

The missing "otherness". I use the term loosely to reflect on the groups that were not so visible, such as people of Turkish origin living in Germany. The absence of some groups was noted. It is also understood that the seminar set out to profile and reflect current research.

Undertaking this type of work is not without risk, which in turn may lead to conflict that will necessarily heighten emotions. Working in an emotional vacuum is not possible, acknowledging and working with the emotional impact of this work is crucial.

Youth researchers have been placed outside of the group of youth professionals for the purpose of this article, but in fact should not be. If this is so, and we talk about training/personal development on these issues for young people, then what about us? ■

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- The report of the Re-situating Culture seminar will carry a more extensive reference section.*

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by Asuman Göksel

4 YEARS OF EXPERIMENT... & EXPERIENCE

IN THE EURO-MED YOUTH PROGRAMME:

Euro-Med Youth Action Programme, Training Strategy

Or... confessions of an ex-National Coordinator

It was 1999 when I started to work with Euro-Med. I was a fresh research assistant in the Department of political science and Public Administration of the Middle East Technical University - METU, where I had spent 10 valuable years of my life...

I still remember the day that I was criticised because of my "academic pedagogical approach" or being "highly academic" in a 'training' context. I had never been involved, ever in my life, in any informal learning experience neither as a trainee nor as a trainer. Until then, the only way was the "academic way of doing it" for me.

In this article, two stories go hand-in-hand. One of them is the story of a Turkish National Coordinator (NC); and the other that of the development of a Programme called Euro-Med Youth Action Programme (Euro-Med) in Turkey. Both stories sum up to one: the story of a "strategy" in Turkey. This strategy in itself was not a 'training' strategy only, but also included many other information and support measures taken to develop the youth work in the country towards an 'international' direction, hence the ultimate aim - the mobility of young people in Turkey.

► Research phase

After being nominated, I did some research on the Programme. I found many documents in the internet and even a guide to the Euro-Med Programme published by the European Youth Forum. I read them all, sometimes without being able to attribute them a meaning or image; and tried to present them to others (especially the members of the NC Nomination Committee). In the end, I was appointed as the NC, approved by the European Commission (EC), and started to work in the Euro-Med under the roof of the university where I also continued to work as a research assistant.

However I needed to visualise what I read. By chance, I talked to a friend whose organisation was involved in Euro-Med years before it was called Euro-Med; within the old Youth for Europe Programme under Action D, which referred to the youth exchanges

with "third countries". We spent some time discussing the projects, the concepts and the philosophy behind it. I even saw the photos of the previous projects and had a chance to examine some final reports. I learned a lot in this process.

► The Programme and the faces behind it:

It was not until November 1999 that we met the people in the Commission. The very first NC meeting with the Commission was organised then, with the Euro-Med NCs already appointed by their governments. I think we were 6 NCs - Jordan, Malta, Israel, Turkey, Tunisia, Morocco - in that meeting, nearly all of whom are still in the field. There, I firstly realised that the world of Euro-Med is a very political one. In addition, we saw that we would not be alone for the establishment and implementation of such a Programme in the future. If we could prove that the outcomes were successful in the Pilot Phase, the Programme could continue in the future.

In the pilot phase, the Programme was constructed on the basis of the previous "Youth for Europe" and "European Voluntary Service". The second phase coincided with the emergence of the new "YOUTH" Programme where the Euro-Med Programme was placed under the new Programme, attributing a priority to it. The main feature was that the organisations from the Mediterranean partner countries could also directly apply for their projects, which was not the case under Action D of the old Programme. It was a real priority because in the old Programme, when a Turkish organisation would like to host a project in Turkey, they should first find a partner from the Programme countries and convince the partner to submit this project to the Commission.

This difference with the Euro-Med Programme has been vital to the work of the NCs. It intended to increase the project preparation/implementation/evaluation skills of the beneficiary NGOs in our countries.

The NCs had a similar role to the National Agencies (NA), which are in charge of the implementation of the YOUTH Programme. NCs were (and still are) responsible for the establishment of an office for Euro-Med, dissemination of the information, implementation of the Programme. It was too much for a single person as NC to conduct all those duties. But many of us managed!

► Action plan...

The story of the strategy in Turkey formally started with the preparation of a work plan for a 12-month plus 6-month activity



list and related budget. Together with an expert assigned by the Commission, the plan for Turkey was made, which focused on the “information meetings” to disseminate information about the Programme and to raise awareness about it. There were also training courses envisaged. However, only one could be realised because of lack of experience in organising trainings; lack of good knowledge of and cooperation schemes with potential local partners; and lack of a comprehensive understanding of the needs of potential beneficiaries in different regions of Turkey. Maybe that’s why only 69% of the total budget was spent in the first contractual period.

► **Warming Up...**

The first work plan originally included 6 Info meetings and 5 training courses at the national level. However, as soon as the real work started, I realised that was nearly nothing for a country, with a population of around 14 million youngsters (aged 15-25), plus the youth workers and leaders, on a territory of around 780.000 km². Even before the contract was signed in June 2000, I was invited to many different meetings as a speaker, where I had the opportunity to disseminate information, but more importantly to see different realities and to meet beneficiaries of the Programme. I even had a chance to participate in 3 Euro-Med projects in Turkey, which helped me to get fully acquainted with the programme. The first information note was prepared and a Euro-Med Türkiye database list emerged with the data I collected in those information meetings. I was still far away from organising an event by myself. At this stage, the support of various public and civil society organisations helped me to survive. The support of the Delegation of the Commission in Ankara was very valuable. As the contact list was growing day by day, the information to be disseminated to the beneficiaries in Turkey was reaching a wider audience.

Another characteristic of the first work plan was the support proposed by the EC for the NCs to equip them with the necessary skills to implement the Programme. However, for the pilot phase of the Programme, the Commission organised only a 2-day training given by the Technical Assistance Office (TAO) combined with the selection panel meeting in October 2000. The second training experience for me was the 15-day job-shadowing in TAO in February 2001. Those activities helped me to understand the technical part of the job that the NCs were supposed to accomplish in their countries. I can never forget the help and support provided by the lovely people in TAO. Whenever I received an enquiry that I did not feel comfortable to answer, I contacted the TAO people and I was never left without an answer.

► **The turning point**

A strategy should be the outcome of an accumulation of knowledge, experience, even the world view. The turning point in this story was my involvement in the SALTO Euro-Med Cooperation Training Courses in March 2001. Two of the NCs were proposed and then invited to the SALTO Euro-Med Training Courses as observers and I was supposed to attend the very first one. I had no idea what was waiting for me...

► **A story in itself...**

When I arrived at the end of the final preparation day, I found the team members waiting for me in the garden, looking at me very

strangely. Nobody told me before that I was supposed to be in the team (moreover, I never imagined that you should have a team and trainers in a training course!). In fact, I was ready to observe and take my notes throughout the training and never thought of being responsible for anything else. My team mates were so kind to inform me about what they did until then and who would do what and then gently disappeared to prepare their own sessions. That day, I saw the very first ‘poster’ in my life, sine-qua-non of trainings, which since then has been on the wall in my office.

The rest was like a dream. I did whatever they told me to do: I facilitated workshops, had a reflection group everyday, gave feedback to projects and even made the participants play a game! I also felt very comfortable making my points in the team meetings although sometimes my approach was found a bit “academic”. After the evaluation, the team asked me if I would be interested in taking part in the team of the second training in June 2001, although I insisted that I was not a trainer at all. However, their support was enormous and I would not be able to resist because I simply loved it.

Only then was it that I grasped that a set of trainings in Turkey was essential. There was a huge interest in the Programme, and in Turkey youth work needed support. I saw in this experience that Euro-Med is a world in itself, with different political connotations, and training was the biggest tool we had to maximise the benefit for the participants. This was the *raison d’être* of an NC.

► **Action again...**

When I came back from the second SALTO Euro-Med TC, I started to think of the strategy. In September, October and December 2001, we held the three most significant events of the Euro-Med Türkiye work plan: an Evaluation Meeting for all Euro-Med beneficiaries in Turkey involved in projects as applicants or partners; a very first Basic Training Course in Izmir, and we hosted around 30 international participants who took part in the 3rd European Youth Festival. However, still none of those activities were organised by the NC alone. For each of them, a different NGO took the responsibility of organising it, with the support of the NC, in line with the priorities of the Euro-Med Türkiye.

► **Action Plan revisited: 2001-2003**

Before preparing the second work plan for Euro-Med Türkiye, I sat down and recalled the experience gathered in the pilot phase of the implementation. Without assessing the actual situation of the youth work in Turkey, it would not be possible to prepare a strategy. Working for the last 2.5 years as the NC helped me to get in touch with the field. A picture of needs and then any possible action to satisfy them needed to be drawn up. For instance, a pre-departure training was urgently needed when for the first time 7 EVS volunteers from Turkey were ready to leave the country.

Background for "the strategy"

Youth Work in Turkey 1999-2003 - Some Impressions:

I realised that there are not many “youth” organisations in Turkey. There have always been civil organisations established for their own reasons but very few of those had the ultimate aim of working “only” with youth. However, many of the organisations cover

"working with and for youth" within their own field of activities. I simply categorised the organisations in Turkey, although they may not be solely working in the youth field: Associations (which are subject to Law of Associations); Foundations; Student Clubs (which are subject to the regulations of the universities that they are founded in); and, Youth Clubs (registered with the Directorate for Youth and Sports). More recently, local youth councils and new youth centres have been established, mostly associated to the municipalities. One common characteristic is that they are all non-profit-making, voluntary organisations. They work at local/regional/national/international levels. Representatives from all of those categories were involved in Euro-Med projects in the last 4 years.

Regarding the institutions in charge of youth affairs, there is not a sole governmental body, neither a ministry of youth. There are many departments in different public institutions which work on youth-related issues. This situation sometimes makes the picture complicated, especially when it comes to policy-making. We still don't have a particular youth policy in Turkey but many people (governmental and non-governmental) believe in its benefits. For a long time, youth work was under the shadow of sports. Any sports activities such as tournaments and competitions were more appreciated (and financially supported) than a youth gathering. Hopefully this is changing, especially with the demand coming from young people themselves.

In Turkey, a national youth council does not yet exist. For many years, different organisations and governmental bodies worked to establish one but none of the attempts have been successful and inclusive enough until now.

The themes that youth organisations work on cover a wide range: from environment to culture, from local development to gender issues. Youth work itself is composed of many different types of activities, sometimes organised and realised by young people themselves: local/national festivals, campaigns, local projects designed according to the needs of the young people... In recent years, work conducted on and with disadvantaged young people is increasing, including young people with disabilities.

Last but not least, unfortunately in Turkey, there are no particular financial support schemes from government for youth organisations. Most of the finances come from contributions of the members and sometimes from sponsors. Recently, Turkish organisations discovered the opportunities of being funded by international organisations under various budget lines. Euro-Med has been one of them...

Preparation of "the strategy"

To prepare the second work plan to submit to the Commission took an enormous amount of time. I don't remember how many drafts and how much constructive feedback I got from the Commission. Many aspects of it were discussed with the Commission: content and reasoning of the support activities; documents to be

translated; activities to be hosted in Turkey... and last but not the least, the budget. Once we had agreed with the Commission on the work plan and it was approved, Euro-Med Türkiye had a 3 times bigger budget than the first one, and, it included some signs of a strategy.

What was the strategy then?

The strategy in the second work plan consisted of support measures of various types, concentrated more on training courses: international TCs (hosting one SALTO First Steps and sending participants to trainings organised by other NAs or NCs); hosting a Contact Making Seminar; national TCs (local/regional/national basic and advanced); evaluation meetings (national for Euro-Med beneficiaries; EVS volunteers; and the participants of international activities); and last but not least, a training for Turkish trainers. In addition, regular activities were to be continued: info meetings (national, local or even organisation-based); site-visits to projects; production and translation of resource materials (newsletter, three T-Kits, User's Guide etc). At the end, some activities were added (e.g. EVS Volunteers' Mid-term and Final Evaluation Meeting); and some of them were extended (e.g. Advanced Training for Turkish Trainers turned out to be a "3D Training Process in Turkey" with 3 consecutive stages).

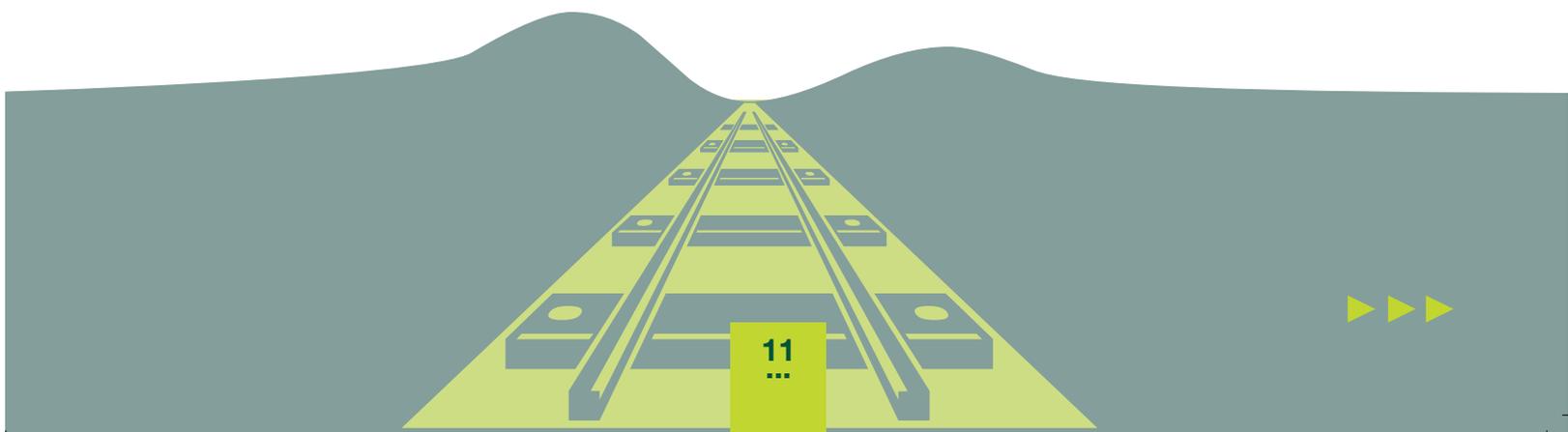
Realisation of "the strategy"

All of the above events, plus some additional ones, were realised in 18 months (1 January 2002-30 June 2003), and work was especially intensive in the last 8-10 months.

Could an NC do it alone? Not really. This strategy had to be realised in cooperation with the help of experienced organisations and institutions. Support of the SALTO-YOUTH-Injep was so valuable. Different support schemes were displayed in the realisation of "NGO Youth Training Project 2002-2003" (including 8 Basic and 2 Advanced Training Courses as well as a final evaluation meeting) in close cooperation with the British Council in Ankara, Connect Youth, Euro-Med Türkiye and Youth Services Centre; and the translation of T-Kits (Intercultural Learning, Project Management and International Voluntary Service) in cooperation with the History Foundation in Istanbul and with great support from the Council of Europe/European Commission Partnership secretariat. These proved to be precious reference materials for course participants.

Support from actors: There are "Trainers" in Turkey!

However, the biggest support I got was from the dedicated, experienced, ambitious and mostly young youth workers and/or trainers; mostly involved in NGOs and who had often been exposed to Euro-Med in the past. They were trained in various international trainings such as the Training for Trainers programme of the Council of Europe or in their own "international" organisational



Those nice clever people always offered help for Euro-Med events and sometimes worked for Euro-Med Türkiye on ad-hoc basis but it was not until the “3D Training Process in Turkey” that this help was formally structured. The 3D process in Turkey brought together 3 components: Turkish trainers; the NC and the newly established YOUTH NA in Turkey; and 2 European-level trainers. At the end of the second stage of 3D in Turkey, among other things, we devised a list of TCs to be organised by Euro-Med Türkiye and Turkish trainers to be involved in them. The plan worked quite well and we had a total of 8 big training activities with 8 different trainers’ teams at 5 different cities in Turkey, and all in 2 months!

Support from the institutions: the European Commission and METU

Support from the Commission continued into the implementation phase of the plan. There was constant communication between Euro-Med Türkiye and the responsible person in the Commission. I contacted the Commission to take their opinion on any changes in the original work plan or an additional activity to it. I tried to inform them about the results and outcomes. The attitude of the Commission was always helpful and I always felt very safe and supported.

My university was the beneficiary of Euro-Med in Turkey. Thus, they were also formally responsible for the actions of Euro-Med Türkiye. I always had to be mobile, which is unavoidable for an NC, and people in the Department were extremely encouraging rather than discouraging. The autonomous structure of the university made many things easier in terms of realisation of the strategy.

Looking back to "the strategy": An overall evaluation

When I look back at the second work plan of Euro-Med Türkiye, there are of course some ambitions that could not have been realised. But to work with Euro-Med, even in one country context, means different realities. When I assess the outcomes of the strategy, **I see that the general objective of the Euro-Med Youth Programme was met: some young people are more actively participating now, especially in their own local communities; they are gaining new skills in, and more importantly a new notion of, youth work and non-formal education, which will in turn help them to integrate into social and professional life. They are now learning by doing, by benefiting from mobility opportunities and by being exposed to very different cultures, they are getting to know themselves and each other better.**

Recently a friend of mine asked: **“Did Euro-Med have a place in your world view?” Yes indeed.** I perceived it as a way of changing the world, even though it was the ‘small’ world of mine and many youngsters in my country. It was unbelievable to see (twice!) three support measures realised on the same days in three different locations in Turkey. **I would not even believe someone telling me that there would be 61 projects submitted from Turkey in 4 years.** In 1999, I would have never ever imagined witnessing that one day.

The end, but a new beginning...

What will happen to Euro-Med Türkiye, if I am an “ex” NC now? Turkey has benefited from the Euro-Med Youth Programme as being a Mediterranean partner country in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership process and will continue to benefit from it in the future. However, the picture gets a bit complicated when Turkey is also considered as a candidate country to join the EU. In fact, Turkey, since 2002, is an eligible country for the YOUTH Programme too.

If Turkey does her homework well, full participation to the YOUTH Programme will be possible in 2004. To ensure this, a National Agency in Turkey has been established and has already started to work actively to accomplish the "preparatory measures" and to get the necessary infrastructure in place. In addition to its responsibilities for the YOUTH Programme, the Turkish NA will take over the Euro-Med Türkiye in 2004 and Turkish youth and organisations will still benefit from the Euro-Med Programme, within its specific context and particular criteria.

Youth work in Turkey was previously not very open to an international dimension for several reasons. One of those reasons was the very restrictive nature of the legislation, which had limited international events and acceptance/use of international funds. However, the vision has been changing with the changing world. There were youth exchanges, particularly bilateral ones, with countries such as Germany, due to the bilateral agreements between governments. However, with the general trend with the EU candidacy of Turkey, this has also changed remarkably. In the recent years, international activities, bilateral or multilateral, have increased not only due to the Euro-Med Programme but also as a result of the willingness of young people to know more about the "others".

I believe that the existence of the NA in Turkey will encourage more and more international youth activities in Turkey.

Yes, there are also challenges, fights and competition in youth work in Turkey, as anywhere in the world. However, the attempts to create reliable networks have been undertaken as initiatives of the youth organisations. **Now, organisations feel the need to share their knowledge and expertise with others and come together to develop youth work together.**

Now activities are not only organised in Istanbul or Ankara but in many different cities of Turkey, from east to west, north to south. Now, not only the youngsters from big cities or big universities but also the youngsters from very small cities and secondary schools are getting involved in voluntary activities. The meaning of being a volunteer is grasped as well as the benefits of working as a volunteer. Non-formal education is now getting into the picture and many valuable trainers are working to satisfy the needs of the youngsters in Turkey. ■

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COYOTE THEME I N C L U S I O N

INTEGRATING YOUNG
PEOPLE WITH FEWER
OPPORTUNITIES INTO THE EUROPEAN
COMMISSION'S YOUTH PROGRAMME:

FIGHTING
FOR
INCLUSION

WHY YOUTH
PARTICIPATION **MUST**
GO FURTHER **?**

**ROLE OF EUROPEAN
TRAININGS,
ARTS AND PARTICIPATION IN
INCLUSION OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES**

**DISSOLVING
FINANCIAL BARRIERS
IS NOT ENOUGH**
YOU NEED TO **QUESTION**
YOUR OWN VALUES & VISION...

SPORTRIO: AN EXAMPLE OF **SOCIAL
INTEGRATION THROUGH SPORT**

INTEGRATING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES INTO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S YOUTH PROGRAMME:

A STEP BY STEP APPROACH

► Introduction

As a result of European unification and EU enlargement, a very broad range of traineeships, exchanges and language study trips is now available to young people, a growing number of whom are attracted by these new experiences. It is accordingly of vital importance that such opportunities should be accessible by all young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

This article aims to clarify the conditions of international voluntary service for such young people and to explain how it constitutes an opportunity for social change.

► General background

Since 1996 a pilot activity has been pursued with the aim of enabling young people with social integration problems to participate in European Voluntary Service. Apart from the implementation aspects, the aim is to study the obstacles to such participation, to devise strategies and to make development proposals (the foundations for this work had been laid one year earlier with a preliminary pilot project launched by the European Youth Forum). In 1998 the Association of Voluntary Service Organisations (AVSO) took charge of the activity, with the EIP (European Inclusion Programme) handling its coordination.

From the departure of the first volunteers it became clear that a step by step approach was essential to guarantee good results. The scheme was accordingly named "Step by Step", and subsequently "Further Step". Since the objective was to integrate disadvantaged young people into EVS, a constant effort had to be made to reconcile strict compliance with the European Commission's conditions for such exchanges and the need to find means of adapting and circumventing constraints which were perceived sometimes as insurmountable. The principles of a sending project and a host project and of a young person bound by a contract with the European Commission have been preserved. But it is above all the concept of volunteering, the principle of devoting one's time

to a cause free of charge, that has been put forward among young people who, until then, were more used to being on the receiving end of assistance or to merely being offered vocational training possibilities. This change of role is undoubtedly behind the success of such voluntary service. Many young people have learned a lot from feeling themselves useful, being made responsible for an activity or for others, being able to give their opinions and being listened to.

► The young people concerned

This article is not the place to give a detailed definition of what qualifies young people as disadvantaged. It can nonetheless be said that most young people in this category experience mobility problems. For these young people leaving their home countries, regions and districts and being separated from their families are all barriers, the size of which must be gauged and which they have to be helped to overcome. Taking a plane or a train and travelling on their own around a city or a region are new and intimidating experiences for them. These young people usually experience difficulties in learning a foreign language and, more generally, are ill at ease in a school environment. Merely sitting at a desk throughout a lesson is a challenge. They have limited access to training and information. Most of them have only a very hazy, debased self-image; they see their future in very uncertain terms and, as mentioned above, have rarely had the opportunity to assume any form of responsibility. Lastly, a number of these young people, who could be described as "problem youth", have had trouble with the law, have acquired habits or behaviour patterns that place themselves or their family and friends at risk or have themselves been the victims of segregation or emotional or sexual abuse. Nonetheless, a video report - called «Step by step» - has shown that they do not always perceive or define themselves as disadvantaged, and even less as socially excluded.

Their reasons for volunteering are not self-evident from the outset; leaving to do EVS may be preceded by a lengthy maturation



process (voluntary work in their home district, short stays abroad). Escaping from a difficult, harmful home environment is certainly one of the most frequently cited reasons, but they also want to discover something new, to prove at long last that they are capable of doing some good, to live a fulfilling experience and to meet other young people. Participating in a group preparatory session abroad is a means of taking an official step in this direction and constitutes an opportunity to dare to put one's wishes and motives into words and to listen to those of others.

► The sending and hosting organisations

Apart from fulfilling the usual conditions for any organisation participating in EVS, the organisations which decide to arrange this type of exchange have special skills and capabilities in dealing with disadvantaged young people, or, at the very least, feel ready to acquire them. Although it is easy to imagine that this experience is a genuine adventure for the young volunteers, it is often quite difficult to conceive that the same applies to the organisations involved.

Some of these organisations already work with young people in this category, but their criteria and perceptions are linked to their own country and structure. For them it is a question of opening up to another concept of social work and adapting it to a new context, that of voluntary service. These organisations rarely have experience of partnership with organisations from abroad. Other organisations are well familiar with the voluntary service context and international exchanges, but have had little contact with this "target group". They are initially ill-equipped to deal with the preparations for sending or hosting a volunteer and learn for themselves what additional support is needed. We have noted that there are real communication difficulties between projects, which can be ascribed to both the language barrier and the partners' quite different working methods. Under no circumstances could such exchanges be organised in an anonymous, unfriendly atmosphere. This means that each organisation is expected to appoint someone to provide the volunteer with a significant level of support.

► Coordination and networking

One of the adaptations made to the traditional EVS formula has been the creation of an international coordination network. The experience acquired over recent years has shown the vital importance of a coordination structure in terms of the institutional

links it establishes with the various partners, its negotiating capacity, its remote form of involvement and its overall management of exchanges.

From a practical standpoint the international coordination unit has dealt with many technical and logistical problems, ranging from putting together application files sent to the European Commission to dealing with the practicalities of exchanges, organising group preparatory and evaluation seminars, and writing reports, not forgetting financial management of the whole scheme.

It is also this unit which works with all the partners to amend the contracts as time goes by. For example, a volunteer may agree to a one-month period of EVS, but once he or she joins the host project and feels at home there he or she may wish to stay longer. This of course entails providing appropriate assistance in solving the problems the young people encounter and helping them to progress in assuming their responsibilities, but it also requires considerable flexibility on the part of the host project to adapt the EVS experience over time. The coordination unit is there as a back-up, sometimes playing an advisory role or serving as a negotiating ground in order to achieve the necessary flexibility.

The coordination unit's main role has unquestionably been to establish a climate of trust conducive to the emergence of an international network for exchanges of disadvantaged young people. This trust is of primary importance for all concerned. We would be deluding ourselves to assume that the problems posed are solely technical in nature; although there are indeed many technical problems, they are far from being the greatest cause for concern. It is above all necessary that a shared state of mind should slowly develop between each volunteer, each sending organisation, each hosting organisation and a central coordinator, who can serve as a go-between if need be. This underlying attitude is fragile and must be sustained through day-by-day commitment. All participants must be able to sense that they are listened to and understood and must be confident that a spirit of conciliation will always prevail. This also means that the participants must have an opportunity to meet each other, to get to know each other and to hear what each other has to say. In such a context the concept of the duty of confidentiality concerning the difficulties experienced by some young people has regularly been addressed. The network has never been a rigid structure but is more a living, adaptable organisation where priority is given to the exchanges. Some projects have left the network, because they were unable to arrange to send or host volunteers, and other new projects have gradually joined it.



The diversity of the EVS projects on offer is of prime importance. Some take place in an urban setting, others in rural areas. Some are residential in nature, while others mainly concern voluntary work solely during the day. Some call for quite a high degree of autonomy, whereas others entail comforting contact with others and take place in an almost family-like atmosphere. Some involve working with people with disabilities, others with children. Some entail work on the built heritage. Some may be able to host one or more volunteers all year round, while others offer only a few weeks' work in the summer.

During group preparatory sessions, once a climate of trust has been established, a joint decision is taken as to each volunteer's destination, regard being given to all of the above criteria. Depending on the volunteer's degree of autonomy (often determined by the volunteer himself or herself), individual or group voluntary work will be envisaged. The team managing these events has a key role in helping volunteers to arrive at a decision and also in providing support for projects.

► Impediments, lessons learned and identity shifts

It is impossible to list all the problems and learning experiences here. I will merely mention some, which concern the volunteers. Regarding impediments, mention could already be made of all those encountered by any EVS volunteer setting off for abroad. Examples of additional impediments are the risk of no longer being entitled to unemployment benefit on returning home, the risk of being "caught up with" by the home country's law enforcement authorities during a period of voluntary service, the risk of being subject to family pressure to return home and take up work. Then there are of course adaptation difficulties in the context of the activity itself, difficulties in finding one's own place and role. The language problems can be huge, and there is often insufficient time to learn. How are volunteers to occupy their time in the evening or at weekends? How can they express their problems and to whom?

The lessons learned can be seen to be in direct correlation with the impediments, which are in fact made to be overcome. Firstly, EVS is an enriching experience in human terms, leading to greater self-knowledge and self-confidence. Volunteers learn new activities, which boosts their assurance and gives them heart for the future. Quite often, feelings that have been smouldering for several years come to a head, and the volunteer at last has the courage to speak out, to "confess" his or her fears and worries. They learn to dream of a future and to make plans.

Volunteer service of this kind entails a geographical relocation, but at the same time another relocation is initiated, a shift in one's perception of oneself and the world. It is now acknowledged that one is rarely a "disadvantaged or problem" child from birth. It is the way these young people are seen by others, by society,

that shapes them as such. In a new context they will probably no longer be labelled in the same way. This shift of identity brings about far-reaching changes, which naturally have implications for the young person's future. Returning home is sometimes a painful experience.

► Post-volunteering

Several years may be needed to assess the impact of participation in European Voluntary Service on a young person's life. For a majority of them, it is the spark which lights the path to education and training all life long, as the AVSO brochure outlines. It would be risky and dishonest to draw general conclusions from such individual voluntary service or to cite success or failure rates. It is nonetheless clear that the experience often has a very positive impact; that volunteers go through a - sometimes lengthy and difficult - process of "rehabilitation to normal life", and that few of them regret having participated. Many volunteers are grateful and say they would encourage other young people to do the same. Step by Step has moreover devised training sessions in which former volunteers pass on their experience to future volunteers, to hosting and sending organisations and to our institutional partners. This has proved particularly effective and is a gratifying experience for the young people concerned.

► Conclusion?

It is important not to hide the fact that an initiative of this kind places a heavy burden on technical and policy resources and that it can have a wearing effect. This activity will end in a few months' time, and EIP is currently working to achieve a skills transfer. The objective has been achieved, in that we have shown that, under certain conditions, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds can participate in and benefit from voluntary service abroad. ■

References and contact :

• **Ann O'Sullivan:** *Step by Step to becoming a volunteer*, AVSO brochure, 2001

• **S. Wicher:** *Step by step*, a video produced by a former EVS volunteer.

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by **Bea Roberts**
Personal experience of exclusion

FIGHTING FOR INCLUSION



This pair of articles explores some of the issues around being disadvantaged and being heard. First Bea Roberts describes her own experience of poverty and of the difficulties she encountered when representing the interests of young people at a European Youth Convention. Tom Croft then explores some of the wider issues of enabling and encouraging young people to have a voice.

► Personal experience of exclusion

My name is Bea Roberts, I am 24 and I live on a housing estate in north London, England. I grew up in a single parent family with two younger brothers, one of whom had educational and behavioural difficulties. We lived in poverty and faced its effects on a daily basis. We were raised on state benefits and never had enough money to make ends meet. That meant that my mother often had to choose between paying bills and buying food and clothing, which often left her with lots of debts. My brothers and I could never go on school trips or attend after school clubs as these weren't free and my mum couldn't afford it. All of our school clothes and shoes were second hand and we were often bullied and teased because of how we looked. My mother found it very hard to cope and in the end suffered a nervous breakdown.

Because of this my brother was taken into care and not returned till he was 18. A concerned neighbour put us in contact with ATD Fourth World.

ATD Fourth World is an anti-poverty NGO with a human rights ethos and provides support to families, young people and individuals living in poverty and facing social exclusion. It provides a much needed support network and carries out projects and events so people of different backgrounds can come together and learn about the problems faced by those in very difficult and often drastic situations. As an organisation we want to better understand the hopes, dreams and aspirations of people living in poverty, and use this understanding to challenge perceptions of poverty and to bring about change.

► Getting involved

I have been involved with ATD for 14 years now and my family and I have received a lot of support. When I first came to ATD I wasn't accustomed to being around groups or speaking to people, as I'd only ever been with my family. A long time was spent just helping me to get to know the other families in the network and then I gradually got involved in some of the projects ATD was running. The National Co-ordinator at the time thought I'd be good with youth related issues and encouraged me to take part in ATD's Youth Movement where I was able to use the skills I already had, learn new skills and meet other young people like myself. I really enjoyed it and found that I was really interested in issues relating to poverty and social exclusion, as I had faced them all my life. My family supported and encouraged me, as did other members of ATD, particularly some of the volunteers who seemed to always have time for me.

Because I was interested in the political work of the organisation I started participating in discussion groups in order to develop my public speaking skills and using these skills at local events for ATD as well as some other organisations. I was really scared at the time but also very excited and always had support if I felt I needed it. Soon after, I was asked to be part of a delegation the team in London was sending to a European conference organised by ATD. I really enjoyed this challenge and during the preparation I began to realise that for any real change to happen you not only have to change policy but the way policy is made; it takes a lot for some one like me to stand up in front of



politicians in their environment and tell them how their policies really affect people. It is extremely intimidating as the language and the pace of work is so removed from my day to day reality. It is also because when you have felt ignored or unimportant in certain situations before, like for example going to the doctor, speaking to a social worker or dealing with the social security office, it can be terrifying to speak about your personal experiences and share your opinions in front of people who are so powerful and have so much control over people's lives.

► **The biggest challenge**

In July of 2002, I faced my greatest challenge yet when I took part in the European Youth Convention, held over 4 days at the European Parliament building in Brussels. I was one of four young women from different youth NGO's selected by the European Commission to represent the interests of their young members at the event, which brought together 210 young people to discuss "the future of Europe".

The aim was to produce a document that would provide fresh views on the mission, governance and priorities for a new enlarged European Union from a youth perspective. This document was then to be presented to the "adult" Constitutional Convention on the future of Europe chaired by Mr Valery Giscard d'Estaing.

On hearing I'd been selected I began a 3-week preparation with young people in London and Glasgow in Scotland, using e-mail, telephone and small meetings.

I prepared a general questionnaire on the EU and met with small groups of 6-12 young people who lived on housing estates in some of the poorest and most disadvantaged areas. Most had had experience of social service intervention and the institutional care system as children. Many were very excluded in their community, had little access to support services and hadn't completed their basic education and with no prospect of returning to it. At first they were reluctant to participate but once I had explained my own circumstances and motivations they recognised that I was like them and understood their experiences. When we first went through the questionnaire together they felt the EU had nothing to do with them. But once they began to consider the idea that the EU should improve Europe for the better they saw that their own lives should be a question for Europe and they became more concerned and wanted to be involved.

I also spent a lot of time myself researching the EU and related information. I was both proud and shocked at being given such an unbelievable opportunity: to get the voices of all

the young people involved with ATD, as well as all those who face the same battles, into a document that would be seen by those deciding on things that would effect the whole of Europe for generations. This was quite a responsibility and one I took seriously. However, despite all my experience and preparation with ATD, taking part in the Youth Convention was far more difficult than I had expected and has left me feeling that youth events at this level have a long way to go before they become genuinely inclusive.

► **A new kind of exclusion**

Despite the organisers' attempts at creating a diverse group of young Europeans, other than in terms of geography, participants were depressingly similar in their background and outlook. An overwhelming majority of them were members of or affiliated to political parties and organisations. Most had studied or were studying politics, political sciences or similar subjects at degree level. This was even noted by a speaker who addressed the lack of diversity among participants and their overly political attitudes and approach. Those of us who were not "politicals" often felt ostracised and ignored.

It sometimes seemed that in their eyes our opinions and ideas had no place at this type of event.

One reason was that educational and political achievement seemed to be essential. I, however, do not have much formal education although I am proud to say I have 24 years experience of living in poverty, and fighting against exclusion. Although a number of participants, who seemed to understand what it had taken for me to be there, made every effort to make me feel included, I was left with the impression that all the work I had done to gather the views of very vulnerable young people counted for little if you could not talk like a student. I still believe, though, that a person can learn a lot more through living life than studying it.

Part of the problem was that I seemed to be speaking another language. In order for the other participants to understand my background and experience, I spoke about the true story of a young woman I know who lives near my home. Most found it really hard to understand how this - a young woman's story - was important at European level. I had to explain that it's not just her, she's not the only person in Europe that experiences this kind of exclusion. If we want to improve things for all young people in Europe we have to take their lives and experience into consideration. To make Europe more inclusive, true stories like these should really be paid attention to and not dismissed as

marginalized or extraordinary cases. And in order for others to begin to understand what people like me go through, young people like myself need to attend these sorts of events and be listened to.

However at this particular event, I felt it impossible to get my point across because it felt like no-one was listening or wanted to listen. The result was that I felt very hurt and often humiliated. In many ways I have never felt so excluded, which coming from my background says a lot.

If I had the opportunity to go to a similar event in the future I would only attend it if I could get some guarantee that I wouldn't be the only one present from a background like mine. I would want to take other young people with me, but only if their stories and hopes could be truly heard and not ignored or dismissed.

The way in which the event was organised didn't help either as in copying the working methods of the main Convention it favoured young people accustomed to the traditional party political way of doing things. By placing its emphasis on creating a product, a text, in a very short space of time it totally alienated people like me who were accustomed to a more nurturing working environment. The big plenary meetings and smaller working groups were highly pressurised, encouraging competitive tit for tat voting and amendment making.

I personally felt intimidated to speak or participate fully due to all the political posturing and manoeuvring of the party activists which made meetings feel like verbal boxing matches with each corner trying to beat the other into submission while the chair refereed all the action. This way of organising things created an atmosphere where it was impossible to reach a common goal through understanding and solidarity.

- **Understand the barriers – there is another way** If such political youth events are to be produced in the future, those organising them must try and better understand the barriers young people face in coming to these events by consulting with them and those close to them. Together they could jointly find ways to support the participation of those who never normally attend. In doing this they could create a truly diverse event with both a variety of life experience as well as political involvement and understanding present among participants.

Those organising these types of event should try and work hard with people active at the grass roots to create smaller steps to

big meetings like these, where smaller numbers of young people could meet one another and be consulted in a friendly and more intimate atmosphere. This could be done in a similar way to how I tried to prepare for the Youth Convention by getting together with young people from some very disadvantaged areas.

Finally, organisers must discard traditional and old fashioned political working methods. For example, they could replace a lot of big plenary sessions with more and smaller working groups where participants can meet and discover each other's experience, motivations and reasoning well before getting started on any more formal paper or document. At the Youth Convention, the fact that we started in our small groups with a ready prepared working document killed the possibility for some people to express themselves because the style and wording of the text was so alien to them or they found that their concerns were completely missing. If you are already doubting yourself and your place in this kind of meeting this could all too easily be the final straw that condemns you to silence. If everyone is working hard to create an open forum where each young person feels able to speak and take part and where people listen and try to understand one another it would be easier to handle this kind of self doubt. There are many imaginative and non-formal ways that this can be done as readers of Coyote know well.

At the end of it all I am left thinking that you can not build tower blocks from the roof down, they need strong foundations. Why is it so difficult for people to understand that the same applies if we want to build an inclusive and progressive Europe? We have to start with the poorest and most excluded if we really want everyone to have a better tomorrow. ■

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by Tom Croft

WHY YOUTH PARTICIPATION MUST GO FURTHER?

Involving young people in political processes

Recently, the idea that young people should have more opportunity to participate in the political processes shaping our continent seems to have taken root in the hearts and minds of Europe's institutions.

Indeed, one could even go as far to say that it is a principle which has become firmly established: youth participation is the central plank of the European Commission's "New Impetus for Youth"; the Laeken Declaration highlighted beyond all doubt the need to engage young people in the European project; and member states of the European Union are currently considering common objectives and guidelines for the participation of young people at European, national and local levels.

What's more, over the last few years, in case you haven't noticed(!), there has been a whole host of youth events aimed at giving Europe's young people a voice in the debate on Europe's future: the European Youth Convention, Youth 2002, Youth 2003... You see it is not only rhetoric, real European young people are getting together all over the place(!) and having their say.

Of course, everyone agrees that more can always be done, but who can deny that the show is definitely on the road, that the future appears rosy, not to say youthful? But amongst all the back slapping and general cheer, I for one just can't get excited. It all seems a little bit too easy, too straight forward to me. As a youth worker committed to working with young people facing the consequences of social exclusion, I am extremely worried by the lack of awareness and willingness to give these young people a chance to speak for themselves in this debate.

► **The distance between debate and reality**
Anyone who has worked with very vulnerable young people will know that such a debate is miles away from the reality of their lives. What does building Europe, or

fundamental human rights and freedoms mean to a young person desperately trying to find somewhere to sleep tonight? When you are concerned more with the daily battle to keep going what possible sense can "youth participation" have for you. However, it can not be said that young people facing and trying to overcome such things do not have a political awareness.

ATD Fourth World, the organisation for which I volunteer my time, has a long history of reaching and engaging with young people in real difficulty, young people living in poverty and facing exclusion over the long-term, often growing up in such circumstances. **We know that given the chance to get involved in youth work that is sensitive to their situation, where they can find acceptance and respect, many of these young people find it necessary to share their experiences and develop their view of what can be done to change things.** And more than this, the very fact that someone is asking them what they really think, and then values and finds important what they have to say, is something that can affirm their own daily struggle. It is true that everyone benefits from being able to take these kinds of opportunities but some young people I have worked with have never even been asked their view on anything in any meaningful way before. This fact is especially shocking when you realise how many agencies and professionals are often involved at one time or another in their lives. I find this disturbing because it means that these young people are too often seen merely as recipients of services instead of the principal partner in a joint effort to overcome exclusion.

► Debating on whose terms?

Many of the young people we work with have been failed by our education systems. Many do not even possess the most basic formal education, they sometimes have difficulty reading and writing. We do not have the time or space here to go into the reasons for this failure but the lack of formal educational achievement is another reason for people to be sceptical about the ability of young people with difficult lives to represent themselves in such debates. I do not mean to underestimate the size of this barrier, or the urgent need to tackle this problem but it is nonsense to suggest that it prevents someone from being able to speak for themselves and others.



What stops people, as Bea has already said, is the failure to open up the terms of the debate, the seeming inability to allow people to use their own words and their own thinking. By this I mean that just because someone does not possess the technical language and theoretical knowledge to speak about the finer points of European integration, it doesn't follow that they can not make any important contribution to the debate. With the right preparation, this is always possible as long as someone is given the time and space to talk about what they really know about.

I have heard university students staying up and talking about human rights and European identity till the early hours of the morning, and, having indulged in this sort of behaviour myself, I have nothing against it as far as it goes. Yet, young people I know who may as well live in another universe, have been the ones to really teach me why defending human rights is imperative and what is at stake if we do not. These young people speak in concrete terms about real situations and real people, and for them an idea is only worth something if there is a person behind it, if it has a human face. Their way of looking at the world represents a valid and important perspective. Something that could enrich the sometimes very academic debate that goes on at important European youth events.

When some young people from one of our youth groups welcomed members of a Russian youth association to Bordeaux last year, they felt extremely proud. Many of the young Russians had left institutional care and the group supports their efforts to overcome the legacy of this experience. **Even across the language barrier, these two groups of young people recognised that they were engaged in the same battle, and they forged a kind of common identity.** Later, a young man from Bordeaux, speaking at a session we organised, said how important this encounter was. For him, it was a concrete example of why the idea of "Europe" could and should have meaning for young people like him.

"But why should we change the terms of the debate", I am often asked? "Isn't it just a fact that these sort of real life examples and stories, and the conclusions which are drawn from them are only useful at the most local of levels?" "What have they to do with political arguments at the forefront of European integration?" Well I accept, such examples and stories do not translate easily into articles or neat little arguments at this level, but that for me is not the point. We need to understand and remind ourselves what we should be building Europe for. **On this question, these young people have a powerful statement to make because they truly want a Europe that does not forget about its most vulnerable citizens and that wants to work with them to find solutions to the problems they face.** This is a view that needs to be heard because young people facing the worst that society has to offer do not see this happening at the moment.

And if it is concrete policy proposals that are important, then these young people can be as concrete and down to earth as anyone. They are usually hit the hardest by the biggest social problems. They are also on the receiving end of the services and policies designed to help them. Unfortunately, these initiatives often take away their autonomy and make them dependent on systems that were ironically originally designed to promote independence and security. Young people trying to access these services are often desperate and at their most vulnerable. They are least able to assert or defend themselves from the humiliation that this kind of dependence can bring. Their experience means that they are able to provide a deeper understanding of good and bad practice, of what works and what doesn't, because what works makes an improvement and what doesn't work usually makes things worse.

► **Committed, grass roots support**

In the end, it simply comes down to a matter of will.

When we talk about European youth participation are we talking about how we can enable the voices of all young people to be taken into account, or are we content to hear only the most educated or easiest to gather together? Do we really think there is something to be gained through the inclusion of young people with a much harder experience of life in these debates? If so, there will need to be much more support given to grass roots work involving them. As Bea has explained, without such opportunities, built on long-term commitment, support and understanding, young people in difficulty cannot have the basis to go on and speak out about their lives and their situations.

We will also need to change radically the way in which political youth events at this level are thought out and put together. There is a desperate need to apply in this area some of the vast experience youth workers have gained through working in multicultural contexts and in conflict resolution. Non-formal methodologies and a rejection of orthodox models of political dialogue are essential, in my opinion; if we are to create real diversity at these events and if young people from genuinely different backgrounds can find the security and the respect in which to speak with their own voice. ■

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by Karina Chupina

ROLE OF EUROPEAN ARTS AND PARTICIPATION IN

Value and specificity of trainings for youth with disabilities

Non-formal education, trainings and the active learning they provide, are more inclusive for young people with disabilities than the formal education system.

From discussions at various European youth meetings I could see that many disability organizations are aware of the importance of training. However, even though many young disabled people learn about the possibilities to organise study sessions in cooperation with the European Youth Centres, some are afraid to fill in and send an application because of lack of self-confidence and low self-esteem.

A greater number of young people with disabilities lack foreign language skills in comparison to their non-disabled peers, due to limits of special education in some countries or social exclusion. Training is therefore especially vital for people with disabilities, because it builds up the social skills and expertise otherwise unattainable for them through formal education. That is not to mention the fundraising skills, organization management, lobbying and other skills that disabled youth can learn at the trainings; the skills that help them to participate fully and to raise disability awareness in society.

One of the major prerequisites for participation of disabled youth is information.

When it comes to cooperation with the European Youth Centres and other structures, and participation in the trainings, one of the reasons for abstaining is simply that there is no information on how accessible the venues are - whether there are ramps for wheelchair users, induction loops for hard of hearing, Braille computer keyboards for blind people, audio-tape, large print, easy-to-read materials at the training venue. Provided with such information, young people with disabilities would feel more welcome and respected in their right to participate. Sometimes an obstacle is the lack of information about the educational value of such venues. There is a wealth of information as Mark Taylor pointed out in previous Coyote issues, but young people don't know where to find it, and all this creates a vicious circle.

Generally, there are few structures in Europe that consider specifically disability/mixed ability trainings as their priority. Usually the disability aspect might be more or less explicitly evident in training programmes concerned with minority/social inclusion/anti-discrimination and intolerance. Therefore, disability organizations and networks try to participate within the limits of these programmes; they also try to take care of organizing disability and mixed ability trainings themselves - with funding and support from European institutions. In 2003, the European Year of People with Disabilities, it was gratifying to learn that SALTO-YOUTH organized mixed ability trainings on Inclusion and Disabled. There were more disability-related 2003 year activities held even outside European Union borders, and that is a good sign.

Often disabled young people perceive themselves either as "incapable" or "helpless" or try to become "over-achievers" and reach the sky. These two are examples of extremes, of course - they are cited here only to indicate main tendencies in the self-perception of disabled youth. But in any case, we are restricted by our own self-images, and we are performing roles imposed by public opinion.

We need to train ourselves out of that lack of assertiveness. Both tendencies above can bring out another one that I call self-centeredness/self-centrism. In Russia where I come from, it is often perceived that if you are a disabled, the society and state owe a debt to you and are there to serve you - even though state assistance is below the poverty level. This point of

view suggests being an object of charity rather than a producer and active initiator of social change. As a person who comes from a post-communist country where a transition from **disability as a taboo subject**, with allusions to a charity model, to **disability as a human rights protection issue** has just started, I was rather surprised to sometimes see a similar self-centeredness in other parts of Europe.

(A charity model, also often called a medical model, places the problem with the individual and assumes that only a cure will solve it; it depicts disabled people as victims of circumstance, deserving of pity. You can find more about models of disability at http://www.vertou.demon.co.uk/models_paper.htm).

At trainings, self-centrism and low self-esteem may create an obstacle for participants and a challenge for trainers. Participants might be pre-occupied with concerns that relate to their type of disability - blind, hard of hearing,



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wheelchair users - which prevents them from responding to needs of other disabled participants. For instance, hard of hearing youths can be so tense trying to follow every word that they are involuntarily less able to help other participants. In this case, group work is what matters most - it should make participants learn about personal and others' attitudes, raise empathy for each other. **A participant's resistance can occur towards a non-disabled trainer who might not have the same expertise in the field of disability and understanding of the underlying complexities.** This resistance also has to do with fear of change (as in any kind of training) when a participant deals with the breakdown of his or her traditionally accepted role. "Over-achievers" are highly motivated and can lead the rest of the group, but they also tend to be unrealistic about programme tasks, time frame and other limitations at the training courses. The trainer's task will be to bring the participants in roles of "incapable/helpless" and "over-achievers" to their balanced contribution to a training. It is certainly justifiable that disabled young participants need a more sensitive approach from trainers, but in a way that they (participants, not the trainers) don't use it to their advantage.

There can be a language challenge too.. At a study session of the International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People, lack of participants' command of English created a "double disability". At the same time, at another IFHOHYP study session external trainers were surprised that deaf participants performed exercises on intercultural communication with much more acute reactions and quality than non-disabled trainees. IFHOHYP regularly runs study sessions in the European Youth Centre Strasbourg that tackle issues such as "How to Cope with Information", "How to Make a campaign on hearing disability", "Building communication for hard of hearing youth: breaking barriers and stereotypes". The European Youth Centre in Strasbourg is well-equipped with a special "induction loop system" and provides a text-to-screen service for the hard of hearing.

Another challenge for trainers is to avoid superficiality and pity in methods and approaches, and to be prepared usually for a slower group dynamic than in regular trainings; it takes more time for a blind person or a wheelchair user to get around a plenary room.

Re-adjustment to each other's differences is done almost every time in working groups: disability cannot be changed, it is something that environment and people can be adapted to. These challenges imply a constructive composition of the programme, time frame and - as far as possible - learning about the special needs of every participant in advance. At the study sessions and trainings for disabled youth we had to adapt games and exercises or choose them very carefully, considering different kinds of disability. Our task then was to run them in a sensitive, well-balanced way, without being patronizing to certain groups of disabilities. (Games with closed eyes are not that exciting for deaf or hard of hearing who need to read lips in order to understand; wheelchair

Benefits of disability trainings

We can speak of many obstacles for youth with disabilities - environmental, structural, informational...

But the main obstacle that exists at all levels of society is an attitudinal barrier: it still exists among many people who see the disability and not a person. It is a paradox that in order to be heard in the local environment, a young person with a disability should first speak out at a European youth meeting. Then this young person is treated with more respect and welcome in local structures: not only because of the increased self-confidence and skills, but also because of the nice printed report from the European meeting. The doors open easier for an ambassador of European youth work issues.

And so, what can a training give to young people with disabilities?

- shift from self-centrism to an increased self-awareness and appreciation of others' differences
- greater self-confidence and self-esteem
- motivation for social action and increased control of their lives, impetus for counteracting stereotypes and breaking down attitudinal barriers
- integrity (this also implies identifying, recognizing own strengths as well as limitations, and accepting them)
- better social and problem-solving skills, interpersonal skills
- examples of good practices and powerful role models

All this serves to empower disabled young people - even if the main aim of a training is not empowerment training as such.

users may not be able to do some group building exercises which for example require a lot of physical contact or movements as in a "Crossing the river" exercise). At one of the European Human Bridges mixed ability trainings disabled young participants invented a few sport games and exercises suitable for all kinds of disabilities. Here is a description of a very simple game, which can be used for example in group building for young people with different disabilities: players line up behind each other, and the game is played by passing a figure from the first member of the team to the last. The figure or a word is passed by drawing it (usually by fingers) on the back of the next player - players are to remain silent unless they need any specific assistance.

The set of figures is the same for all teams and should be not changed during the process.

Due to the simplicity of the game it is accessible for anyone - blind and deaf persons, wheelchair users and persons with mobility restrictions. Every person is to be placed in line in accordance to the needs (e.g. in a chair, wearing warm clothing, etc). Since no equipment is required the game is safe and has no technical restrictions.

In disability trainings, participants are mostly process-oriented rather than task-oriented. In the course of the training, the group work process, relationships with each other and socializing can be more important than the formal result



After you have read this, you might think that I am somewhat reluctant about disability or mixed ability trainings. Not a bit! I only want to be realistic; I always greet such trainings with optimism and enthusiasm. In fact, I think such trainings suggest a tremendous development potential for all involved, and can be a powerful learning process for both non-disabled and disabled trainers. Speaking about methodology in general, it is known that at generic training courses many ICL games and exercises give opportunities to draw participants' attention to nationality and gender issues. **The exercises and role plays that bring participants in touch with a new dimension including the disability dimension that some may never have encountered before, could give an added value to the trainings.** (OK, maybe it's just that self-centred approach speaking in me!). But indeed, learning about disability can deepen our understanding of diverse social, cultural and physical environments that make up the world society.

► Disability and Arts

European Human Bridges – a quest for humanity.

One example of good practice is European Human Bridges - an integrated long-term project networking non-disabled and disabled young people from Europe since 1996, when it came to existence as a result of participation by young disabled people in the Council of Europe Youth Campaign "All Different – All Equal" in 1995. The focus of EHB is anti-discrimination.

At the end of 2003, EHB will run a training seminar "Integration of Youth with Disabilities through Arts and Education" in Turkey [Editor's note: this article was written in October 2003]. The EHB event is devoted to exploration of disability in an intercultural context. It was performances of Russian wheelchair dancers and wheelchair dance workshops at the "Disability and Sport" training seminar in 2002 that raised the issue of arts in integration of people with disabilities.

Why Arts?

For people with disabilities, the arts represent a world of resources, providing an outlet for unlimited possibilities for personal, academic, and professional development.

And as the Arts is an infinite and unconditional field, it allows people to express themselves freely - without physical, social or attitudinal barriers. From my experience of working on rehabi-

litation through arts, I know that not all youngsters with disabilities who attended art studios, become professional artists. But **there is some inner freedom, flexibility, adherence to ideals about them, which is noticeably contrary to young people who have never been involved in arts. Art followers acquire a creative approach to problem solving, and they endure social oppression easier.**

On the other hand, the Arts is an effective tool in disability awareness-raising. For example, while people with disabilities can be associated with consumers and beggars, musical and dance disability performances, exhibits of exquisite artworks break these stereotypes. One can rock rostrums speaking about youth disability rights – or give this young person a chance to perform in public with their musical or theatre masterpiece. The effect would be startling and will evoke a positive attitude coupled with respect. A wheelchair dance performance of deaf dancer with partners in wheelchairs will be a more obvious example of inclusion possibilities than any paper declarations. **The language of art is stronger than words – it is universal.**

In Izmir, Turkey, young disabled and non-disabled people from 15 European countries will explore the ways arts and education can combat intolerance. The team of EHB trainers want to stimulate creative actions that can raise disability awareness.

The aim is to bring participants to an understanding of how arts-based education can improve their learning and social skills; to provide them with an opportunity to reflect on the importance of art in the development of self-identity.

Interactive Arts-based activities, master classes and creativity workshops (theatre, clay, dance, painting) will allow participants to look at disability beyond cultural boundaries. Mixed ability groups will mirror society and underline the notion that learning from each other's differences and abilities is the best education towards inclusion. Role plays, pantomime and interactive theatre provide a fun approach while encouraging deep and serious insights, and they help participants to abstract themselves from traditionally accepted disability roles. Participation in theatre will also help building self-confidence and mastering public performance skills that will later allow participants to stand up for their rights and battle local bureaucracy.



► What do we expect as outcomes?

At a personal level: while being art-therapeutic to an extent, creative training elements will raise self-confidence, motivation and the ability to publicly speak about arts as a way of integration; they are expected to develop a deep urge for creative development, and problem-solving skills.

At local and European levels: using creative methods in their organizations, promoting positive images of a disabled person through arts. Participants will be encouraged to find means of integrating ideas about disability into art, documentaries, media, news, comedies and so forth. For the creation of healthy societies it would be invaluable if celebrities and well-known disabled artists assimilated the practice of creative work with disabled young people and served as role models in a way it is done in some Western European countries and largely practised in the U.S.

There is hope that participants will gain the attention of local educational and decision-making institutions that will recognize the importance of arts in the integration of all youth. There should also be a mobile disability art exhibition, starting with artworks produced at the training seminar 2003! It will travel around Europe with temporary displays in EHB partner organizations, along with video presentations. Such projects with an inclusive approach give impetus to young people for further development as well as strength to combat discrimination.

► Participation for All in Europe

The European Youth Conference "Towards a Barrier Free Europe for Young People with Disabilities" held in Athens in May 2003, worked in this direction as well.

The Madrid Declaration adopted in 2002, provided a conceptual framework for action for the European Year of People with Disabilities at all levels. It was the first European conference of its kind where both disabled and non-disabled youth could participate and it emerged as a result of cooperation between the European Youth Forum and the European Disability Forum. **The objectives of the conference were to increase the political participation of young (disabled) people, to mainstream disability in youth policy, to set up disability youth networks, and adopt a common Declaration, which is to be disseminated.** For me, one of the biggest achievements of this conference was that its mixed ability setting allowed for open discussion where contrasting, almost radical views could be juxtaposed – about independent living, for and against inclusive education. Furthermore, the conference allowed participants to speak of dis-ability in terms of ability, equal opportunities and participation. I was pleasantly surprised to see the interest and inspiration with which non-disabled participants approached the issues of rehabilitation for ALL young people. Most participants came from national or local organisations, which made me think how many disabled young people are indeed active at European level. Participants seized the chance to express their concerns in the presence of Pierre Mairesse, Head of Youth Unit, European Commission DG Education and Culture. Such a direct contact

with decision-makers was an example of getting away from a trend when professionals take decisions on behalf of young disabled people without asking their opinion. The creation of a Declaration recalled the model of open-coordination used for the White Paper on Youth: about 200 young disability representatives, social workers and pedagogues, volunteers, experts from different countries of Europe contributed their comments to it. Being a speaker on behalf of the European Disability Forum, I highlighted the aspects of information and participation for ALL from a disability perspective and facilitated discussions on how to improve communication channels for young people with disabilities and how the EU programmes can be further improved for youth with disabilities. For me, as a person who is concerned about youth work and training, it was pleasant to see that the Declaration adopted the call for such actions as the use of people with disabilities as resources both in governmental and non-governmental sectors, e.g. trainers, educators, and encouraging inclusion in educational policies, vocational training and permanent training.

Theory calls for action. In our time of unrest, ethnic conflicts, terrorist attacks and catastrophes none of us is insured against disability. ■

Further information and contact: ✕

- **International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People:** www.ifhohyp.dk
- **Models of disability:** http://www.vertou.demon.co.uk/models_paper.htm (accessed 10 December 2003)
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by Marianne Schapmans



DISSOLVING FINANCIAL BARRIERS IS NOT ENOUGH YOU NEED TO QUESTION YOUR OWN VALUES & VISION...

Lots of young people are reached by a ► Open youth work mixture of youth organisations. These initiatives exist in all sizes and colours and bring dynamics along with energy into local community life.

In most cases they are progressive, creative and open-minded. Even though we can perceive some difficulties for a certain group of youngsters to enter youth work initiatives.

To support existing and new youth work initiatives in dealing with disadvantaged young people, a Flemish (Belgian) organisation called "UIT DE MARGE" developed a support service, based on years of practical experience. "UIT DE MARGE" freely translated means: out of the margin. Getting out of "the side-line".

In the year 2000, this national organisation went through a restructuring process, and from then on, it had in place a support structure in every province of Flanders. Cojema is the regional pillar of Uit de Marge, in the east of Flanders. Flanders is not that big, but a regional approach is very important in the view of this organisation.

Marianne Schapmans (Flemish Youth Council) had a chat for Coyote with Phillip De Vriendt about his work in Cojema. Cojema, (which means coordination of youth work and social disadvantage), wants to support, to connect, to train, to motive, to guide all youth work organisations working with disadvantaged youngsters.

Young people in vulnerable situations, often referred to as disadvantaged youngsters, have to deal with more difficulties to participate in regular youth initiatives. Some barriers underlie this inaccessibility.

These barriers can be different for every individual.

A difficulty to access, or to enter youth work, is associated with various reasons. In practice a number of organisations believe that "openness" will be sufficient to succeed in being accessible for all youngsters in society. Openness is not enough. A lot of other barriers have to be dealt with. In plenty of examples we see organisations using every effort to reach disadvantaged young people, without success. These efforts require lots of energy from youth workers and volunteers. When the effort isn't perceived as worthwhile, very often it turns into an awfully disappointing experience frequently followed by apparently logical conclusions. "We offered so much, we modified our activities, we promoted them hard, but they don't want to participate. It's their own fault, it's their own choice".

It's not enough to dissolve practical and financial barriers. When barriers are removed, it should be done equally for all participants. Disadvantaged youngsters feel dreadfully uncomfortable, for example, when activities are free for them only. They feel like they have been marked, categorized and watched... like a big arrow points to them to declare: "they are different, they are poor". No one wants to be this exception because of a difficult background, a complicated family life. Free is not the solution, everyone can contribute. When activities are free of charge, it seems like they are less valuable. What's intended as helpful, can become very painful. Thinking about practical barriers is a first step; it's also essential to chew over probable stigmata being created by new regulations. Place yourself in someone else's situation, and become sensitive about how denigrating "being helped" can feel.

► **Difficult? Cool!**

Other initiatives do reach disadvantaged youngsters without meaning to. Sometimes they point out some group problems and identify these youngsters as more difficult, thorny and complex. Also in this situation it is beneficial to reflect on the underlying processes. Regularly the emphasis is not focused on the youngsters themselves, but only on elements of their behaviour. They are difficult, they tease, they make trouble, they are obnoxious...

Always being labelled “the bad one”, also provokes a stigma effect. This behaviour stands not on its own - a large amount of messages can lie behind it, just waiting to be noticed. Youngsters feel ashamed, disgraced, dishonoured. In building up a constructive and positive relationship it's crucial for youth workers to refocus their attention. Not behaviour or living conditions need to be centralised, but the youngster as a person deserves a central position. Because besides their problems, their difficult behaviour and their complex living conditions, they hold a lot of talents, qualities, competences, capacities... The problem-focus should be replaced by a positive focus. An enormous potential for the basis of a positive relationship will be discovered!

► **Diversity & positive approach**

To open up structures, to welcome all youngsters whatever their background is, sounds easier than practice finally shows. To be open for all youngsters is - from time to time - perceived as a kind of a threat for an already established group. Will all members stay when youngsters with a different background participate, when their values will be questioned?

To extend a youth work initiative and enlarge participation of disadvantaged youngsters can't just be the project of one or two persons. It's crucial that this idea is carried by a larger platform of partners. Youth workers, parents, members - they all need to be convinced.

Diversity is different from integration. We live in a society where people have different backgrounds, religions, philosophy, sexual preferences... To open youth initiatives for all youngsters means respecting differences. Respecting goes further than asking to integrate and to adapt to our established patterns.

The catchphrase **“all equal, all different, all different, all equal”** covers this perfectly.

To deal with youngsters in a positive way is crucial. Strengthening qualities instead of limiting attention to their perceived difficult behaviour. Recognizing and encouraging potential instead of highlighting hitches.

Consider before you start. Youth work in a very dissimilar context requires more than a few technical changes. Your established traditions will be challenged. It's not the difficulty that should be in the first place - concentrate instead primarily on how rich, fruitful and enlightening this can be for everyone involved.

► **Help! Cojema:**

Youth work organisations in Flanders are not left alone in this complex process. They can count on personal support and good

advice. An extensive service has been developed over the last couple of years. There's plenty of documentation and information available and nearby for youth workers, students...

On request, Cojema acts as a mediator to local and regional authorities and if necessary a process can be started on establishing a strategy of including disadvantages youngsters in regular youth work. Increasing awareness is a permanent assignment.

Therefore Cojema is present in several advisory councils and working groups. Cooperation and partnership is a regular way of working.

To support youth workers in their daily work, Cojema organizes monthly moments of "inter-vision" for youth workers and coordinators. In these group sessions any subject can be discussed, every one is equal and all topics have the same importance. These moments are extremely informing and fertile for everyone. Participants value these sessions as a real support.

► **Training**

Disadvantaged youngsters don't commit themselves easily to a leadership position in youth work. Even when they have been participating for years, the first step to a responsible position is often too big. The presumption of a lack of attention to their personal lives, to the meaning of childhood in their own culture and a brand new, unknown group causes hesitancy.

Cojema/ uit de marge organizes training for trainers for youngsters with a disadvantaged background. This course offers a solid base to get involved as a youth leader.

The working methods of these courses are first of all very ACTIVE. Working groups are kept small, (around 12 participants); and learning by doing is the crucial guideline. Theory is banished and replaced by practical training. The programme is similar to a regular training for trainers course, only the methods differ. First aid, leadership qualities, creating games, dealing with conflicts, dealing with aggression... it's all in the course outline.

After 60 hours of training, every participant starts a 60-hour "field training" in a local youth work organisation.

They are members of the group of trainers, they prepare and run activities. They get coached by a more experienced trainer. It's not a practice in observation, but in real participation.

A positive outcome of the training process leads to certification as “youth worker”, recognized by the Flemish Government. This is an endorsement of the participants' motivation and competence.

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by Anne Storz

SPORTRIO: INTEGRATION

The YOUTH programme has enabled a large-scale European project known as SporTrio II to be started for young persons with disabilities.

This programme is essentially based on exchanges between young students, enabling them to widen their horizons and find out more about cultural and social matters, travel and sport.

Thus they can relate to the world, transcending all differences, and open up to Europe, including tomorrow's Europe.

All too often, young people with disabilities are forgotten, pushed to one side, and sometimes even kept hidden by their own families. Enabling them to meet one another and learn about the cultures and lifestyles of young people of their own age in another country, and helping them to grow up together through brief but intense exchanges, may give them a new lease of life. The European Commission, thanks to financing programmes for the benefit of young people, has made it possible for youngsters from eight nations to get to know each other and to travel together for a short while along the same path.

The SporTrio II project takes up where the first edition (1999-2000) left off. Three partner countries had been involved in the first edition, Italy, Belgium and Sweden, and the aim had been to make it possible for young persons with disabilities to exchange experience, culture and knowledge through recreational activity with a strong element of social integration, in other words, through sport (of a non-competitive nature, of course).

The idea underlying the project is both to give young people with disabilities an opportunity to enjoy new experiences throughout Europe through strictly non-competitive tournaments, so that they acquire knowledge about sport, travel and culture, and to convey a strong social message against discrimination, so as to lay the foundations for a better understanding of the lives of persons with disabilities, providing a basis for a new culture.

With the year 2003 having been declared by the Council of the European Union to be European Year of People with Disabilities, but also with a view to preparing for 2004, the Year of Education

through Sport, the SporTrio II project, building on the success of the project's first edition, is intended to repeat this experiment with a larger number of partner countries, and, in particular, with direct involvement of the candidate countries which will be joining the European Union, so as to enable more young people to embark on a process of personal growth and self-enrichment.

The need to make young people aware of discrimination

As the new millennium begins, hallmarked by new technologies and the globalisation of information, we have every reason to believe that discrimination problems relating to opportunities for travel, work, culture and sport and leisure activities for persons with disabilities are now a thing of the past.

While, on the one hand, the European Union enthusiastically promotes numerous schemes to raise public awareness of discrimination against persons with disabilities (through information and awareness-raising campaigns, through joint funding programmes relating to equal opportunities in employment, through various initiatives such as the European Day of Disabled People, to be held on 3 December, and the European Year of People with Disabilities 2003, and through the European Parliament and Council Decision concerning the year 2004, on exactly the same themes as the project, sport as an instrument of integration and education), on the other hand, much remains to be done at national, regional and local level in the various member states of the Union and in the candidate countries.

Approximately one citizen of Europe in ten (counting members of every age group) currently suffers from a disability, giving a total of more than 37 million such persons in Europe. To be more precise, there are over 100 million if we take into account those who suffer from reduced mobility. The needs of those who have a disability are still in fact misunderstood by most of the population, and they are frequently underestimated. The problem takes on a significantly worse dimension if the concept of disability is extended to encompass older people, pregnant women, young children, victims of illnesses, persons who have undergone organ transplants, etc.

According to a January 2001 Eurobarometer survey for which over 16 000 people were questioned, virtually all Europeans are aware of this reality and consider that persons with disabilities still have great difficulty in obtaining access to community facilities and in playing a part in the life of society. Furthermore, 60% of those polled said that they knew at least one person with a disability, who, for one in four, was a member of their own family.

AN EXAMPLE OF SOCIAL THROUGH SPORT

The Eurobarometer survey reveals that European citizens are overwhelmingly (97%) in favour of further measures being taken to improve the integration of persons with disabilities. Some 93% of those questioned also said that more money should be spent on eliminating the physical obstacles encountered by persons with disabilities.

► Are young people ready to meet this challenge?

Thus we face a real challenge, that of combating discrimination. This does not mean isolating persons with disabilities and highlighting their differences, but simply making it easier for them to lead independent lives and promoting better social integration.

Of course much remains to be done to change current behaviour towards those persons who suffer from disabilities. Discrimination is still widespread in the spheres of transport (or rather mobility), tourism, fashion, education and sport.

The SporTrio project is intended to make young people give serious thought to the issue, thanks to intercultural exchanges, so as to create a basis for a new culture, a culture not of "ghetto-building" by members of minorities, but one of acceptance of differences. There are approximately 75 million young persons (aged between 15 and 25) in Europe. The number will be much larger after the admission of the candidate countries to the European Union. These young people represent our society's future, and it is to them, first and foremost, and consequently to their families, that it is vital for this new culture to be transmitted, and it is with them that it must be created and disseminated.

Sport: a way of fostering social integration through leisure activities

The first aim of the project is to highlight the **social value of sport** through intercultural exchanges. Numerous obstacles still all too often face persons with disabilities, particularly young persons. The project is intended to show the role that sport can play as an instrument of integration, particularly, but not exclusively, for young persons with disabilities. Sport signifies coming together, across differences.

The aims of the project include demonstrating how important it is to make room for everyone, something that will be done through the discussions at the Final Conference, in Slovenia, and through promotional material (such as the video spot), thus getting the

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message across to the very families which often hide their own children because of their disabilities (thereby denying them any possibility of contact with the outside world).



► Results and hopes

The use of sport as an instrument of social integration, and not just an instrument of competition: identification of new ways of studying sport and turning it to advantage in the context of other themes without any competitive element.

Encouragement of discussion and raising of awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities, thanks to sport's social and educational function.

Consequent raising of awareness in schools and families of the importance of sport and recreational activities for young persons with disabilities.

Creation of a new culture acknowledging differences and promotion of new integration measures and a better understanding of the needs at every level.

It is the intention that the project should lay the foundations for a new culture, a culture of acknowledgement of differences, rather than a culture of non-discrimination in itself. And for this, we need you young people, you who will build our future society.

► Promotion and dissemination ... a considerable asset

As the purpose of the project is to lay the foundations for a new European culture and for a better understanding of the world of young persons with disabilities, through awareness-raising and thanks to the visibility of projects like this one, we shall place a particular emphasis on promotional material: creating a website, producing and distributing CD-ROMs covering every phase of the project, making a VHS video on the project theme and issuing class newspapers bearing the project logo and including descriptions of the YOUTH programme, of those European Union initiatives focusing particularly on young persons with disabilities (especially the initiatives during the Year of Education through Sport, 2004), and of the SporTrio II project. The class newspaper is a necessary, fundamental tool for students. It is through class newspapers that the target group, young people, will directly receive the project's message, which will be kept in the forefront of their minds every single day of the year.

► The importance of new technologies: everyone can contribute

During the Final Conference, an innovative Internet link will be set up with the schools in each partner country (the partners may choose the schools concerned), using videoconferencing technology. In practice, a videoconferencing link will be set up between the conference venue (in Slovenia) and seven schools, one in each partner country (selected by that partner). The young people from these seven schools, whether they have disabilities or not, will be able to follow the conference in real time, while sitting quietly in

their classrooms, thanks to an Internet connection. They will be able to put questions and, if the schools have a webcam and the appropriate software available, they will also be able to make an appearance on the screen in the conference room.

► Widening our horizons beyond Europe

There is no doubt whatsoever that sport is a passion shared every day by millions of people worldwide.

Whether we take part ourselves or watch, all of us are, at one stage or another, involved in the phenomenon which is sport. While it can have a recreational dimension, sport is first and foremost an instrument of integration, personal development and better health, and it helps to improve quality of life across all ethnic, geographical and cultural boundaries.

Also involved in the project are young Africans with disabilities. The «Sport for Africa» section is intended primarily to foster the promotion of understanding between peoples, particularly Africans, cutting across every border and helping young Africans with disabilities to visit new horizons, meet young Europeans and take part in cultural exchanges in the various countries involved in the project. They can be helped to get away from their marginal position through sport and thanks to relations with others across borders.

The word "sport" is not synonymous with competition! What it means first and foremost is enjoyment, recreation and interaction with fellow team members.

You may ask what our aim is. It is to enable young Africans on the margins of society to take part in the SporTrio project, and to help them to forge relationships with young people of their own age in the various partner countries.

This, of course, is just a foretaste of the "Sport for Africa» project, which would merit an article of its own ... an article which may perhaps appear in a future issue... ■

References and contact :



• Eurobarometer No 54, 2001

See the website: www.sportrio.org

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by Flavia Giovanelli



SALTO-YOUTH RESOURCE CENTRES

In 2000, the Commission established the four first SALTO-YOUTH centres, as part of the European Training Strategy, and with the aim to focus on training in the YOUTH programme.

Since then, the steadily increasing success of the SALTO-YOUTH centres has contributed to develop their tasks, and to extend the SALTO-YOUTH Resource centres to new priorities.

Today there are eight SALTO-YOUTH Resource centres, all established within a YOUTH National Agency, and responsible for a specific priority.

SALTO stands for “Support and Advanced Learning & Training Opportunities”. While the first SALTO-YOUTH centres were linked almost exclusively to training, the SALTO Resource centres have now been turned into resource and support centres in more general terms.

Thus, the role of the SALTO Resource centres is to

- Provide RESOURCES to increase and improve the QUALITY of YOUTH projects in priority areas, and to
- Provide SUPPORT to the network of YOUTH National Agencies, National coordinators (EuroMed) and to the users of the Programme, on specific priority themes.

In short, the main tasks of the SALTO resource centres are related to:

- Training (courses, NA training activities support, material, tools,...)
- Production, compilation and dissemination of information and good practice (www.salto-youth.net, newsletters, leaflets,..)
- Developing networks and partnerships (organise meetings, contact making seminars,...)
- Database of trainers (Trainers Online for Youth – TOY)
- Training calendar
- Partner finding
- Information and Communication between National Agencies/ Commission

Each SALTO Resource Centre is specifically dedicated to one of the following priorities: EuroMed; South East Europe; Eastern Europe & Caucasus; Inclusions; Cultural Diversity; Training and cooperation; Youth Initiatives; Information. In addition, some are responsible for horizontal tasks (see also Coyote nr.7), like the compilation of good practice, evaluation, etc. Below, each SALTO Resource centre explains briefly their tasks. You are invited to visit their common web site, www.salto-youth.net, which provides much more information and links to all the tools and resources available.



SALTO-YOUTH EUROMED RESOURCE CENTRE

NA – France, FRANCE: Coordinator: Bernard Abrignani,
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SALTO EuroMed Resource Centre in France keeps its role of disseminating and collecting good practices, but adds a new priority to this task: the support to National Agencies and National Coordinators within the EuroMed Youth Programme.

One of the main activities of SALTO EuroMed Resource centre is the organisation of training courses (TC) on three levels:

- **“Step In”** is a training course for beginners to discover the EuroMed Youth Programme.
- **“Step To”** aims at enabling youth workers, familiar with the EuroMed Youth Programme, to use the “support measures” (Action 5) to develop a local, regional or national strategy linked to Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.
- **“Step AT”** is an advanced training course aiming at encouraging youth organisation leaders to develop management techniques adapted to their organisation’s reality

In addition, SALTO EuroMed Resource Centre proposes several “thematic TCs” dealing with EuroMed Youth priorities, and contributes to “national TCs” in the Mediterranean countries.

Another priority for SALTO EuroMed Resource Centre is to support the creation and organisation of seminars and events, and to disseminate information on EuroMed via the web site, an e-mail *newsletter*, a *EuroMed Magazine* and on educational good practices in youth work. During 2004 we will work on the creation of a training passport (“T-PASS”), a *“EuroMed training bag”* and continue the coordination of the on-line *“Toolbox for Training”*.

SALTO-YOUTH SOUTH EAST EUROPE RESOURCE CENTRE

NA – Slovenia, SLOVENIA : Sonja Mitter
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The SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre aims at facilitating and increasing co-operation with South Eastern Europe partners within the YOUTH programme, and to assist the Commission in increasing the participation of this region into the Programme.

SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre proposes a monthly newsletter rich in information and events as well as a magazine (which can be downloaded) going deeper into facts and reflections. We also give assistance to partner research thanks to a database of over 450 local organisations.

Our training courses will concern Action 5 projects and EVS on-arrival training sessions for volunteers of EVS projects in SEE.

SALTO-YOUTH EASTERN EUROPE & CAUCASUS RESOURCE CENTRE

NA – Poland, POLAND: Tomasz Bratek
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The SALTO Eastern Europe & Caucasus Resource Centre aims at raising visibility and awareness of the YOUTH programme in this region, promoting cooperation with EECA and supporting NAs in the development of contacts, partnership and expertise opportunities. The SALTO Eastern Europe & Caucasus Resource Centre was set up in October 2003, and will be an important actor to help strengthen the cooperation between YOUTH programmes countries and EECA region: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine.

More specifically, its activities will focus on dissemination of information and documentation, on building new partnerships, on supporting National Agencies’ activities and local multipliers network. The SALTO EECA Resource Centre will organise contact making seminars and support cooperation projects throughout the year, in addition to organising training especially within EVS.

SALTO-YOUTH YOUTH INITIATIVES RESOURCE CENTRE

NA – Belgium (Fr), BELGIUM: Henar Conde
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A new priority covered by a SALTO YOUTH Resource Centre is Youth Initiatives - Action 3 of the YOUTH programme. Since August 2003, SALTO Youth Initiatives Resource centre works to increase the dynamism in Action 3 Youth Initiatives by developing the European dimension of local youth initiatives and networking projects.

The main activities of SALTO Youth Initiatives Resource Centre are:

- Promote the exchange of good practice within the network of National Agencies by moderating discussion forums and organise annual meetings for National Agency project officers.
- Develop and disseminate information tools, like the web site (www.salto-youth.net/youthinitiatives/), a magazine (with news, good practices, partner requests, etc) as well as pedagogical tools to help give young people a European dimension to their local projects.
- Develop a compendium of Youth Initiatives projects to facilitate the partner search for networking activities, and provide support to National Agencies through the organisation of seminars and training on networking projects.
- Encourage the debate on the development of Youth Initiatives, to give added value to Youth Initiatives, and open up new perspectives for the future of this Action.

SALTO-YOUTH CULTURAL DIVERSITY RESOURCE CENTRE

NA – United Kingdom, UNITED KINGDOM: Susie Green
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Tolerance, Diversity and Anti-Racism are all European priorities linked to youth work. To respond to these topics, SALTO Cultural Diversity Resource Centre provides training courses in order to support youth workers responsible for Cultural Diversity issues across the YOUTH Programme countries.

A Module Pack on Diversity training will be produced during 2004 as well as multiplying "Training for trainer" courses to share appropriate methods and approaches in dealing with these issues, and to produce modules and activities to be used afterwards in regional, national or international training courses.

As horizontal task, the SALTO Cultural Diversity Resource Centre remains responsible for evaluation and will produce a practical CD-ROM on evaluation techniques.

SALTO-YOUTH INCLUSION RESOURCE CENTRE

NA – Belgium (fl), BELGIUM: Tony Geudens, Ann Hendriks, Tine Van Roy
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Social inclusion is one of the priorities for the European Commission and is on top of the agenda for most National Agencies of the YOUTH programme. The SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre will therefore increasingly focus on Inclusion in order to support quality inclusion projects.

Support goes from cooperation with National Agencies, to making training tools available in the SALTO toolbox, sharing good practice or organising Inclusion training courses ourselves, like the "Training Course on Inclusion through Sports" in the frame of the "European Year of Education through Sports".

Find out more at the regularly updated inclusion frontpage: www.salto-youth.net/inclusion/

To provide this support for inclusion and take on board additional tasks, the SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre has expanded its staff, and in 2004 the number of training days on Inclusion has also been increased.

Besides the Inclusion work, the SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre continues its work on trainer issues and liaises with different existing trainers pools. The TOY-database with Trainers Online for Youth is continuously updated and expanded. Have a look at this online trainer resource at www.salto-youth.net/toy/.

SALTO-YOUTH TRAINING AND COOPERATION RESOURCE CENTRE

NA – Germany, GERMANY: Udo Teichmann and Tanja Kaltenborn
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SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre supports the development and visibility of National Agencies' training strategies, through their so-called "Training and Co-operation Plans" (TCP). In this context, the SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre co-ordinates and monitors four NA Network training modules: BiTriMulti for newcomers in youth exchanges, SOHO to train mentors of European Voluntary Service (EVS) and two long-term courses for multipliers and trainers for European YOUTH projects.

For more information, go to www.salto-youth.net/tcp/

Furthermore, SALTO Training and Cooperation maintains the European Training Calendar, which enables potential users of the YOUTH programme to find available and suitable training courses. In addition, SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre facilitates the information flow within the network about Action 5 large-scale projects and results, and acts as the web administrator of www.salto-youth.net.

SALTO-YOUTH INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTRE

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The SALTO Information Resource Centre was established to develop and facilitate communication among the National Agencies and the National Coordinators of the YOUTH programme, and between the National Agencies / National coordinators and the Commission. The SALTO Information Resource Centre operates Youthnet, an Internet based "extranet" (only for internal users), which facilitates and stimulates the daily communication, co-ordination and co-operation within the network of YOUTH National Agencies/National Coordinators, in order to develop the efficiency of the implementation of the YOUTH programme. We also offer training in the field of communication for the information officers of National Agencies and support the development of information and communication strategies within the network, and cooperate with the DGEAC Youth Unit in developing communication tools and enhancing the visibility of the YOUTH programme. ■

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by Karolina Vrethem

CREATING TRAINING

► AN UPDATE ON ATTE

- **Learning towards global citizenship**
- **Emotional competencies**
- **Civil sector and its role in modern democratic society**
- **Time management for international trainers**
- **A perspective “from the idea to the action” in training/non formal learning activities**

The above are examples of the Training Quality Products created within ATTE, (Advanced Training of Trainers in Europe – a two year course organised within the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe).

► Why Training Quality Products?

As the 2-year process of ATTE drew to a close participant trainers were asked to produce Training Quality Products linked to the second and last training project practice period. Except for being a learning feature and an assessment tool within the course, they would provide a contribution to the training community of knowledge and practice as well as evidence of competencies of ATTE participant trainers.

By providing the challenge and chance to conceptualise an experience of working as a trainer, the Training Quality Product gave the participant trainers the opportunity to draw together different features of European youth worker training. As assessment in ATTE, as in non-formal education in general, took place through self-assessment, feedback on the Training Quality Product gave substantial input to this.

► What is a Training Quality Product?

But what is a Training Quality Product? ATTE described it as a "product" which is supposed to show that the participant trainer has a high/advanced level of competence in the field of European youth worker training. This product could be the documentation of a training and learning process, the conceptualisation of a training practice, a training manual, a comparative study etc. It could take the form of a text, or a video, a website, a CD-rom or other. The project or practice to which the Training Quality Product should be linked could be any international activity of minimum 5 days in which the participant trainer acted as a trainer and which provided her or him with an educational challenge.

► Process

Linking the product to the practice framed it within the ATTE course as well as it framed the Training Quality Product in an actual training activity. The link, however, could be individually interpreted. It could relate to the training concept developed, to the outcome, to a specific session or theme, to the team work, to an aspect of non-formal education etc. Each participant trainer had the opportunity to consult with course colleagues, team members, their individual mentor and of course anyone else outside the course for support in the making of a product.

By the end of the practice period the Training Quality Products were finalized and collected for circulation. Three outside experts were contacted to give their feedback on the products.

The products were therefore grouped in 3 different groups that roughly came to represent: European citizenship; Training modules and concepts; and Working as a trainer. The experts; Teresa Cunha, Peter Friese and Gavan Titley in their turn represented experience from the European youth training field, formal education and youth social services.

QUALITY PRODUCTS

As the Training Quality Products were finalised they were also put on the course website and hence available for all participant trainers and team to consult. The vast majority of them were written products. Some are directly transferable to a training activity, others are more personal narratives and reflections.

At the subsequent and last ATTE seminar the products were dealt with in small groups, so-called feedback groups. The creator of the Training Quality Product had a chance to present it and to get feedback from the expert, from the team and from colleagues. Feedback was given on two different levels. One level was to look at the three competence dimensions of skills, knowledge and attitudes and how these were manifested in the products. The other level was to look at how the product could contribute to the community of knowledge and practice in European youth worker training.

► Results

A wide variety of topics were dealt with within the Training Quality Products. From self-management to trainers' team processes, from thematic sessions to training concepts, from local action work to European networking. The target group are mainly seen as being (a smaller or wider community of) youth trainers in Europe.

As a result of this a lot of the general discussion, looking at all products together, centred around the usefulness of the Training Quality Products for other actors in the field of European youth worker training; trainers, organisers, organisations, institutions etc. The Training Quality Products were analysed by the external experts as being hybrids and linking certain aspects on training that previously seemed to be "pure" and isolated; i.e. combining knowledge and practice, bridging both formal and non-formal education or relating the political reality and local youth participation. The Training Quality Products also in general were seen as having an explicit political commitment where the trainer states the reason behind the making of the product.

Producing and using (i.e. reading/watching) the Training Quality Products raised a lot of questions to be further explored:

- What is the sense of the "other person", i.e. the receiver when conceptualising a training experience?
- What is the relationship between political commitment and an educational activity?
- To which extent do the Training Quality Products represent classical standards in training?
- How often is the orthodoxy about concepts in non-formal education challenged?

Not all participant trainers produced Training Quality Products. Among those who did not there was a hesitance towards producing something that would not be used or that could be misused, as well as sheer lack of time. Those who did found the process of producing the piece of work and gaining feedback to be a challenge and a useful tool for learning, many also saw their products as a contribution to youth work and something that can be used by other trainers before or during a training.

If you want to get yourself acquainted with the Training Quality Products, summaries and downloads are available on the public part of the Partnership website: (www.training-youth.net).

ATTE was the subject of an on-going evaluation process throughout the two years – more information about the results will be published in Coyote in the future. ■

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by Arturas Deltuva

SPIRITUALITY

We often hear and we even say that spirituality should have its part in training. But what do we mean exactly when we say so ? Arturas Deltuva starts what we hope will be a series of articles on this important subject.

Prayer and/or meditation during a training course? It can happen, but then it is very specific and not for everybody. We probably mean something else when we talk of spirituality. There's the "wise" face of a trainer who sometimes mentions the meaning of life, talks of the soul or says bullshit but in a way that it sounds like he/she would quote the Bible or the Holy Spirit herself. Maybe this is not real spirituality as well...

But then what is it? The best answer for myself - for now - I found in the book of John O'Donahue "Anam Cara. Spiritual Wisdom from the Celtic World". He describes spirituality as the attitude to human nature as the nature that goes beyond the level of functionalism and efficiency only and goes to the secret of potential and compassion of the individual person. The Spirit wakes up when the individuality of the person wakes up. Then the blunt energy of functionalism decreases and a new alive energy fertilizes our action(s).

You could say – but this is about personal development. Yes. Maybe. I think it is one, but not the only aspect of spirituality in training. In a way it is the possibility and ability to turn "project management" as a topic into "project management in relation with me", or "human rights" as a topic into "human rights in relation with me". It is when we can learn with our individualities, when we can learn through interest and compassion with each other. Another way to describe this is to see it as transforming the topic into the issue, turning objective to subjective, theoretical to lived concerns. So reflection groups, solo moments and all other situations when participants can face their issues in the topics, can be called spiritual moments or potentially spiritual moments. For example, Open Space Technology - according to this point of view – can be a spiritual method in itself. It is a space for issues in the topic.

One difficulty for spirituality in training

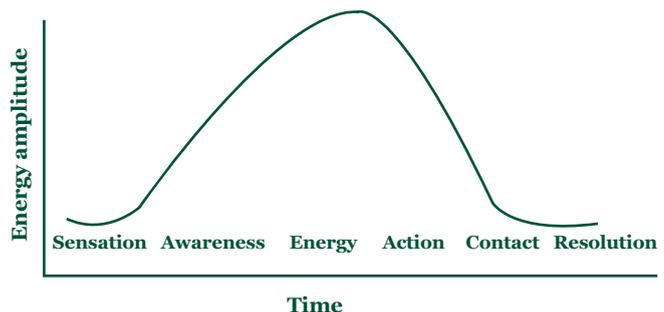
Yes. I call it difficulty, NOT a challenge. A challenge is what we should or can try to overcome. Difficulty is what we should learn

to live with. One of the main difficulties is emptiness. For the participants of a training course, it can be that THERE IS NO ISSUE! And it is not in our hands, it is not in the hands of trainers. We can provide a topic, we can provide a space for discoveries, but the issues are up to our participants. And sometimes it happens that "the issue" for a concrete person doesn't exist or it is so "uncomfortable" that the participant doesn't want to face it. Then we hear: "Hey trainer! You should dance! You should do something! Nothing happens here. It is empty time. I could do nothing at home. Trainer! Do something!" Fear of emptiness – the main obstacle for what is alive, for real issues, real wishes, and real interests. What we as trainers do then when we are afraid of emptiness? I know what I do – I often keep the programme over-planned, put too much into it. What do you do?

There are more difficulties...

One challenge for the spirituality in training

The challenge here lies in developing the awareness or ability and possibility to recognise the issue and to stand for it explicitly. In order to explain what I mean I use the Gestalt Cycle of Experience (Edwin C. Nevis, "Organizational Consulting. A Gestalt Approach", 1998). The theory says that there is a certain process before the explicit action of a person takes place. Everything begins with sensory arousal and the cycle of experience grows as awareness develops of what is going on within oneself or the surrounding environment. Awareness is growing consciousness from what we see, hear, touch, smell or taste. Out of awareness comes excitement or energy to react to what we sense. It leads us to action and contact – the explicit expression of our issues or concerns.



The Cycle of Experience seen as energy arousal and discharge.

Where are challenges here? At each stage, we can get stuck and can stop moving ahead. When we are not able to notice the sensation, it stops; when we do not allow ourselves or others to react emotionally on it – it stops; when we do not take action according to what we feel as the issue – it stops; when we do not get in touch

IN TRAINING.

DEMYSTIFIED

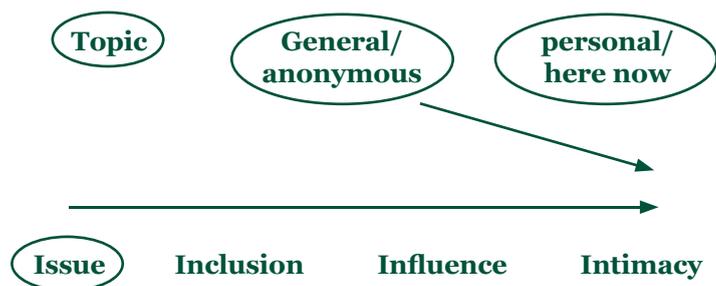


with other people about our issue it stops again. That is the challenge: for the person to be able and responsible to BE (to notice, to act and to contact) in the group as he/she is and for the group to be open for others as they are. We notice this especially in international groups, because differences are bigger and we usually feel less safe there. It is a very natural challenge and we all face it constantly.

There are more challenges.

One opportunity.

The group process. It is something that helps us in our process of turning the topic into the issue. Theory (Sources: Corey M.S., Corey G, 1987, Srivastva, Obert & Neilsen, 1977; Hovelynck & Vanden Auweele, 1998) says that at the beginning of our learning process there is a distance between topic and issue, but when the group process goes on (trust, openness, safety in the group is growing, when the relationship "Me-it", turns into the relationship "Me-You"(Buber M, 1998, 1958)), we have a chance for the topic to become the issue or just to let the issue to be opened. So the group process can give us a chance for the Gestalt cycle of experience in each of us. Usually at the beginning the topic and the issue are far away from each other. The topic sounds general and anonymous. The real issue happening inside the people can be – am I in the group or out of the group? Who is the boss here? How close to or far from other people am I?... Maybe only later the group becomes more open to other questions about the topic – how the topic is related to my reality, my role in it and maybe even how it is revealed here in this group – what about my rights here? What about planning and managing time here?...



Scheme to symbolize relations between topic and issue (adapted from Outward Bound Belgium group dynamic model: based on: Srivastva, Obert & Neilsen, 1977; Hovelynck & Vanden Auweele, 1998 theories)

So I think we are right when we are patient enough to wait for the moment when those two – topic and issue – meet in the group, but also when we are open to notice what is a topic and what is an issue in this group now. And when we are open to this process, we should be able to allow things to happen or even not to happen for

some time; to allow both pleasant and unpleasant moments, comfortable and uncomfortable questions to arise and even to allow people to hide behind the topic and to be fully just pragmatic and impersonal, because nobody told them that training should have this dimension of spirituality!

There are more opportunities.

Some tools for spirituality.

First tool. Kill the tool-box trainer.

(I can not help with the definition of this, but for understanding please wait until the "third tool"; if it doesn't help, don't worry; maybe this term is just a joke)

Second tool. The first is enough.

But if you want the third one – learn to be in the process of discoveries with trainees.

In the process to be weak and lost, to feel strong to confront and disagree, in the process to be sure or to feel doubts.

Spiritual part.

I still hear the sceptic screaming:

but where is spirituality here?!!!

The spiritual tradition that I come from, says – "spirituality is in us". And now I'll shut up. ■

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by Jean Philippe Restouiex

CO-OPERATION

► **... training courses for civil servants responsible for youth affairs and youth association leaders ...**

Support of youth work, youth policy development is not only the responsibility of public authorities but should be developed in co-operation and in partnership between the different actors involved: youth leaders, youth NGO and civil servants in charge of youth affairs. The training course "50/50" is one possible tool to facilitate the process.

Since 1998 the Council of Europe's youth sector has been running training courses for both civil servants responsible for youth affairs (at local, regional and national levels) and youth organisation leaders, as part of its programme of assistance activities. These courses on "co-operation and partnership" are also known as "50/50 courses", as they have to comprise an equal number of participants from each of the two target groups.

This article will begin by recapitulating the goals and aims of these seminars and then go on to outline the opportunities and challenges presented by the courses in terms of training, youth policy and social aspects, while at the same time broadening the whole area of investigation.

► **Reminder of the courses' goals and objectives**

The following section incorporates the information set out in the course descriptions, together with a definition of the course framework. This will be a reminder for some, while for others it will explain the whys and the wherefores of this type of training course.

"Work in the youth sector and youth policy is obviously not carried out only by the non-governmental youth organisations: the governmental structures - national, regional and local administrations - also have a major role to play(...) The roles of these two sectors, governmental and non-governmental, are distinct and complementary. "

A real - but sometimes only potential - partnership therefore exists. This partnership needs to be developed and reinforced for the mutual benefit and to serve the common aims of the governmental and non-governmental sectors, through constructive co-operation. Experience shows that not only the actors of the non-governmental sector, but also those of the governmental



PARTNERSHIP

sector i.e., civil servants from national, regional or local administrations, need to be trained in order to develop those skills which enable them to carry out this co-operation with the other partner in a smoother, more efficient and truly constructive manner”.

More specifically, not only do the course programmes address the values and principles of youth policy as conceived within the Council of Europe, and the means of promoting co-operation and partnership among NGYOs and the public authorities, but also, and more importantly, the training aspects. The programmes originally involved multilateral courses attended primarily by participants from Central and Eastern Europe, but since 2001 they have been held in such countries as Albania, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Turkey, as well as various parts of the Russian Federation.

► Educational challenges

The diversity within the target group, whether in terms of experience, age or responsibilities, presents particular challenges which I would like to deal with at this point. First of all, even though specific efforts have always been made to encourage civil servants to take part, we must face the fact that the 50/50 balance has hardly ever been achieved. Several factors might explain this difficulty. Not all the public authorities acknowledge the usefulness of this type of training. On several occasions civil servants taking the courses have had to use their own annual

leave allowance in order to attend. While we realise that it can be difficult for a civil servant to leave his or her office for a whole week, which is the usual argument, the same can apply to students missing their lectures or to association leaders, who must also desert their offices.

Some civil servants may also be nervous about meeting other participants younger than themselves. This age issue can take various forms. We must stress here that this is of course a generalisation, although it is based on a number of actual observations and experiences. The concern may be a projection of the type "I'll be out of place, I'm too old for this kind of thing". Or else it may reflect an apprehension about the working methods used: civil servants often expect formal educational methods, and may be worried about courses using non-formal techniques and participative methods.

During the courses themselves, some methods are seen as being too "childish", too "fun-oriented" because they are not based on formal transmission of knowledge (a person addressing a group in a fairly static situation - lectern/rows of chairs), whereas, in line with the participative objectives of these seminars (promoting participation by young people, but also by all citizens, in the socio-politico-cultural life of every community), these participative methods are aimed at creating a shared experience serving as a potential basis for broader reflection. It would nevertheless be wrong to believe that civil servants are the only ones to hold out against non-formal methods. Some youth organisation lea-

ders also have their reservations about such methods. When this happens, as in any training activity, it is a case of the trainers and participants negotiating the methods to be used, ascertaining what is being done and why, and stressing that these methods are one of a range of possible means of achieving the objectives set. In the "50/50" courses such negotiation is perhaps more complicated because of the diversity of the target groups and of the age and status of participants.

► Socio-cultural challenges

Nevertheless, such reservations concerning methods also reflect personal perceptions of each partner's role and status in view, inter alia, of intercultural differences. Civil servants' socio-cultural status and the internal freedom in each administration vary widely from country to country. During the courses this issue usually comes to the fore through a confrontation exercise one of whose key statements is "A civil servant must be loyal to his government". This exercise reveals a wide diversity of opinions on the part of both the association leaders and the civil servants. Some national administrations lack facilities for consultation or discussion between colleagues with respect for hierarchical realities in the various departments. NGYO representatives often have extensive freedom of speech and a better capacity for expressing their analyses and proposals than civil servants, some of whom consider that they must exercise the standard official reserve when acting in this field. Some may see this as a reflection of a different type of preparation (arguing that association leaders are better prepared), but we could equally well claim that the fact of attending these courses on an equal footing, as peers, can be destabilising, in fact just as much for the association leaders as for the civil servants. It is simply a case of accepting that people cannot be reduced solely to their status, age bracket or political function, and realising that the whole endeavour is an intercultural one. This egalitarian message may be hard to discern in certain

societies which are emerging from a past marked by dictatorship or only partial democracy. Paradoxically, Communism, with its great claims about equality, used the State apparatus to create a Nomenclature and assign a major role to various bureaucracies, so opening a chasm between the public authorities and the citizen. The "Co-operation and Partnership" courses often have to cope with this heritage. I quote one civil servant who assessed one of these courses as follows: "I have learnt here that I was not just a civil servant but also a human being".

In connection with this heritage it is an unfortunate fact that in some countries dialogue between youth association leaders and the public authorities is made particularly difficult by the poor image which each side has of the other. NGYOs sometimes get the feeling that they are up against inefficient bureaucracies, obtuse officials with no understanding of youth issues, and this feeling can be reinforced by the corruption which is unfortunately still very much a reality in some societies, not least in the youth sector. Furthermore, civil servants have the impression that they are not recognised as partners and that the NGYOs only approach them for funding, precluding any open, constructive dialogue on the means of improving the response to the realities experienced by young people in the various countries and developing appropriate policy. These mutual perceptions can even be reinforced by international governmental and non-governmental organisations which, in some countries, do little to disguise their reservations about public authorities, which they see as still bearing the stigma of the bureaucratic heritage of the self-proclaimed "people's democracies".

At this stage, faced with all the above-mentioned challenges and difficulties, the reader will perhaps be wondering about the opportunities referred to in the title. This last section will describe these positive points.

▶ **Renegotiating the social contract through dialogue**

The opportunities described below are not merely a figment of my imagination or a utopian view of realities, but suggestions made by participants in these courses and the types of action subsequently adopted.

The encounter itself is no doubt the main opportunity presented by these courses. More often than not, even though they are engaged in the same endeavour to provide an optimum response to the realities and needs of young people by developing youth policies, governmental and non-governmental operators never actually meet up; they remain strangers to each other. The "50/50" courses enable one side to get to know the other, to accept their different realities and to recognise each other as partners. It really is a case of building up a relationship of mutual trust and respect by jointly analysing the realities faced by young people and formulating youth policy priorities. "I suddenly realised here that civil servants are not my enemies but rather potential partners", said one association representative during an evaluation session. Moreover, the encounters can give civil servants a feeling of being supported in their work: "The course gave me a better understanding of why I want to work in the youth sector. It gave me fresh impetus for my work".

Joint analysis of youth needs and an understanding of the importance of "Co-operation and Partnership" has occasionally led to the post-course establishment of consultation bodies, particularly at the local level, in line with the recommendations of the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Municipal and Regional Life. Some civil servants have felt empowered to initiate changes in their departments and their posts with a view to improving the partnership with NGYOs. It would be naïve to think that this can happen without resistance from certain administrative officers who shy away from any challenge to their power or the status quo in NGYO/public authority relations. However, knowing that partnership is possible, and that it can even sometimes lead to joint NGYO/public authority management, is a useful tool for attempting to change things.

Broadening the scope of the discussions, we could stress that the "Co-operation and Partnership" courses really are helping to redefine the social contract in the countries and societies concerned. Although the level is necessarily modest, being confined to one specific social sector (youth and youth policy), these courses are fuelling the debate on how the public authorities can initiate dialogue with civil society, how representative democracy accepts negotiation with participative democracy, and how all the social operators are contributing to the future of each society, to the reinforcement of democracy and to socio-cultural development for the benefit of all citizens.

Above and beyond the educational and socio-cultural challenges, therefore, the "Co-operation and Partnership" courses enable participants to search together for responses to the issues facing not only young people but the whole of the society in question, not only in central and eastern Europe but throughout the whole continent. Of course the search is long, difficult and hazardous, but with mutual respect and the commitment of all people of goodwill responses are nonetheless possible. As Brecht wrote, the night is long but daybreak is coming. Would we be working in the youth field as trainers, association leaders, civil servants, or politicians, with respect for each person's role and responsibilities, if we did not believe that the day will soon dawn? ■

The opinions and analyses set out in this article represent the author's own ideas only, and in no way reflect the opinions and analyses of the institution for which he works.

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by Geoff Cooper

EUROPEAN YOUTH AND ENVIRONMENT

TOWARDS EUROPEAN UNDERSTANDING

"It was a fantastic experience for me, from the start there was a good atmosphere, all the people of the centre were like a family. I discovered so many cultures through the presentations, the cooking and when we all talked together. I found out what is done all around Europe for Nature and it gave me a new jump in my passion to take more action myself."

Maude, France.

Introduction

In the summer of 2003 Low Bank Ground, Metropolitan Wigan's outdoor education centre in the English Lake District, hosted its tenth European Youth Event. Since 1994 groups of young people aged between 17 and 25 years from some 16 European countries have been coming together for these unusual two-week gatherings. The events have been supported by grants from Connect Youth International through the "Youth for Europe" Action 1 programme. For most participants they represent special experiences and for some they have changed the direction of their

lives. Each event has an environmental theme and there is a well-tried recipe for creating a strong learning environment based on friendship, trust and sharing responsibility.

The team of facilitators has developed a way of working which encourages co-operation, creativity and intercultural learning. Their success is shown by the many friendships, projects and continued links the young participants have established across Europe. It is hoped that the experiences and ideas from these events may contribute to the development of good practice on other multilateral youth exchanges.

How did the youth events start?

"If I recall the preparation of the first two TOUCH conferences in 1989 and 1990 I must still believe that what occurred was some kind of miracle. Who would have expected the TOUCH meetings would lead to so many follow-ups, programme exchanges, scholarships, translations of materials and joint projects. We did not know, we could not have known, in October 1989 that the political barriers to co-operation would be broken so dramatically."

Jiri Kulich, Czech republic.

In October 1989, Geoff Cooper, head of Low Bank Ground, was invited to an environmental education conference in Czechoslovakia. It was an informal gathering of environmental educators from East and West European countries who met to share experiences and discuss the role of environmental education in a rapidly changing Europe. The approach was different from other conferences; there were no learned papers delivered from a rostrum, the emphasis was on education through experience and in creating an atmosphere for interactive and co-operative learning. It became known as the TOUCH conference as participants were involved in practical, hands-on learning and were encouraged to have direct experience with the environment- to touch it.

At the time it was not realised that the barriers between East and West Europe would be removed so rapidly in the months that followed. The process was taken a step further in 1990 with an environmental education conference at Low Bank Ground, organised by Metropolitan Wigan, the Centre for Global Education, and WWF (UK). Since then TOUCH conferences have been held in Greece (1992), Latvia (1995), Spain (1996) and the Czech Republic (1997). During this period there have been many links established through the TOUCH network; programme exchanges, regional meetings and joint international projects. The youth events at Low Bank Ground, known as Young TOUCH, have become part of this process.

► The aims.

“*I have never been in sympathy with so many people and never met as many people with the same opinions and concerns while being so different. It has given me a taste to meet and talk with others without being frightened by their opinions.*”

Nino, Georgia.

The main aims of the Youth Event are to encourage environmental awareness and intercultural understanding. These are achieved by:

- 1 Establishing an open-minded, supportive, learning community.
- 2 Giving young people responsibility for the event and their own learning.
- 3 Encouraging creativity and critical thinking.
- 4 Showing how to establish a personal link with the environment.
- 5 Encouraging groups to use English for communication.

The success of these events depends on the interaction of the four essential components, the four Ps:

► People, Place, Programme and Process.

The people.

“*An excellent mixture of the right kind of people. I have loved every moment and person at this event*”

Lars, Norway.

Delegates from the TOUCH conferences have played a key role in helping to set up the European Youth Events. In the early 1990's this existing network of people and organisations had already begun to disseminate good practice and involve young people in environmental projects. It was a natural progression to recruit groups for the youth events at Low Bank Ground. Veta Tsaliki and Maria Katsakiori from Greece and Alberto Martinez Villar from Spain have been a great support in co-ordinating groups since the first event in 1994. The co-ordinators and participants come from a wide range of environmental and youth organisations including NGOs, environmental education centres, wildlife and conservation groups and student associations.

The young people themselves are from a wide age range, 17-25 years, but all have an interest in the environment and basic ability in speaking English. Over the years the participants have included students, teachers, engineers, builders, travel guides and social workers. Common characteristics have been their open-mindedness, good humour and willingness to learn from each other.

The facilitators are also an unusual mix. John Gittins was involved in the original TOUCH conference at Low Bank Ground. He is director of the Cheshire Landscape Trust and brings a wealth of environmental knowledge and practical skills to the events. Andy Wallbank, from Wigan, started as a trainee instructor at the centre and quickly became a natural role model and motivator for young people. Geoff Cooper is head of the centre and has spent many years working with young people in the outdoors and facilitating environmental training in different European countries. Jenny Deane, the youngest member, is studying environmental management and international politics and was a participant of the 1998 event. As a result of contacts she made at this event she spent six months working in Indonesia at the age of 17 years. In summer 2003 two previous participants, Jitka Kretov from the Czech republic and Giovanni Amarena from Italy returned to help as facilitators.

The Place.

“*These hills, these valleys, these lakes, are now in our hearts. Here time stops forever.*”

Alberto, Spain.

“Soft, green moss, grey slate, gentle rain, walls, quarries, stone upon stone, white farms, spreading trees, green grass, sheep, mountains, crags, gills, dales, becks, lakes busy with boats, carparks, walkers, picnics, clouds racing, blue patches, windy days”

These are just a few words and phrases used by participants to depict the scenery around Coniston. These landscapes have long inspired writers and artists. John Ruskin, the Victorian artist, environmentalist and social reformer lived at nearby Brantwood and owned the land on which Low Bank Ground stands.

Each year participants comment on how the environment affects them. Low Bank Ground, is a special place, a collection of old farm buildings tucked together on the hillside below Grizedale forest and above the shores of Coniston water. It lies near the centre of the Lake District, England's largest National Park.

The views across the lake to the Coniston fells are outstanding. It would be hard not to be inspired by this setting.

The size, shape and informal layout of the buildings and surrounding spaces also help create a feeling of belonging and friendship. There is a stone pond with maple and magnolia, a walled garden, hedgerows, kissing gates and stonewalls. New groups quickly succumb to this comfortable environment. This setting is itself an icebreaker for the young people who have journeyed from the corners of Europe, tired from their travels and apprehensive about what lies in store for them at the Youth Event.

► The Programme.

"It combines adventure with knowledge by offering a lot of experiences. Presentations help show participants how other countries manage their environment. The event includes water sports like kayaking, canoeing and raft building. It also has a mountain expedition and visits to protected areas of the Lake District. It offers games and art activities which help to exchange experiences and feelings. To join this event is like making a deal with yourself to understand nature, to find out about skills you hadn't known about yourself, to communicate with people from all over Europe; and after all these experiences to feel closer to what is called environment."

Chrisovaladia and Maria, Greece.

The two-week events have an environmental theme which is agreed by the participants for the following year. The themes are deliberately broad so that they are relevant to young people in any part of Europe. Examples have included: "Youth, Environment and Tourism"; "Biodiversity- Nature and Culture"; "Community, Arts and Environment" and "Young People, Education and Sustainability". Although there are planned parts of the programme, the participants take increasing responsibility for the running of the events. Each person makes a presentation related to the theme. This may be a short illustrated talk but it can also be an activity, a workshop, a display, a song, a discussion or a dance. There have been excellent presentations over the years, for example: talks on the problems of animal excrement in the Netherlands, teaching gypsy children in Hungary, a bee-eater's view of biodiversity in the Aegean, solar energy self-help groups in Austria; performances

of minimalist, folk and bongo music; games to encourage trust, co-operation and environmental awareness; demonstrations of country dancing and a moving personal dance of one participant's response to the deliberate burning of a forest near her home in Thessalonica in Greece.

One year the participants interviewed a selection of local residents of Coniston to discover their views on village life, what they liked and disliked, which parts of the environment were special for them. As a result of this survey a small exhibition was put up in the parish church and this led to interest in improving aspects of the local environment. Other groups have worked on practical conservation projects restoring traditional drystone walls and taking action for the environment.

All the young people have the chance to take part in a mountain expedition. As part of their journey they bivvy or camp in the Coniston Fells. For some this is a very special experience. One participant describes his feelings:

"Walking in the landscape gave me a feeling of being surrounded by magic. The clouds were rolling down the hills into the valleys. The sun was shining....I was comforted by the spirit and sound of a small beck seeking its way to the lake below."

And another participant writes:

"The feeling of being so close to nature and its hidden mysteries, so close to the harmony composed by the bird-songs was unforgettable....So tired but so pleased to have the opportunity to touch, to feel, to smell, to walk for 5 or 6 hours up steep paths that led to a real paradise....So cold during the night but so warm with the others around, watching the shooting stars and making wishes for the future....So insecure of falling down the rocks but so secure that nature won't leave us helpless....So many things to observe but so little time."

During the event everyone is involved in cooking a typical meal from their own country and over the years this has developed in some cases into an evening of food and traditional singing and dancing. There have been Greek and Spanish nights and evenings of Hungarian and Austrian folk dancing. Drama and art workshops are also used to encourage environmental awareness and to explore environmental issues. One year the group expressed their wishes for the future in the form of a large communal piece

of artwork, another group worked on individual pieces of land art, celebrating the natural environment.

In the evenings groups often provide their own entertainment but there have also been performances at the centre by rock and blues bands and folk singers, jazz evenings, a village music festival and late night discos in Windermere and Barrow.

► The Process.

"My eyes have been opened, it has changed my whole outlook on life. I am aware now, focused, ready to think and act."

Andy, England.

Although a great deal of thought goes into the programme, the facilitators believe that the process- the how – is more important than the actual programme - the what. We can consider, for example, one of the main aims of the event, intercultural understanding. This is developed through an interaction of the young people, the facilitators, the place, the activities on the programme and also the ethos of the event and the methods and manner of working.

These events are based on a simple philosophy of quickly breaking barriers and establishing trust and confidence. The facilitators create a supportive atmosphere where everyone can contribute their ideas and experiences freely. Techniques such as "brainstorming", discussion groups, role-play and games are used to encourage interaction. Gradually the participants take

more responsibility for the event and its organisation. In the early events this was not always a smooth transition and some groups had to be encouraged to take ownership. It was sometimes difficult to stand back when there was uncertainty and lack of action. The facilitators are now more adept at approaching the natural organisers in the group who then act as catalysts inspiring and involving others.

At the end the participants evaluate individually and in groups and make suggestions for future events. They also produce their own report of each year's event. The early reports were in the form of booklets. In 2003 a CD was produced including photos and brief descriptions of the participants, menus and aspects of the programme.

There is certainly more than one recipe for success but Young TOUCH uses the following well tested ingredients:

- ① Icebreakers to rapidly establish trust, empathy and understanding.
- ② Lots of fun and active learning.
- ③ Co-operative rather than competitive games to help in teambuilding.
- ④ Small group discussions to encourage involvement.
- ⑤ Adventurous activities to motivate and develop self-esteem.
- ⑥ Self support groups to help with English. Nationality groups help each other with translations and share presentations when some of their members have limited English.
- ⑦ Different ways of evaluating and reviewing.
- ⑧ Use of art and sensory activities to encourage environmental awareness.
- ⑨ International cooking and group journeys to encourage taking responsibility.
- ⑩ A practical conservation project to demonstrate taking action for the environment.
- ⑪ Group discussions on environmental issues to encourage critical thinking.
- ⑫ Participants involvement in recording the event and in planning for the future.

Towards a common European understanding.

When an international group comes together it is tempting to look for differences. We sometimes find other peoples' customs amusing and this is often the source of light-hearted conversation. It can, however, lead to bias and harmful stereotyping which becomes a barrier to international understanding. The International Youth Events held at Low Bank Ground over the last nine years have helped to break down such barriers by emphasising our common heritage but at the same time celebrating the richness of local customs, landscapes and traditions.

Travelling throughout Europe you are struck not by the differences that occur from region to region but by our common European heritage and future. For example, Saint George, the patron saint of England, is celebrated in Christian and Muslim communities across Europe. Most countries were profoundly influenced by the Greek and Roman civilisations and by Christianity. Our cultures have been shaped by countless European philosophers, artists, writers and scientists. The work of Socrates, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Shakespeare, Mozart and Picasso cannot be claimed by any one nation, it is an essential part of our common heritage. We have common folk tales, for example, most countries have a version of "Little Red Riding Hood" or "Goldilocks and the Three Bears". There are similarities in folk dancing between the Celtic west and the Slavonic east. The great architecture of the Classical, Gothic and Art Nouveau periods is found in many European capitals.

The twentieth century has brought pop culture and the spread of the multinational. City life is much the same whether it is in London, Athens or Prague. We share the benefits and pitfalls of the "Big Mac", the "Irish Pub" and the internet. Our future is inextricably bound.

It is clear from the Young TOUCH events how interdependent we are in Europe and across the globe. Environmental issues do not respect national boundaries. Many problems, such as traffic congestion, acid rain and loss of habitats are common and there is much to learn from each other's experiences and by sharing good practice. It is also vital in the new, enlarged Europe that we encourage intercultural learning and understanding. These events will undoubtedly strengthen the belief that young people have a key part to play in this process. ■

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• Training methodologies



by Mark Taylor

MaRKeR

Monkeys, watching the watchers, fashion tips and toilet roll holders

"Marker" is a regular column in Coyote, written by Mark Taylor, looking at issues in training and hoping to encourage debate and reflections. Feedback from you, dear reader, will be really welcome. Shiny pieces of gold would also be welcome as we enter the Chinese Year of the Monkey, according to the Hsia calendar...

Knowing that our attention span gets shorter every day, and that Coyote appears but twice per year, it seemed efficient to include more themes in Marker. Response to this experiment in the last issue was positive, so what comes next is the result of many concentrated sessions over the past couple of months, resulting in a series of mini articles. Don't blink your eyes, you might miss something...

On a roll

Knowing that I am a person who likes spending some quality time on the toilet, I received a wonderful present a few years ago from one of my loved ones. It is a toilet roll holder in the form of a little man on a unicycle – as you pull the paper on the toilet roll the little man's legs go up and down and the wheel goes round. Perfect. At least I think so. In our bathroom we also have a stick on a base and this serves as a practical place to store spare toilet rolls. What I cannot understand is that otherwise perfectly normal people have started to take the paper from the stick rather than the unicycle. Perhaps they don't want to disturb the little man or, maybe, their vision of logic is just different from mine? If only the little man on the unicycle could speak.



Watching the watchers

On a couple of recent training courses I have had the great chance to observe researchers/observers watching the process. They are very professional people and most of the time they do everything possible to blend into the background – and they do know that it is impossible to have no effect on the things they are observing. At the beginning it is a little disturbing to have these note-takers around. Then, gradually, you start to get used to them and notice how exciting it is for both participants and team to be asked to reflect on the course and their involvement from the outside. Crumbs, we are being taken seriously here – other people are actually interested in what we do and think! And, because I have to explain myself here and now, this affects the depth of my learning...

What are you wearing for the plenary session? The workshop? The farewell party?

Plenary:

old T-shirt from Macedonian intercultural campaign, hiking trousers, colourful socks, boots

The workshop:

old t-shirt from Macedonian intercultural campaign, hiking trousers, colourful socks, boots

The farewell party:

pink lycra body stocking with ostrich feathers? or suit, shirt, tie, glittery waistcoat, black shoes? Or, maybe, have a shower and put on old Captain Beefheart t-shirt, hiking trousers, colourful socks, boots.

And you?

Thinking in blocks 2

Those programme blocks are still worrying me and others, if to judge from some of the e-mails I received. Some ways to get away from the blocks, or at least to demonstrate the links between them:

At the start of a day, (or a block!) refer back explicitly to previous elements in the programme; Use different coloured string to show the horizontal themes running through the course; Introduce a new way of working by handing around a bunch of lavender (thanks Teresa!) or other lovely smells, and bring them back again; Present the blocks in huge ice cubes – watch them melt over time.

"Teaching and learning" – is that really what we do?

Continuing with the subject of researchers watching training courses. One very powerful tool, and not one to be taken lightly, is that of asking researchers to input some of their observations and findings back to the course. We did that and very interesting it was too. As you will see in the article by Bryony Hoskins and Paul Kloosterman earlier in this issue, the communities of youth workers and researchers use different terminology to describe situations and their work. Both times the researchers referred to "the quality of the teaching and learning" in the courses. As a member of the community of youth worker trainers, this was really strange to hear. I am not a teacher, we are not teachers, we don't teach. Yes you do, said the researchers. We need to go into this further...

Year of the Monkey

It would appear that the year of the Monkey presents us with many opportunities and many dangers. Let's take the opportunities!

References and contact:



The Year of the Monkey: <http://www.raymond-lo.com/main/monkey.asp> [accessed 30.11.03]

Paddy McAloon featuring Yvonne Connors: I Trawl The Megahertz (EMI Liberty)

Teoman: _STANBUL'DA SONBAHAR

brazav@yahoo.com



• Marker

Contributors notes...

Karolina Vrethem is an educational trainer with her background mainly in youth organisational movements. She works both on the European level and with local training projects with much of the focus on training of trainers and the development of non-formal education. During 3,5 years she worked in Bosnia-Herzegovina with the development of local community youth work and is now involved in a long-term school project to develop methods to prevent gender- and honour based violence and suppression. She was a team member of the Advanced Training for Trainers in Europe 01-03.

Asuman Göksel was born in 1975 in Turkey. She was graduated from the Middle East Technical University - METU, Department of Political Science and Public Administration in 1998 and started to work there as a research assistant. She got her MSc at the same department. Meanwhile she was also working as the national coordinator of the Euro-Med Youth Action Programme on behalf of Turkey from 1999 to 2003. While she was studying for her PhD in METU, she got a scholarship from the Turkish government for her doctoral studies in Belgium's KU Leuven. She moved to Leuven in November 2003 and she is still trying to settle down and concentrate on her academic career.

Anne Françoise Storz has a Masters in Political Sciences from Brussels University (ULB) and a Masters in Communication and Media at Florence University (Italy). She is Belgian and is deeply fond of the Mediterranean, the Sun and the cultural beauties of Italy. Anne has worked on European projects concerning Mobility, Tourism, Environment, Culture, Sports and above all the Social Field. At present, Anne is the coordinator of several European projects, connected to the young (SporTrio II*) and to general topics including Sustainable Sporting Tourism and Accessibility for All.

Arturas Deltuva is a consultant and partner in the consultancy group «Bespoke Projects» in Lithuania. He is a Psychologist and holds a Ph.D. in Social Sciences. He specialises in: teamwork (intercultural teamwork), leadership, intercultural communication, coaching and training of trainers, personal development. He uses experiential, outdoor methodology, open space technology, and other interactive learning methods. Arturas works as a freelance trainer for the Council of Europe, National Agencies of EU YOUTH and EuroMed Programmes and other partners all over Europe.

Paul Kloosterman is a freelance trainer and consultant based in Amersfoort in the Netherlands. He works for a wide range of projects throughout Europe. Major areas of work are: Intercultural learning, Training for Trainers, Motivation, Working in International teams and Distance Learning.» Sharon Holder has a background in youth work and is currently delivering sex and relationships education for young adults with learning disabilities. Sharon has also worked independently as a Trainer on issues related to minority youth and diversity, working with the Council of Europe and the European Commission in recent years.

Gavan Titley works as a researcher in the Renvall Institute of Helsinki University, where his interests include understandings of globalisation and cultural change, tourism and culture, and ideas of multiculturalism. Gavan has worked as a freelance trainer for many years, and particularly with the Youth Directorate as a trainer, rapporteur and researcher. He is also involved in the Bridging Global Gaps project based in Prague, an attempt to develop processes of negotiation between different stakeholders in globalisation issues. He is Irish living in Helsinki, and at this time of the year is mainly engaged in inter-climatic learning.

Karina Chupina lives in St.Petersburg, Russia. She is a vice president of the International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People and organises IFHOHYP study sessions in European Youth Centre Strasbourg. Since 2002 she has been a project coordinator and trainer of the European Human Bridges network. Her other responsibilities include volunteering as press secretary for the Fund of Assistance to Disabled Children and Youth in Russia. Her interests lay in trainings for disabled/mixed ability youth, human rights education, intercultural learning. Today she is working on her Master thesis in International Journalism "Information Policy of the Council of Europe and Disability Rights".

Geoff Cooper is head of Metropolitan Wigan's two outdoor education centres in the English Lake District. He has organised training workshops on environmental education for youth leaders and teachers throughout Europe and is author of «Outdoors with Young People: A Leader's Guide to Outdoor Activities, the Environment and Sustainability», published by Russell House Publishing.

Flavia Giovannelli is a former EVS volunteer. She has worked for a few years in the French Youth NGO's sector and is the Member-administrator of SVE-Connexion, a French based former EVS association. Flavia has an MA (DESS) in European Project management and carried out a 3 month placement at the EYC in Strasbourg assisting educational advisors during training courses. Since September 2003 Flavia has been working as programme officer at the "SaltoYouth EuroMed resource centre" (France).

Louis Leroux worked for ten years for the association Solidarités Jeunesses, a member of the NGO Youth Action for Peace. As founder and director of an international centre, "La Maison des Bateleurs", he participated in the organisation of voluntary work in rural areas involving rehabilitating heritage buildings and artistic projects. This educational association engages in practical peace-building work and brings together people from all backgrounds (including EVS and Step-by-step). Louis has a Masters in Educational Science and is currently Chair of the School as a Tool for Peace' (EIP) association.

Marianne Schapmans (31) is currently employed as project officer International Affaires at the Flemish Youth Council - Belgium. She has been working in the youth field at different levels for many years. Voluntary work is for all time important to her, even though in 1995, after a study in social sciences at the University of Ghent, she started a 'professional' youth work life. Initial, as a policy officer and a process manager in a rural youth movement, today, at the national youth council of Flanders.

Tom Croft is a volunteer with ATD Fourth World, an NGO which fights against poverty and exclusion. Members of ATD Fourth World come from all walks of life and work alongside individuals and families living in poverty in an effort to build a more inclusive and caring society. Tom is part of ATD Fourth World's international youth team.

Bea Roberts is member of ATD Fourth World, she helps to facilitate ATD's youth work at the local level in London. In July 2002 she represented ATD Fourth World at the Youth Convention, part of the European Convention on the Future of the Europe, which last year drafted the European Union's new constitutional treaty.

Bryony HOSKINS has a PhD in Youth Research on young people's sexual practice but she is not a traditional academic. She has recently completed an internship/stage in the Youth Unit of the Commission working on the Youth Programme, particularly Action 5. What is most important to her is empowering young people's voices particularly within youth policy and academic youth research. Since April 2003 Bryony has been working at the EYC Strasbourg as a Research Officer within the Partnership Agreement.

Jean-Philippe RESTOUEIX is 38 years old. He is a former member of the European team of the International Youth of Catholic Students (JECI-MIEC) and former Secretary General of the European Coordination Bureau of INGyOs (ECB). Since 1994 he has been working at the Youth Directorate of the Council of Europe, where he is currently responsible for the programmes of assistance for the Youth sector. Enthusiastic about Europe, he is also a specialist of silent movies.

Jonathan BOWYER is a consultant and trainer in the field of youth and community, organisation development and partnership development. In the European context he has worked with Connect Youth (the UK National Agency for the YOUTH Programme), was co-author and editor of T-Kit No 1 on Organisational Management and is a member of the T-Kit team for Funding and Financial Management. His other current clients include a Regional Health Authority and a University. Jonathan lives in the English Lake District with his wife and two sons.

Carol-Ann Morris is the Project Officer for training and Membership Services at the European Youth Forum. She is responsible for the co-ordination of its Pool of Trainers and the training programme. She deals with membership applications and as an information service to the 88 members. Other responsibilities include liaison with the Council of Europe Directorate of Youth and Sport concerning training courses and the ADACS programme; working on the Coyote and T-Kit editorial teams; working with the European Commission in the selection of projects for funding through the YOUTH programme. With a background in counselling psychology, she used the latter as a basis for her training and project work with international and local development organisations in India and the UK.

Bernard Abrignani works as a civil servant at the French Ministry of Youth and Sports and as a Project Officer at the National Institute for Youth and Community Education (INJEP). He is specialised in youth participation, community development, education, prevention of delinquency, intercultural learning and international youth work. He is coordinator of the SALTO-YOUTH Euromed Resource center.

Mark TAYLOR is as a freelance trainer and consultant currently based in Strasbourg. He has worked on projects throughout Europe for a wide range of organisations, institutions, agencies and businesses. In addition to training and consulting activities, he has long experience of writing publications for an international public. Major areas of work include: intercultural learning, international team work, human rights education and campaigning, and training for trainers. A founding member of the Coyote editorial team, he is still waiting to meet Spiffy.

Administrator of the Partnership Programme responsible for Coyote

Balázs HIDVÉGGHI (33) has worked as the Educational Advisor for the Partnership Programme at the Council of Europe since January 2001. He is Hungarian, and has a background in education and international relations. He studied at ELTE University in Budapest and at Leeds University in the UK. Balázs worked previously as a teacher and NGO leader. Since 1997 he has been living in Strasbourg, France.



The Adventures of Spiffy

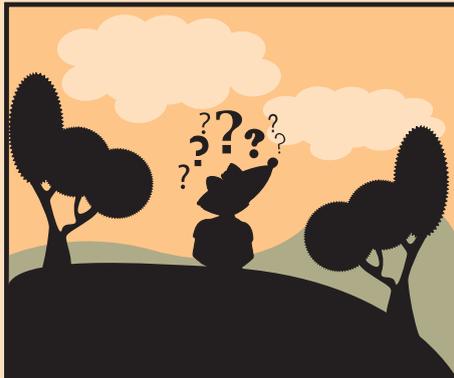
Mark Taylor The Big family

N°10
sic

SPIFFY moves into mind maps

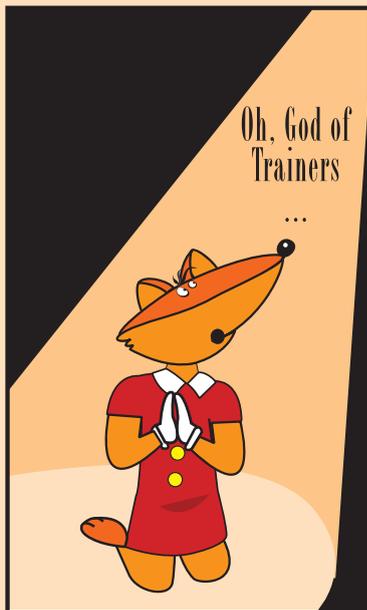
Whenever we do a project session it helps participants really to know what they have to do and when

...



BUT

What about all those "little surprises" the unplanned things??!

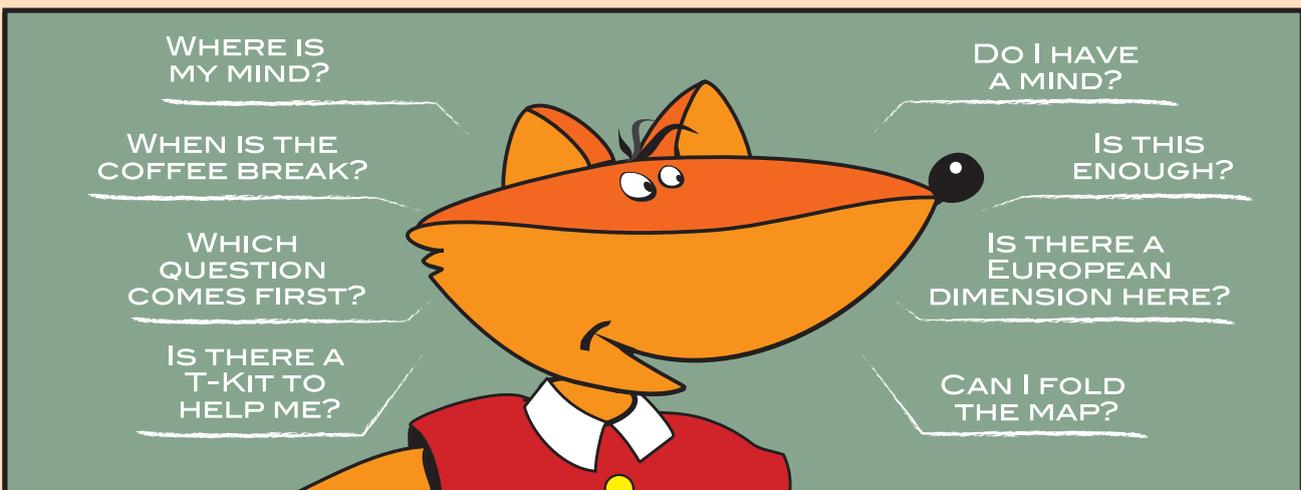


How to organise the unplanned things?



You may notice that the number of Spiffy Adventures has gone slightly strange in recent editions. Do not worry! There are no coincidences in life.

Make a map
of your mind!



New aid for participants in European level training courses!

Spiffy Productions will soon be releasing a CD-ROM which automatically completes application forms, ex-post ante evaluation forms, pre-courses evaluation forms and post-course impact study evaluation forms. Review copies available soon at cost price: €58.00. Active review sessions will be organised for selected purchasers.

Magazine #8

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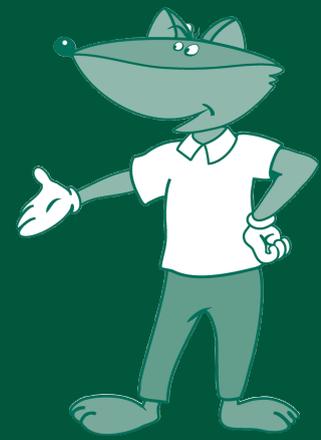
Coyote Theme: Human Rights Education

Behind the application form

Spirituality No.2

Role Plays

Training in Ramadan



2000



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE