

# Shaping European youth policies in theory and in practice

Report of the third edition 2017 – 2018

*First residential seminar report*

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*The opinions expressed in this work, commissioned by the European Union–Council of Europe youth partnership are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of either of the partner institutions, their member states or the organisations co-operating with them.*

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT

The project “Shaping European youth policy in theory and in practice” aims to support actors in the youth field – policy makers, researchers and youth work practitioners, as well as structures that represent young people - to shape youth policies in theory and practice, by developing their capacity to do so.

The EU-CoE youth partnership, in cooperation with SALTO Resource Centres and the National Agencies for Erasmus+ Youth in Action, has organised three editions of this project on youth policy making. The renewed 2010 - 2018 youth strategy of the European Union and the Agenda 2020 of the Council of Europe provide the policy framework in which this initiative was developed.

The project consists of two residential seminars and an in-between phase allowing participants to reflect and implement youth policy steps or initiatives in their context. The residential seminars serve to provide participants with opportunities for networking and interaction, mutual learning of respective realities and different contexts of youth policy.

The **2017 – 2018 edition** of this project included two residential seminars (November 2017 and March 2018) and over 40 participants from 13 countries, Latvia, Republic of Moldova, Croatia, France, “The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, Montenegro, Spain, Italy, Ukraine, Slovenia, Estonia, Cyprus, and Portugal. Participants were civil servants working for public institutions, researchers or practitioners working with young people in NGOs, youth councils or youth work structures (see List of participants in Appendix). Each delegation had in principle a representative of each of these three profiles, with some exceptions.

The 2017 – 2018 edition was organised by the EU – CoE youth partnership with the National Agencies of the Erasmus + youth in action from France and Croatia.

The objectives of the project were to:

- introduce European youth policy frameworks and relate those frameworks to the variety of realities from local and regional to national and European levels;
- allow participants to analyse youth policy concepts and interrogate its main principles (e.g. evidence-informed, participatory and cross-sectorial) and approaches (e.g. youth rights, youth needs and youth well-being);
- facilitate the shaping of manageable strategies for intervention in different contexts in Europe;
- support participants to learn from local youth projects as well as opportunities to transfer the identified practices to participants’ realities.

At the end of the project, participants were expected to:

- be familiar with European youth policy frameworks and their political cornerstones;
- be familiar with the stakeholders involved, their roles and their previous and current activities on youth policy;
- be familiar with the principles underpinning youth policies in Europe, including evidence-informed and participatory approaches;

- be familiar with the existing instruments and approaches to youth policy across various policy domains;
- be familiar with the available resources to support youth policy development and implementation across Europe;
- be confident in shaping manageable strategies for intervention;
- be able to transfer the identified good practices/local models to their working realities.

The first residential seminar was organised in Zagreb, from 13 to 15 November 2017, by the Erasmus + Croatian National Agency in cooperation with the EU-CoE youth partnership and the Erasmus + French National Agency. The second residential seminar was organised in Strasbourg, from 17 to 20 March 2018, by the Erasmus + French National Agency in cooperation with the EU-CoE youth partnership. In between the seminars and after the second seminar, participants prepared concrete steps and initiatives related to youth policy for their context.

The first seminar included the following programme blocks:

- identifying key questions related to youth policy,
- mapping out the milestones in youth policies' development in the participants' countries,
- looking at the main challenges that both the European and the national youth policies are currently facing.

The programme included the following sessions:

- a reflection on participants' plans from the first residential seminar,
- new elements (youth policy in France, interaction between European, national, regional and local levels, and youth participations as key areas discussed, workshops on advocacy and data)
- planning for further steps in youth policy development in participants' contexts.

This report contains the main outcomes of the two residential seminars and participants' future plans.

## LEARNING ABOUT YOUTH POLICY

### QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUTH POLICY

Participants identified in the first seminar their key questions related to youth policy, as follows:

- How can we change the “system” and call for youth mainstream?
- What is the best way/ methodology to convince the decision makers to invest on youth policy?
- How can we achieve cross-sectorial cooperation between young people that develop policies for young people since ministries have their own agenda?
- How does law recognizes youth umbrella organisations?
- What works? Horizontal or vertical youth policy?
- How to decrease youth unemployment (Spanish question)?
- Where to focus on resources? On strategy development or on the field?
- Concept “youth policy” and concept “youth work” – commonalities and differences?
- Efficient tools, mechanisms and ways of implementation of youth policies between central public administration and local public administration?
- How can young people participate at local level? Youth councils? What else?
- How do you make sure youth policy works?
- How to bring the national strategy into a law more effectively?
- How to efficiently break the barriers amongst decision- making bodies on youth policy?
- How we can increase participation among youngsters? How can we promote youth involvement in the development of strategies and policies? What is the best way to approach them?
- How to get youth to participate in the conversations about youth policy? How to get decision- makers to involve youth in the process?
- What is more important in youth policy when resources are scarce: strategy or practice?
- How to do monitoring and evaluation? What indicators of efficiency need to be used for the analysis of quality of youth policy?
- How can we involve more countries?
- What is the link between this working group and the European Commission?
- What will be the practical output of all the projects apart from sharing back practices?
- And what about young people?

These questions served as the basis for discussion and for the reflection within the two seminars, as well as for the development of the project for the in-between phases and for refining these plans during the second seminar.

## MAPPING MAJOR YOUTH POLICY FAILURES

Participants identified factors leading to youth policy failures in each country, as follows:

- **Lack of political will**, which entails a lack of recognition on youth as a priority and is also reflected in lack of coordination among policy makers;
- **Implementation challenges**, which might entail bureaucratic procedures, project management issues, lack of skills and resources, visibility issues;
- **Lack of evidence based policy and mechanisms on how to monitor and evaluate**;
- **Financial challenges**, both internally in the allocation of enough resources to implement youth policy but also related to the external environment (e.g. financial crisis);
- **Lack of coherence between local, national and European policies and reality**.

The above can be better understood if we consider a few of the failures shared within the working groups. For example:

- In the case of Cyprus, it was mentioned that the implementation of the Youth Guarantee has been a major failure due to lack of inter-governmental cooperation. Furthermore, the development of the (recently adopted in spring 2017) national youth strategy has been a failure into the action fields and prioritization because it was based on EU fields and themes and not structurally based on the real needs of youngsters. Finally, the validation of non-formal education and youth work is also a failure in the field, since they are still waiting for a European suggestion, which is still in progress and not achieved. For the Cypriot delegation, the main reasons why this has occurred is due to waiting for directions from the EU level, adopting a non-realistic working timeline and guaranteeing sustainability after the budget finishes.
- In the case of Spain, when the issue of unemployment was underlined as a major social issue, the lack of involvement of the employment department in youth policy and in general the lack of coordination between ministries is the major reason for failure. It was also noted that a lot of money spent but there is no result. It was also shared with the rest of the participants that the Spanish youth council next month will close in a few weeks, a decision deriving from a law adopted a few years ago due to the economic crisis and underlined this as a major failure of youth policy since its function was not fully understood.
- The country team from Ukraine mentioned as a major failure the fact that three different national youth councils were fighting in the same time for status in the European Youth Forum. The explained that for them this is the result of lack of political will and evidence-based approach in youth policy, lack of national standards and indicators of youth policy and the predominance of youth political organisations.

- The French delegation mentioned as a failure the fact that there is no integration of local specificities into national youth policy because in France there is a centralized system. They also identified as a failure the fact that there is no integration of a pedagogic component in leisure activities for young people.
- Finally, the Estonian participants mentioned that a major failure was the First Estonian Youth Act that proved that when you try to please everyone, it's difficult to match everyone's needs. Moreover, they made reference to the fact that there is no professional standard of youth work, which makes youth work not valued.

## FACTORS FOR SUCCESS IN YOUTH POLICY

Participants identified factors for success in youth policy in each country.

- **Political will and leadership** were recognised as a primary reason for success. Participants even mentioned that there are “heroes and heroines of youth policy”, people that constitute a strong component of youth policies that can be “a champion of an idea or project, a leader, a forceful advisor” As it was said: “Every success story has a name and surname behind it. We know them by name”.
- Linked to the above is the need to have “very concrete ideas for what should be done- step by step” and that it should be a “common priority and joint effort of entire sector” and for example, “priorities [should be] co-developed with NGOs”. The **vision on youth policy** should be also based on “well done, extensive documentation”.
- Moreover, the **legal framework** was recognised a necessity for a successful youth policy. “Law provides a framework that actors can draw upon”, said one of the participants and another one added that the right application of law “requires budget for implementation”.
- Finally, they also agreed that sometimes things work because there is **pressure from above** (especially from the side of the European Union, but also when it comes to national policies that need to be taken on board on the local/ municipal level). It was however underlined that it is necessary to “empower regions and or municipalities to implement youth policy”.

Participants referenced some of the “success stories” in the field of youth policy.

- For example, in the case of “The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, the country delegation made reference to three important and successful moments of youth policy in their country. Firstly, in 2017 the formation of a youth club (committee) within the members of the Parliament (mostly consisting of young people) resulted in creating a quality youth policy together with the youth sector and to advocate for youth within Parliament. Earlier, in 2013 the establishment of the National Youth Council as a representative body for the youth was a good moment, especially after the failure of youth law. Finally, a positive environment

was created in 2015 with the formation of a governmental institution, the Agency of Youth and Sports, which has the mission to support and serve the youth voice, financially support youth initiatives and provide support to youth organisations and actions.

- The delegation from Ukraine made reference to a major element which has given a boost to youth – related issues in their country and this is the youth worker trainings that were launched by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the State Institute of Family and youth policy and UN Development programme since 2014. Moreover, a national policy, Youth Ukraine (2016- 2020), has been adopted, while a Youth centres association has been created only a few days ago before the dates of the seminar in Zagreb.
- The delegation from Estonia recognized as a major success the decision allowing young people to vote at the age of 16 years old. Moreover, they pointed on the successful implementation of the Youth Guarantee, in contradiction to other European countries explaining that the success was due to the adaptation of a tailor- made approach. They underlined that the main reason for success for all of the above is the fact that youth work is recognized as a profession.
- In the case of Portugal, the functioning of the Erasmus youth agency was considered a major success and an influencing aspect on youth policy in the country. The delegation also made reference to a good coordination moment between the Health Ministry that reached out to the youth in cooperation with the Education Ministry and the Youth and Sport ministry. They also underlined that there has been new fresh air on youth organizations with inclusion of young people and now for example 16 years old young people are leading their organizations.
- The delegation from Montenegro made reference to the first national strategy for youth as a success moment, because it set the national framework for youth policy implementation and defined the cooperation between institutions and organisations, as well as the needs, resources and financial means. It also recognized and involved all relevant actors for the implementation of youth policy. The first youth centre in Montenegro opened as an initiative of the Directorate for Youth, where youth and organisations can have access to free of charge, as a way of empowering young people.
- In the case of Slovenia it was mentioned that the Youth law gave better visibility to youth issues, allowed the better participation of youth in decision- making and provided the legislative framework for the implementation of youth policy, including the financial means. It was also mentioned that the Youth Capital programme (2010).
- In the case of Italy, it was mentioned that the job youth centres are a good practice in the field of you policy. Running since 1982, they are well identified by young people and are an example of tans-cross sectorial approach and have a local/ national coverage. It was also mentioned that the Youth Capital title (that was hosted in Turin in 2010) brought significant advancements in the field.

## APPROACHES TO YOUTH POLICY

*Input by Andreas Karsten*

Following the session on successes of youth policy, Andreas Karsten made a presentation focusing on is the definition of youth policy and why it is important and he gave insights on global indices as policy drivers and frameworks for youth policy. He started by explaining that every country has a youth policy, either consciously or unconsciously (as he said, “the absence of policies has also effect on young people”). Often, he explained, governments take the easy way and have a short political document, some nice rhetoric without commitment and no budget indications about youth policy. But he explained that the essence of youth policy is to reflect on all public policies affecting people, meaning both those dedicated youth policies on specific youth issues and general public policies that affect young people. He also made reference to the example of Sweden that has one of the best youth policy frameworks, “with a budget, with commitment, with sincerity” but, as he underlined, it is limited to typical youth issues, such as education and training and employment). Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that the Swedish society exploded a few years ago when young migrants started riots at the suburbs of Sweden and there was a negative response on youth in the media. On the other side, he also presented the example of UK’s youth policy, which he argued that is a highly regulated system of youth provisions, almost exclusively problem- oriented and that does not see young people as resource, which it includes a number of inconsistencies (for example voting age, drinking age and age of candidacy is set to 18 years old, while the age of criminal responsibility is set at 10, when UNICEF recommends 18 and the average is 14 years old). Finally he explained that youth policy should take into consideration the needs of young people, the rights of young people and the wellbeing of young people but also the control of young people, their constraints and their limitations.

10 common principles of youth policy were introduced:

1. Cross-sectoral
2. Evidence based
3. Participatory
4. Resourced
5. Strategic
6. Accountable
7. Multi-level
8. Rights-based
9. Gender responsible
10. An identified government authority.

Finally, Andreas presented two indices on youth, the [Global Youth Wellbeing Index](#) and the [Youth Development](#) one, explaining that such indexes provide an internationally recognized domains that set a global policy agenda for action and that these domains for assessment are turning into international benchmarks on which governments and parliament are critically and independently assessed.

## TEN YOUTH POLICY PRINCIPLES IN PARTICIPANTS' CONTEXTS

The 10 common principles were used as the canvas on which country delegations were invited to reflect upon the situation in their own context. Participants were given a “country grid” in which they had to assess their own context at the moment by using the “does not work at all” to “works very well” spectrum. Some of the reflections coming out from this exercise are summarised below.

- The delegation from Croatia mentioned that all three of them had similar education and background, therefore a similar vision on the assessment of priorities. They observed two – three differences in opinion but managed to get reconciliation.
- The delegation from France mentioned that they observed differences from the national to the local level. For example they mentioned that the cross-sectorial approach on the national level does not have any impact on the local level, or that participation of young people is rather good on the local level but bad on the national one. They approached these differences by making “an average” on their answers. They also mentioned that regarding Strategy, France is at the crossroad right now because of the Presidential change and that there is no more a dedicated ministry for youth issues.
- In the case of Italy, two different points of view were observed since the participants came from a different region and municipality. For those coming from the same region it was quite easy to analyse and find a compromise, but the national point of view is completely another one. They underlined that the region has the power to decide on youth policy and not the central government.
- The delegation from Cyprus said that in their reflection that they managed to cover local/ regional and the national perspective and create a common realization of what is going well and what is not going well. The exercise gave them hints on where the priorities should lie and they were able to observe different set of problems at different levels.
- The delegation from the Republic of Moldova mentioned that they brought into their discussion the perspective of public authorities and the NGOs involved. For four of the standards they claimed that they perform quite well, while other four are a failure and for two there is nothing. They added one more standard related to cross Ministerial and co-management cooperation but admitted that it is not working as well as they would like.
- The participants from Spain compared the regional and national level and they decided to focus on the national level. They recognized that almost everything is not working very well

or fairly well, while three things are in between. The most important element that they realised is the multi-level standard: there is a lot of regional work and among the national level it is pretty well coordinated. They identified that what is not working at all is accountability. As they said, there is no evaluation of anything, people who decide on youth policies they never report back. Sometimes there are some indicators and sometimes not so many. Finally they identified a lack of a rights-based approach and what exists mainly comes from the general policies, which also affect youth (e.g. education, freedom of speech, etc.).

- The participants from Portugal mentioned that the biggest problem was trying to separate the theory from the practice. As they said, in theory you have all the instruments that you should apply, the gender equality, the accountability, the strategy, the resources. But then, when you try to put it in practice no one will measure, verify or will get concerned whether the target was met. So what we did was to be based on theory but keeping into consideration the practice and they realized that they might have the instruments, but they are not applied. So in theory it is very well but in practice is fairly well. They recognized that the standard that works the least in their case is the multi-level standard because, as they said, “it is like Ping-Pong”. They explained that they tried through this exercise to find a middle point because they represented three different realities (educational system, big municipality, youth organisations).
- The delegation from “The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” mentioned that they feel they are performing fairly well at several points, taking into consideration that there is no ministry of youth but only agency where even the budget focuses on sport and there is zero budgets for the youth sector. They did, however, say that they consider that they are good in gender-responsive as women participation in youth organisations and NGOs is rather high. They were also critical when it comes to evaluation of youth policy and mentioned that even if there are evaluations, the messages coming out from them are not used since they observe the same mistakes again and again.
- In the case of Estonia, they mentioned as well that the multi-level aspect of youth policy does works well, but what works very well is the gender-sensitive standard.
- In the case of Montenegro, participants claimed that most of the items work terribly, except from evidence based policy- making and allocated resources. They noted that the local level is where improvement is needed.

## DEBATE ON THE RELATION BETWEEN DIFFERENT LEVELS OF YOUTH POLICY

In the second seminar, participants had to prepare arguments to defend one of the following stances they had been assigned to:

- Youth policy should always be decided at European level!
- Youth policy should always be decided at national level!

- Youth policy should always be decided at regional level!
- Youth policy should always be decided at local level!

The following arguments were defended within the rounds of debate:

**European:**

- Youth voices should be heard from the local to the European level, in coherent policy processes.
- European politics are neutral and can better represent all young people and can organize large-scale actions.
- We respect local and national levels but the centralized and unified policies and improve the young of young people.
- Most of the resources – financial, human, know-how are here!
- Can ensure that the European values are perfectly transferred to youth policies.

**National:**

- The need for the same standards, ensuring the equality.
- Not all regions are the same – some of them are poor and the others are rich and only the national level can help all these regions.
- Take both local and regional levels on board as well as diversity and inclusion of youth policies.
- The national budget is the one that allows the development of the national youth policies and then the transfer to the regional and local level.
- The national vision is essential to efficient youth policies!

**Regional**

- It is only at the regional level when you still know what is at the grassroots level, but you have the knowledge to cover the youth needs regionally. Not all regions are the same – some of them are poor and the others are rich and only the national level can help all these regions.
- The regional organizations know the youth needs and the regional specificities.
- Up to efficiency! – The right to equality and the right to be different mean efficient policies.
- Are close enough both to local and national levels and can ask both levels for support.
- Can guarantee the respect of democracy and rule of law!

**Local:**

- Think globally and act locally! The local authorities are the closest to youth people, they know exactly what young people want, how they want to spend their free time.
- Youth policies are for and with young people! And only at the local level you can empower young people.

- The real advantages of young people are related to the existent local youth policies, to proximity and here efficiency comes from.
- Might not have all the financial means but have better relationships with the actors in their communities, including the private sector.

Using the outcomes of the debates, the national delegations looked into the existent relationships between the four levels in their working contexts and came up with the conclusions on the analysis based on the following question: ***Which of these levels (European, national, regional and local) should become weaker and which stronger and how?***

Country	Action required
Croatia	Better coordination between the 4 levels is required – especially between the national and local levels.
France	All levels should be improved and that would have an impact on improving the coordination between the national, regional and local level.
Italy	There is a high need for a national coordination framework.
Republic of Moldova	Better transferring the European framework to the national level.
Portugal	The strategies are well drafted but then, when it comes to the real implementation, improvement is to be done.
Estonia	The national framework is well structured, but, at the local level, there is a high need for more political will for the implementation.
Montenegro	The national policies are well developed but the local transfer is a sluggish process.
Ukraine	To increase the level of coordination, the national standards are definitely required but the local level should play a pro-active role.
Spain	There is a high need for human resources at the 3 levels: national, regional and local level, especially at the local level and there is an emergent need of more coordination between the three levels.
Slovenia	The local level should get more active on developing policy measures for young people.

#### DATA RELEVANT FOR YOUTH POLICY

What follows is a list of data sources that youth policy makers, youth workers and youth researchers could use in their work.

### **The European Union and the Council of Europe:**

- Youth Monitor: [https://ec.europa.eu/youth/dashboard\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/youth/dashboard_en)
- Youth Report: [https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/report-infographics\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/report-infographics_en)
- Eurostat Youth Portal: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth>
- Eurostat Youth Database: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth/data/database>
- Eurostat Youth Dashboard: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth/data/eu-dashboard>
- Eurostat Visualisations: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/help/first-visit/tools>
- Eurobarometer on Youth: <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm>
- Search for Research Findings: [https://cordis.europa.eu/projects/home\\_en.html](https://cordis.europa.eu/projects/home_en.html)
- Cordis Advanced Search: [https://cordis.europa.eu/search/advanced\\_en?projects](https://cordis.europa.eu/search/advanced_en?projects)
- Council of Europe & Youth Partnership
- Knowledge Centre: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/countries>
- Knowledge Books: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/knowledge-books>

### **Fact Sheets:**

- Youth Wiki (EU): <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/youthwiki/countries>
- Youth Wiki (YP): <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/contribution-eu-youth-wiki>
- Youth Policy Labs: <http://www.youthpolicy.org/factsheets/>

### **UN Sources:**

- World Bank: <https://data.worldbank.org>
- UNDATA: <http://data.un.org>
- UNDP: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>
- UNESCO: <http://data.uis.unesco.org>
- UNICEF: <https://data.unicef.org>
- WHO: <http://www.who.int/gho/en/>

### **Statistical offices:**

- Cyprus: <http://www.mof.gov.cy/>
- Estonia: <http://www.stat.ee>
- France: <https://www.insee.fr/>
- Italy: <http://www.istat.it/>

- Latvia: <http://www.csb.gov.lv>
- “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”: <http://www.stat.gov.mk/>
- Moldova: <http://www.statistica.md>
- Montenegro: <http://www.monstat.org/cg/>
- Portugal: <https://www.ine.pt/>
- Slovenia: <http://www.stat.si/statweb>
- Spain: <http://www.ine.es>
- Ukraine: <https://ukrstat.org/>

## PRACTICES OF YOUTH POLICY

### MAIN CHALLENGES FOR YOUTH POLICY IN CROATIA AND ACROSS EUROPE

*Input by Marko Kovačić*

Marko Kovačić, a youth researcher from the Croatian Center for Youth and Gender Studies, made a presentation in relation to youth policy in Europe, and especially in Croatia. He started by showing a map of the world indicating which countries have/ are in the development or lack a youth policy. He explained that adopting and implementing a youth policy is challenging and explained it by making reference to a World Bank's World Development Report (2007) where it is explained that the reasons are that it requires cooperation among sectors, because often young people are not involved in the decision-making process and because there are very few good practice examples- something he suggested might be worth advocating for. He underlined though that most of the times the reason is that there is a lack of political will and courage. Marko also made reference to the different approaches to youth policy and underlined that the main idea should be to create an enabling environment for youth and that it should be flexible and adapted to the needs of the communities it affects. However, often, different dualities in relation to youth policy can be observed, such as seeing youth policy as rights – based or duties- based or seeing young people either as a problem or as a resource. He also made reference to the eight standards for a quality youth policy proposed by the European Youth Forum and underlined that youth policy should always be based on evidence.

He also presented the spectrum of youth policy in Croatia, challenging whether it is in line with the EU approaches, questioning whether the EU youth policy systems is appropriate for Croatia and whether the problems Croatia is facing are relevant for Europe and vice versa. At the end of his presentation, Marko made a few suggestions that could bring potential improvements in youth policy. He identified the following:

- Going local (“Young people should focus on solving problems on their local communities, but is this emphasized enough”)
- Keeping youth work alive (“Investing money into the system of youth work which is more flexible and can respond faster than, for example, educational systems.”)
- Benchmarking (“You can't have a youth policy without evidence and without a monitoring and evaluation system”)
- Youth power (“Always placing youth at the heart of youth policy”).

### YOUTH POLICY IN FRANCE

*Input by Anne Cocheril, DJEPVA - [Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisation](#) (DJEPVA – Direction de la Jeunesse, de l'Éducation Populaire et de la Vie Associative)*

Anne Cocheril introduced the French national youth policy. The French system is a centralised one and all the policies are decided at the national level. Then the policies are being transferred to the regional and departmental level. Considering the specific issues/subject in certain regions, some regions can develop local policies and initiatives within the framework of 'decentralization', meaning that the local authority has the legal ability to organize some of the policies so that they respond to the local youth needs and interest.

The European actions and priorities are being transferred to the national level and then to local actions. Special attention was dedicated to youth mobility, the former French president – Francois Holland having elaborated 10 chapters youth policy plan supporting youth mobility. And once a year, a permanent committee for European and international mobility is organized.

The cross-sectoral cooperation is a priority, having organized inter-ministerial meetings to make sure that specific youth groups' needs are being responded (e.g. the needs of young people going to agricultural schools).

The national actors designed to empower youth mobility are transferred to the regional level through the support of the regional correspondents – REIJ and through the training sessions about mobility, seminars and exchanges activities, etc. More information about French youth policy can be found in English here: <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-france>

## YOUTH POLICY AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL – YOUTH MOBILITY IN CORSICA

*by Paulina Gaggini*

The Corsican context is a very particular one: with a population of 340.000 inhabitants and a youth population (15-30 years old) of over 52.000. The law on decentralisation (in 2002) gave the regional level specific responsibilities, the youth matters being the responsibility of the representative of the regional directorate of youth, sport and social cohesion, representing the Ministry of Youth at the regional level, in Corsica.

The Youth Mission is the regional office dealing with the following chapters: civil service, youth participation, leisure time activities and international youth mobility. The regional office in Corsica has a specific focus on: boosting up youth mobility, developing youth mobility programmes, coordinating the relationship between the different actors and implementing the European and regional youth policies. The budget for these activities comes from the regional budget for youth. The same office is also responsible for piloting the CoReMob – the strategic and political authority for the mobility actions, for promoting the national programmes at the regional level as well as for organizing trainings for local actors.

Some of the successful initiatives of the Mission are the following:

- setting up Mobighjvani – the regional platform for coordination of all stakeholders of international mobility activities in the field of youth;
- negotiating with the local flight operator to have reduced prices for youth in order to stimulate youth mobility;
- developing a project that aims to work with the regional youth offices in other islands;
- supporting the establishment and Development of Parolla Di A ghuventu.

## YOUTH PARTICIPATION – LOCAL MODELS: CORSICA

The Association Régionale des Missions Locales is present in every region in France, having as President the mayor, also elected from his local mission. It is an inter-ministerial network and a regional programme is build every year to support the Mission Locale. The programme is co-financed by national public services. The organization aims to accompany young people between 16-25 years old, except for the ones who are already part of the schooling system. The Mission Locale offers services to support young people in the following fields: orientation, training, housing, health and employment. In Corsica, the network is formed of Missions Locale, covering the entire region.

ARML Corsica's focus is on ensuring that the youth voice is being heard. For this purpose, they created [MILO TV](#), a web TV where young people are posting video reports in order to document different matters of their life.

In order to better promote youth participation in Corsica, the Youth Citizens' Committee, named Parolla Di A ghuventu, was created in 2017 and is now a member of the ANACEJ: national France elected network organization specialized in supporting citizens' committees. *Parolla Di A ghuventu* was promoted through a massive information and communication campaign and over 130 young people registered for the committee. The registration was opened to young people 16-30 years old and it has two thematic commissions: Economic issues environmental commission and the employment, training, orientation, mobility, transport and societal issues: youth, sport, culture, health, insecurity, youth rights.

The challenges that faced Parolla Di A ghuventu in setting up the regional working group and in recruiting its members had been the following:

- Building up a regional organisation was difficult;
- Young citizens' mobilization took a lot of time;
- The recruitment campaigns had to be accompanied by clear messages;
- It took time to support and animate the group.

## THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S WORK ON YOUTH POLICY

The national delegations visited the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg (EYCS) and found out more about the youth policy work of the Council of Europe, about the priorities in the youth field as well as of the available training and education opportunities the Youth Department is offering to those involved in the youth field.

The participants had the opportunity to find out more about the role of the two European Youth Centres (Budapest and Strasbourg) as well as of the current activities that the Centres are running and hosting. The main role of the EYCs is mainly defined by:

- being an educational establishment of the Council of Europe;
- being designed to supplement training of youth leaders in a European context;
- aiming to provide youth organizations and networks with a meeting place;
- permanently seeking means of ensuring participation by young people.

The bi-annual working programme of the Youth Department was introduced, for 2018-2019, the focus being on:

- supporting young people in accessing their rights and advocating for human rights and citizenship education;
- developing youth policy and youth work for democratic participation for young people;
- supporting youth in peace-building and intercultural dialogue to prevent and combat discrimination, exclusion and violent extremism.

In line with the seminar's objectives, the legal instruments and the working instruments and the decision making mechanisms (including a clear explanation of the [co-management system](#)) that the Council of Europe has available in the youth policy field had been presented. From the perspective of the Council of Europe, youth policy should:

- be opportunity-focused (rather than problem-oriented);
- aim to "make" young Europeans (through a set of commonly-agreed standards and values);
- empower young people and consider them as resources;
- engage them in the development of democratic, inclusive and peaceful societies ("agents of change").

## YOUTH PARTICIPATION INITIATIVES

### YEN – YOUTH EXPRESS NETWORK TOG(AE)THER EUROPE! LIVING, WORKING AND SHAPING EUROPE TOGETHER

The aim of "[TOG\(AE\)THER EUROPE: Living, Working and Shaping Europe together](#)" was to empower 66 young people and 22 youth/social workers or young policy-makers to advocate for living in a

diverse and dignified Europe, entering into dialogue and making concrete policy recommendations together with local authorities and European institutions for social inclusion for all.

Two learning mobility activities had been implemented: a [kick-off seminar](#) in Greece in May 2017 - "Living in Europe together: our Challenge!" aiming to find new means to give young people a new role in society and an [evaluation seminar](#) in France in November 2017. The representatives of European organizations, authorities and institutions were invited to be part of the activities and to work together with the social workers to find ways to prevent social inclusion.

Within the two seminars, priority in participation was given to young people with fewer opportunities who did not take part in other international activities. For the first activity, in Greece, the group worked together with the young elected representatives in two municipalities, while for the second activity, the international group prepared recommendations based on [ENTER! Recommendation](#). The decision makers were also invited to join the activity but few of them showed interest into the youth event. At the end of the project, YEN sent out a letter to policy makers, asking them to support the action plans developed by the participants. Except for the excellent learning opportunities that had been structured within the project, the Italian and the Spanish delegations managed to put in practice their youth initiatives. In Italy, the participants were planning to open up a centre for refugees and they held meetings with the locals and the refugees groups, while in Spain had been established a youth information centre.

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## YOUNG CITIZENS' HOUSE – SCHILTIGHEIM

*By Joëlle Gerber*

The Young Citizens' House is a good example of having children and young people involved in the advancement of the municipality's policies. The House has a long standing history, being initiated by the Service for Children and Youth and will soon celebrate its' 40 anniversary. The aim of the project is invest in youth participation had had also been the organization that created the first Children's Council in France. The House could also been seen as a way to implement the policy for youth participation at the local level and also give voice to its' young citizens.

The decision makers were also interested to get the chance to meet young people who were not part of the Council thus, in 1999 they created the House, offering the space for youth people to meet and to exchange ideas, A space where young people feel free to express themselves, a space where they feel valorised as a resource, a place where they are provided with the pedagogical means and support to implement their actions. The main objectives of the project are:

- to create actions to promote citizenship education;
- to create spaces for participation and expression for young people;
- to organise events on themes that are important for young people;
- to create educational tools aimed to support these actions;

- to create new educational tools to use in their work with young people.

For this purpose, a Web-radio had been created, the groups of young people acting as journalist under the supervision of professionals in the radio field and twice a year participatory workshops are being held, being the events where youth can express itself and build up local initiatives.

## YOUTH POLICY IN PARTICIPANTS' PRACTICE

In national delegations or in international groups the participants started planning their follow up actions. The facilitators provided the groups with a framework that included: the theme, the resources required to implement the action, the responsible for each of the steps and the financial resources required – asking them to identify as well what the funding opportunities for these projects could be. The developed project ideas are available below.

## CHANGES NEEDED IN YOUTH POLICY

The last part of the programme of activities had been inviting the participants to reflect upon the most important elements/key issues of the national youth policy that needs to be changed, in the upcoming 5-10 years, in their countries. The outcomes of the reflection are the following:

Country	Key Issues
Croatia	There is a high need for more resources for the Youth Departments as well as for better defining youth as a resource, not as a problem. More than this, financial resources are required for a proper implementation of the National Youth Strategies and better coordination between the different levels – national, regional and local is being required. The development of monitoring mechanisms and having evidence based youth policies are set for the developed vision. Having trained youth specialists – civil servants – within the Youth Department is an emergent need. In terms of policy coherence, the national youth policy should be created for now and for the future, not as uncoordinated and episodic policy measures.
Montenegro	The 5-10 years vision is defined within the contexts where over 50% of the content of the youth law is currently changing. In 5-10 years, it is aimed that 50% of the municipalities have local youth strategies (not 3-4 out of the 23 existent now) and local youth councils should exist in every municipality. Moreover, a network of youth centres is to be established and for this purpose, clear quality standards are required. More resources are to be invested into the local youth policies' development, while the Youth Department should have more human resources. On short time basis, with the support of the Croatian peers, the delegation plans to implement a pilot project on organizing structured dialogue mechanisms.
Portugal	The government consulted over 4000 young people and will soon develop a plan for an updated youth policy. At the national level, it is needed to have a national action plan and to have designed transfer mechanisms at the regional level, in order to

	empower the regional and local youth councils to invest into youth participation policies, according to the regional priorities.
Republic of Moldova	By 2020, the youth sector should be strengthening and a well-defined youth agenda is to be set. For this purpose, a new national youth strategy is to be defined so that it corresponds to the updated youth law and indicators for monitoring are required. The youth policies should be evidence based and for this purpose, a Youth Index/Barometer is to be published every 203 years. By the set deadline, the it should be also completed the project of having the recognition of the youth specialists-professionally and in 2021 should also take place the mid-term evaluation of the National Programme for the Youth Centres' Development, a programme that started in 2016.
"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"	On short term run, better advocacy processes should be initiated to have a national youth law and to get the official recognition of the National Youth Council as the main representative of the youth field in the relationship with the authorities. The revision of the National Youth Strategy is also required and should also be designed a structure for the local youth councils in the 82 municipalities. On long term run, it is planned a pilot project for the multi-level governance system – existent in Skopje and planned to be transferred to other municipalities and having this system, would allow the implementation of the regional umbrella youth councils in the 8 regions.
Ukraine	In Ukraine, the national youth policy should be better defined conceptually speaking, better strategies should be defined and more resources need to be allocated. At the national level, a new youth law and a new youth strategy would be required and having a well-established National Youth Council, having the full membership of the European Youth Forum would support the youth policy processes. At the regional level, a better coordination system should be put in place and data on youth matters should be collected. At the local level, the youth centres' network should be developed and resources are to be allocated for the centres' activities. For this purpose – the investment in human resources – youth workers should be foreseen – to work both with organized youth and with non-organized youth groups.
France	In France, 4 main objectives should be set at the regional and local level: a better cross-sector working mechanisms should be put in place in order to mainstream youth policies; youth participation should be a priority; more digital tools are required to stimulate youth participation – to be closer of the current youth interests; the

	allocation of the financial means should be adapted to the existent needs in that specific region/community.
Italy	A national youth framework defined through the existence of a national youth law would support the policy coordination processes. At the moment, the 22 regions might have or might not have local youth strategies and it stays with the municipalities the obligation to design youth programmes. Having a national framework should also enforce the development of local youth policies. More than this, the non-formal learning services are to be reinforced – having a great contribution to the skills’ development of young people. But a good evaluation system would also ensure the fact that the youth policy’s impact is correctly measured at the municipal and regional level.
Estonia	The local decision makers should better transfer the existent national framework. New initiatives had just been set – the Youth Advisory Board at the Ministry of Education, new funding opportunities are to be given to the local authorities to design new youth participation mechanisms (e.g. based on e-participation, piloting youth centres) and for these, measurements and indicators should be set. The co-management concept could also be transferred to the local context, having young people involved with the decision-making mechanisms. Also, the existent good practices – some schools are accepting the credits given at the Hobby Schools – should be promoted for a better synergy between the formal and the non-formal education systems.
Cyprus	A new youth strategy was adopted in 2017 but from this point on, there is the need to strengthen the youth voice in the policy processes. To have a clear perspective on the existent policy framework as well as of the youth needed, a Youth Barometer should be published. Young people should permanently be part of the youth policy development and implementation processes and this participation should be an informed one. They should also be invited to sit in the Youth Working Group, the cross-sector working group where all the Ministries and interested stakeholders are represented. The ‘Youth Check’ system should be introduced meaning that the authorities should know how to assess the potential impact of the policies between putting them in place. Also, the designed policies should have monitoring mechanisms and actions plans with indicators easy to measure.
Spain	There is a high need for coordination between the different levels. The Youth policy is decentralised and every region (17 regions) have different policies – not all of them

	would ensure an equal access to right to young people. More than this, better cross-sector cooperation is required – the youth dimension should be mainstreamed and youth policy should be on the public agenda. At the moment, the youth programmes is constantly going through budget cuts but for coherent and effective youth policies, better allocation or resources – especially at the local level should be foreseen – even for more human resources. In the described context, youth should have an active role and should be involved in the policy processes’ development and implementation and not stay with the beneficiary’s stance.
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## PARTICIPANTS’ IDEAS FOR YOUTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Country/ies	Ideas to be implemented by participants
<b>Croatia, Montenegro and “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”</b>	A joint project on empowering and building the capacity of youth NGOs to create structured dialogue mechanisms at the local level (organising as well as study visit in Croatia to document the process).
<b>Estonia</b>	Boosting up youth participation at the local level and sharing the good practices. The local youth councils are to be invited to join the project and, in the pilot phase, the main partner will be the National Youth Council – having the available resources to train 4-5 municipalities on the planned action.
<b>France, Italy, Spain</b>	A joint project to find out that is the perspective of the young Europeans living in specific regions (represented by the delegations) on the future of Europe.
<b>Spain, Portugal and Estonia</b>	A joint project on transferring the experience of running simulations of the EU Parliament in Spain and Portugal to Estonia in autumn 2018. The group will apply for a Key Action 3 – Erasmus + grant for their joint project.
<b>“The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”</b>	Planning to create a model for the 8 regional youth councils that would be coordinated by the National Youth Councils. The model will be a 2 years process, including consultations with young people, training local youth NGOs, running advocacy campaigns, etc.
<b>Republic of Moldova</b>	Involving different stakeholders – including the Ministry of Education in piloting an initiative that would aim to get young people aware of the importance of having an accountable and transparent education policy. Young people will be mobilized, in the first phase, via the online games that would be proposed and then the aim is to transfer

Country/ies	Ideas to be implemented by participants
	these games to the offline realities – their communities. The action is planned for at least 10 communities.
<b>Slovenia</b>	The delegation is focused on improving the indicators of the National Programme for Youth in terms of making these indicators measurable and comparable.
<b>Ukraine</b>	The revival of the regional youth councils – where they exist and creating new ones in the region where these councils never existed. The pilot action is planned for April and the main need is related to getting on board youth policy experts/ youth workers able to lead the process and continue the actions.

## APPENDIX. PARTICIPANTS

### **Croatia**

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### **Cyprus**

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### **Portugal**

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