

# STEP-by-STEP together

Support, Tips, Examples and  
Possibilities for youth work  
with young refugees



## Youth Partnership

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



EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



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**S**upport, **T**ips, **E**xamples and **P**ossibilities  
for youth work with young refugees

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

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# Contents

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<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>5</b>
The context in the European youth field	6
Before we start ...	7
<b>YOUTH WORK AND YOUNG REFUGEES</b>	<b>8</b>
What is youth work?	8
The role of youth work in the inclusion and participation of young refugees	11
Forms of youth work with young refugees	12
Challenges	19
<b>SUPPORT, TIPS, EXAMPLES AND POSSIBILITIES FOR YOUTH WORK WITH YOUNG REFUGEES</b>	<b>22</b>
How to manage intercultural learning	23
How to support young refugees in accessing their social rights	31
How to involve young women refugees	42
How to support the participation of young refugees	47
How to tackle mental health and trauma	54
<b>LEARN MORE</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>DRAWINGS' TITLES AND EXPLANATIONS</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>APPENDIX – PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>63</b>

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# Introduction

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*Welcome to STEP-by-STEP together.*

**T**his publication offers practical tools for youth work on the inclusion and participation of young refugees at local level. It focuses on youth participation and inclusion as key dimensions to build inclusive societies and, at the same time, to create an enabling environment for young refugees to become fully fledged actors in their personal and community development. It tackles the following themes: intercultural learning; access to social rights; young women refugees; youth participation; and mental health and trauma. These themes were identified in the workshops<sup>1</sup> organised by the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership in France (October 2017) and Greece (December 2017).

STEP-by-STEP encompasses a variety of experiences and practices of youth work, including from the so-called transit and host countries, as well as working with unaccompanied minors, young asylum seekers and refugees. Step-by-Step will not tackle in an exhaustive way the different realities of young refugees across Europe, instead it gives a general overview of the main challenges and possible practices in the youth work field with these young people who are refugees, as they seek international protection and a better life in another country. In addition, it chooses to focus on the young person rather than the profile of the country, meaning that it is important to consider the context, needs and aspirations of that young person and, if we are working with young people “on the move”, it is also important to be able to define the best way to work with them. The authors are aware that realities change depending on whether young people are in transition, on the move or if they have reached their final destination.

The publication is addressed to:

- ▶ youth workers and other professionals and volunteers working directly with young refugees;
- ▶ policy makers who co-operate with the youth sector at the local level, as we hope it can inspire them to develop programmes to support youth work further or types of funding for youth organisations working with young refugees.

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1. <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/refugees-workshops>

This publication has two chapters.

■ The first chapter, “Youth work and young refugees”, puts the emphasis on the role of youth work in the inclusion and participation of young refugees in Europe, highlighting its added value and, at the same time, underlining the main challenges and needs of the youth sector.

■ The second chapter, “Support, tips, examples and possibilities for youth work with young refugees”, offers tips and good practices on the specified themes, while reflecting on the specific challenges and contributions of the youth field in each one of them.

■ At the end of the publication, suggestions for further learning on youth work and young refugees are included.

■ This publication was developed by the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth, on the basis of three seminars and workshops held in 2016 and 2017 and a collection of good practices of youth work with young refugees. The practices were collected between May and July 2017, through the online survey “Youth Work and Young Refugees in Europe: Speak about Your Initiative!”, and we have included in this publication those practices that provided sufficient information about their youth work with young refugees.

## **The context in the European youth field**

■ This publication was developed in an important moment for the youth field in Europe, when different organisations and institutions took an active role in approaching the themes of young refugees’ inclusion, participation and rights. When the work on this publication started, the Council of Europe and the European Commission engaged in youth policy processes, so as to assist their member states in developing policies that respond to the challenges young refugees face; both institutions focused on assisting their member states’ youth policies through developing guidelines and recommendations.

■ On the other hand, more and more organisations and institutions at European level sought ways to reinforce the role of youth work in relation to young refugees. Several youth NGOs, some of which are also included in this publication, explored how they can involve young refugees in their activities, advocate for their rights and support youth work activities including young refugees. Another example concerns the Erasmus + projects, among which “Becoming a part of Europe”, which also looked into ways youth work can be an effective tool for young refugees to participate and be included.

■ The work of the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth has focused on building knowledge and offering practical guidance for the youth field<sup>2</sup>.

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2. For more information, <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/young-refugees>

## Before we start ...

” Art is inseparable from justice at last... It becomes a meeting-place of the invisible, the irreducible, the enduring guts, and honor”. John Berger (Minors)

■ The images accompanying the text of this publication are part of a wider project, the Expressive Art Exhibition. These images are the result of a six-month creative journey undergone in Northern Greece by 49 artists from Greece, Syria, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, Eritrea, Bulgaria and Iraq. The project involved artists aged 12 to 60 and was open to professional and amateur artists. Initiated in the context of psychosocial interventions of *Médecins du Monde* Greece/Switzerland, this project focused on the development of intercultural dialogue, co-operation and integration through art.

■ In recent years in Northern Greece, refugees had to face challenges of great complexity, including basic living conditions and cumulative trauma situations, combined with uncertainty regarding their future and the desire to integrate in new socio-cultural and labour contexts.

■ The *Médecins du Monde* team, which has been active in the camps of Northern Greece, met a great number of children, women, men and young adults who, through passion, choice, or sometimes through despair or to fill in time during the long months of inactivity caused by their situation, used different art forms to face the adversity that meets them every day. Artists were invited to participate in intensive workshops, in which they conceptualised, designed and shaped their first exhibition, “Pain & Hope”, in Thessaloniki, and then “The Art of the Other” in July 2017, and “Seeds of Unity” in September 2017. The last two exhibitions created bridges between communities and addressed the integration process, understood as a co-constructed and dynamic process between immigrants and their host society. In this way, artists who were then refugees in Greece and local artists came together to work on a common exhibition, encouraging the exploration and expression of identities, challenging discrimination and social exclusion, and promoting intercultural dialogue and creativity through workshops and training. The work of the artists was presented throughout Europe and in the USA.

■ Today, the project includes an itinerant exhibition and aims to create a network of artists across Europe, opening spaces of direct contact, dialogue and exchange between European artists and newcomers, enhancing the development of an integrated society. The project is now led by an independent team wishing to trigger and support innovative and creative actions to address social challenges through art.

Facebook: ExpressiveArtExhibition, email: [intergrartproject@gmail.com](mailto:intergrartproject@gmail.com)

# Youth work and young refugees

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## What is youth work?

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“Youth work is a broad term, with different focus in different contexts. It usually covers a variety of activities of a social, cultural, educational, environmental and/or political nature by, with and for young people. Such activities can also include sports, leisure time activities or services for young people. Youth work is delivered by paid and volunteer youth workers and is based on non-formal and informal learning processes focused on young people and on voluntary participation. The main objective is to motivate and support young people to find and pursue constructive pathways in life, thus contributing to their personal and social development and to society at large.” (Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to member States on youth work)

“Youth work is organised in different ways (by youth-led organisations, organisations for youth, informal groups or through youth public services). It is delivered in different forms and settings (e.g. open-access, group-based, programme-based, outreach and detached) and is given shape at local, regional, national and European level.” (Council conclusions on the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people (2013/C 168/03))

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**T**he youth work sector in Europe is very diverse. It includes different practices offered by organisations and public providers, civil society or even social welfare-related institutions and programmes. Despite this diversity, there is a common set of values and elements.

- ▶ **Value-driven:** youth work serves the higher purposes of inclusion and social cohesion.
- ▶ **Youth-centric:** youth work serves key needs and aspirations of youth, identified by young people themselves.
- ▶ **Voluntary:** youth work relies on the voluntary participation of young people.

- ▶ **Developmental:** youth work aims at the personal, social and ethical development of young people.
- ▶ **Self-reflective and critical:** youth work tries to make sure it is doing its best to live up to its mission.
- ▶ **Relational:** youth work seeks authentic communication with young people and to contribute to sustaining viable communities. (Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio)<sup>3</sup>

■ Youth work takes place in many different forms and settings: in youth centres, via youth projects or outreach/detached youth work. It can be promoted by informal youth groups and when youth information is provided, it can take place in the framework of youth camps and it is at the core of youth organisations and youth movements.<sup>4</sup>

■ “Youth worker” is also a broad and diverse concept and profile. In many cases, professionals and volunteers are not aware or do not consider that they are youth workers. This might happen due to a lack of awareness on what youth work is and/or recognition by civil society and authorities. In some countries, “youth worker” is a professional category, there are specific vocational training or higher education paths to becoming a youth worker and certification mechanisms, while in other countries the activities organised and services provided can fall under other fields such as social work.

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3. [www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio](http://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio).

4. European Commission (2015) “Quality Youth Work - A common framework for the further development of youth work” - Report from the Expert Group on Youth Work Quality Systems in the EU Member States, p. 13. In: <https://goo.gl/wDh9oB> (accessed 16 November 2017).

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## Questions for reflection (about your practice)



- Do you consider yourself a youth worker? Do you provide youth work?
- Which are the values and principles of your work with young people? Are they similar to those listed as values and elements of youth work?
- Are you working towards inclusion and/or integration of youth refugees? Why? How?

## The role of youth work in the inclusion and participation of young refugees

“Participation in the democratic life of any community is about more than voting or standing for election, although these are important elements. Participation and active citizenship is about having the right, the means, the space and the opportunity and where necessary the support to participate in and influence decisions and engaging in actions and activities so as to contribute to building a better society.”

(The Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, May 2003)

“Social inclusion is the process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to access the rights and benefits normally available to members of society, such as employment, adequate housing, health care, education and training.”

(Glossary of terms, Council of Europe project Enter! Access to Social Rights for Young People, [www.coe.int/en/web/enter/glossary](http://www.coe.int/en/web/enter/glossary))

■ The youth field has a key role in the inclusion and participation of young refugees, as youth workers offer:

- ▶ the ability to interpret, adapt and contribute to shaping new realities;
- ▶ a quick response to immediate challenges, when other structures are not able to do so, and capacity to mobilise volunteers and the community;
- ▶ a longstanding record in working towards youth participation, inclusion and social cohesion; and
- ▶ the capacity to put forward innovative and creative solutions that link knowledge, policy and practice.

■ While there are different approaches and practices of youth work across Europe, they mostly converge into one common element: a values-based work, founded on principles such as human rights, social inclusion and democracy. Irrespective of the legal status of young people in migration, youth work can contribute to their inclusion from the moment of their arrival.

■ It is important to mention that youth work with young refugees is not something new, but it has gained another dimension and increased visibility since 2015, due to the situation created by numerous arrivals in Europe. At that time, and as a first reaction, youth workers responded (for example, in Greece) with mobilisation of volunteers for emergency response initiatives (for example, collecting and distributing food and clothes). Soon they started with intercultural learning activities, strengthening links with local communities with language and cultural courses. However, a long-term perspective and efforts were needed, to ensure the inclusion and participation of these young refugees, and initiatives were put in place related to access to rights (such as in the case of the right to education and close partnerships

with schools or vocational education), or skills development, with a special focus on young women refugees.

Currently, the response of youth work goes beyond an immediate humanitarian response and access to services and this requires new skills and approaches for youth workers as well. However, in countries where youth work is not specifically recognised, there is also less clarity about its added value and sometimes it is combined with other sectors and services more related to legal, social welfare and humanitarian support. So, youth workers have also become aware of the need to learn more about legal frameworks, how to deal with mental health and trauma, among other issues, so as to be able to contribute to a long-term inclusion for young refugees in the host societies.

For this publication, we chose to focus on the inclusion of young refugees rather than integration, as to “integrate” young refugees may not be seen by many as the final purpose, as discussed in the framework of the workshops promoted by the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership. Furthermore, “integration” is often used in a misleading way politically and by the media. The same word can have very different meanings in different European countries: for some the integration-related policies and programmes are closer to what we introduce in this handbook as inclusion, but in other contexts integration might be very close to assimilation and segregation practices. In this way, integration can be perceived as a more state-centric and oriented approach that implies a collective obligation of the young refugees to adapt, while inclusion focuses on the individual and his/her ability to contribute to the community. For youth work, the focus has been mainly on fostering access to opportunities and rights and creating a space for self-development.

Furthermore, youth workers are contributing to creating the conditions for participation in society. In a context where, for example, access to participation in elections (voting and standing in elections) and engagement in political parties are limited and not available to young refugees, it is crucial to create alternative spaces and approaches to participation.

All human beings should be able to access their rights, to have the opportunity to explore their potential and capacities and to contribute to the development of their community. To support these efforts is to contribute to building inclusive societies and this is what youth work does.

## Forms of youth work with young refugees

Youth work can contribute with opportunities in intercultural matters, human rights and non-formal education, social inclusion, peer support, soft and life skills development, leisure and other areas. To have a stronger impact, it is important that youth workers foster links with others who work directly with the same young people, such as teachers, police and social workers.

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## Questions for reflection (about your practice)



- How do you promote access to the youth work opportunities you offer?  
How do you reach out to young refugees?
- With whom are you co-operating who works with the same young people? How are you creating synergies?

## What can youth work with young refugees look like?

■ The following list includes examples of areas of intervention for youth workers and practices from around Europe.

### Supporting emergency response

- ▶ Mobilisation of volunteers for first response initiatives, such as collection and distribution of food and clothes, in co-ordination with local authorities and humanitarian organisations.
- ▶ **Example:** *Scouts in Action for Refugees Relief* have supported migrants at the islands of Lesbos, Chios, Kos and the refugee camps of Athens and Ellinikon. Their activities included first responses and relief actions but also offered learning and safer spaces for young migrants.

### Intercultural exchange, language and culture courses

- ▶ Creation of spaces for cultural learning and exchange between young refugees and host community. Activities such as “living libraries”,<sup>5</sup> sports, music or cooking-related initiatives and language learning activities.
- ▶ **Examples:** The Estonian member organisation of the Organising Bureau of School Student Unions (OBESSU) promoted an exchange week between migrants and local students: they “exchanged” homes to have a better understanding of the challenges their peers face.
- ▶ *Mareena*, in Slovakia, runs a community programme, with informal events and activities that aim to bring together both refugees and locals, thus creating space for sharing and better understanding of each other, for example Sunday brunches, summer movie nights, Afghan pop-up dinners, Afghan cultural evenings, women’s nights.

### Fighting (online) hate speech

- ▶ Initiatives combating hate speech online through awareness-raising and reporting hate speech, and development of new narratives related to migration.
- ▶ **Example:** The *No Hate Speech* movement, promoted by the Council of Europe, to fight online hate speech and build counter-narratives.

### Research

- ▶ Identifying the needs of young people, listening to their opinions and inputs, thus gaining a better understanding of young people’s situations and using these findings to advocate for changes at policy level.
- ▶ **Example:** The *Young Republic* (a young-refugee-led organisation) undertook in 2017 a research project in five European countries on the needs and aspirations of young Syrian refugees in Europe.

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5. More information about living libraries is available at [www.coe.int/en/web/youth/living-library](http://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/living-library) (accessed 19 November 2017).

## Empowerment and development of competences of young refugees

- ▶ Through peer support, human rights and non-formal education, training programmes and workshops on different themes, to develop various skills, from digital skills to entrepreneurial or life skills; training with mixed groups to develop intercultural relations and networking.
- ▶ **Examples:** *Support to Young Refugees Project* is promoted by Toplum Gönüllüleri Vakfı (TOG – Community Volunteers Foundation) and the focus of the activities is empowerment and social cohesion. Courses, workshops, meetings, non-formal education activities, peer education activities and social responsibility projects have been implemented by young people with the aim of empowering Syrian youth. There are also youth friendly health units in every centre where a health worker and psychologist provide (individual) consultation to young women about gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health.
- ▶ *The Young Republic* organises training courses on the themes of democracy, human rights and participation, mainly for young refugees and youth workers working with young refugees. They also run the GAMIFY programme, which is an interactive and participatory learning experience designed to build inclusive communities; it gathers together newcomers and well-established locals (with a focus on bringing plural and diverse groups) to play together and meet other young people while exploring democracy and human rights related themes, reflecting, sharing and learning from each other's experiences.

## Supporting self-developed initiatives

- ▶ Supporting young refugee-led initiatives, and by doing so supporting the change of narratives about young refugees and giving them the space to further develop their skills and relationships and to find a way to participate in the community and the decisions that affect their lives; mentoring, funding, peer support structures.
- ▶ **Example:** *The Foyer Oberholz* supports young refugees in Strasbourg to develop their own NGO. "Le pensé critique" is now a young refugee-led organisation that has arranged its first project, based on photography and aimed at offering a space for young refugees to explore their identity.

## Supporting access to rights

- ▶ Facilitating, through partnership between local authorities and schools, the inclusion in the education system of young refugees; offering extra-curricular activities for language learning, development of life and soft skills and of positive peer relations; providing information about rights, and support to access the labour market or other opportunities.
- ▶ **Example:** *Tandem* is an initiative to support the integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Brussels by creating opportunities for them to bring their skills and experience to European-level NGOs via short-term volunteer placements.

## Advocating for young refugee rights and strengthening accountability

- ▶ Acting as an advocate for young refugees in different initiatives; bringing the issues that young refugees face to the attention of policy makers; supporting, protecting and facilitating access to rights for young refugees.
- ▶ **Example:** *Speak Out!* is an initiative of the National Youth Council of Switzerland. It targets unaccompanied migrant minors seeking asylum and undocumented minors. The goal is to make their voices heard and to improve their participation.

## Peer-to-peer learning and support

- ▶ Bringing together young people with refugee and non-refugee backgrounds to work and learn together.
- ▶ **Example:** *Migrant Youth Helsinki* is a 2016-2020 project of the Helsinki City Youth Services and it includes a Buddy School system to promote learning results through peer teaching and learning.
- ▶ The NGO *pith of learning* organises democratic citizenship activities in schools in the Netherlands, involving young refugees as peer teachers for young people.

## Leisure time activities

- ▶ Offering meaningful leisure time opportunities to young people with a refugee background.
- ▶ **Examples:** *Faros*, a local Greek NGO supporting unaccompanied adolescent refugees in Athens, organises sports programmes, as increased participation can assist in reducing anti-social behaviour and in building social cohesion, and allows staff to get close to unaccompanied adolescents. These activities also strengthen young people's feeling of belonging to a group.
- ▶ *Stamm Marburg*, a local scout group in Germany, includes young refugees in local scout activities, such as scout camps. The aim is to support young refugees to be included in local society and also to reduce prejudice in German society by letting people get to know some refugees in person.

■ This list is not exhaustive. Other initiatives, more focused on capacity building and support to youth workers working with young refugees, are also being developed; for example, at European level, the Migration and Human Rights Network of the European Youth Forum (bringing together member organisations working with young refugees at project and policy levels) and the "Building Bridges" toolkit and campaign of Service Civil International (SCI).

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The Migration and Human Rights Network is an initiative of the European Youth Forum and its member organisations. It is targeted at youth organisations working with and for young refugees. The main goal of this network is to provide a space for networking, exchange of best practices, policy development and advocacy on the topic of migration and young refugees in Europe.

The approval of the Resolution on Protection and Integration of Young Refugees in Europe by the European Youth Forum in November 2015 is a key achievement of the network. This document highlights the specific situation of minor refugees, the importance of inclusive societies and the role of youth organisations in contributing to the protection and integration of young refugees in Europe. The network has also collected best practices on the integration of asylum seekers into education and vocational training that shows some initiatives that could be adapted in different European countries. These two documents are also important tools for advocacy work in relevant EU policy processes and the youth sector can also consider using them in national and local advocacy efforts.

More information is available at [www.youthforum.org](http://www.youthforum.org)

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The “Building Bridges” toolkit is a web platform, designed to share know-how on voluntary projects involving asylum seekers and refugees as well as raising awareness on forced migration in general. The project is coordinated by SCI Switzerland with the support of *Utilapu* Hungary. Its existence would not have been possible without the support of the Mercator Foundation Switzerland and the active contribution of the Building Bridges working group and SCI branches.

It aims to inspire with case studies of successful projects on the topic and to support in starting similar initiatives by providing a list of practical guidelines on how to organise such projects and specific methods that can be used.

More information is available at [www.sci.ngo/sci-campaigns/building-bridges/building-bridgestoolkit](http://www.sci.ngo/sci-campaigns/building-bridges/building-bridgestoolkit)

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It is important, when an organisation or informal group decides to work with young refugees, to discuss it internally and with other stakeholders and to reflect on what its specific contribution could be. To have that discussion, it is important to be aware of the situation of the young people (including legal status, if they are on the move, needs and aspirations), and who is doing what in the field, among other elements that help to understand the reality and identify the needs. Furthermore, the engagement of young refugees in all phases of the initiatives and projects (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) is essential for the success of any initiative. On the next page you can find some questions to support you on such an exercise.

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## Questions for reflection (about planning youth work with young refugees)



- What is the legal status of the young person? What are the implications to her/his engagement?
- What are the needs and aspirations of the young person?
- How does the context affect programming? Are these young people on the move? What are the implications to take into consideration regarding the existing legal framework, programmes, funding opportunities?
- Can you collaborate with other sectors to improve your work (such as local authorities, schools and other civil society and international organisations)?
- Are there cultural and gender factors that you need to be aware of?
- How are you planning to engage the young people in the project?

■ Youth work can contribute to the inclusion and participation of young refugees, based on its specific value and despite whether young refugees will move on to other countries or stay. Youth work could have an important role in building bridges between young refugees and the local communities. The relation between youth work and community work when working with refugees is important: to have a whole community approach, across ages, could also be very beneficial for all groups, not just for young people. Youth work can also provide cultural mediation and language support. Youth workers can develop personalised and individualised approaches in supporting young refugees. In transit countries, youth work can also offer a feeling of stability and a “home” for the young refugees. In addition, it can support individual empowerment and skills development and can assist in the process of integration/inclusion in host societies. It helps young refugees to develop their confidence, resilience and trust and in building positive relationships with their peers as well. It equips them with necessary skills for inclusion in education and work.

■ It can also contribute to informing young refugees about their rights and advocating for changes in the way the situation is coordinated or the types of programmes that are put in place.

■ Youth work can offer a safe learning space for young refugees to be young people and to enjoy various activities. Through non-formal education, they can benefit from and be involved in activities that could also be similar to those in other countries. It can also create a space for young refugees to express themselves and participate in society, for young refugees to voice their ideas, concerns and aspirations, and it can also be an opportunity to uncover and value the resources that young refugees bring to society.

■ The youth work field can act as an important stakeholder in cross-sectoral co-operation between different areas, for example law, education, housing and employment. Youth work should not take over tasks that fall within the remit of other sectors, but rather act as a complementary support to other services.

## Challenges

■ Young refugees and asylum seekers face multiple challenges, due to the obstacles that they have to go through as they seek to integrate into a new society.

■ Some of the challenges that young refugees and asylum seekers face, that also have consequences on youth work, are listed below.

- ▶ Lack of a legal framework or insufficient implementation that leads to civil society organisations’ intervention (especially youth work) in non-traditional areas and services, such as housing or health.
- ▶ Political developments affecting public opinion and policies in the host countries, particularly in relation to xenophobia.
- ▶ Weak co-ordination between different actors which leads to many organisations doing similar things and non-co-ordinated actions, towards beneficiaries.
- ▶ Burdensome processes related to bureaucracy and the obtaining of a legal status in the host country.

- ▶ Lack of accessible information for the young refugees, especially on their rights, in languages and formats which they understand.
- ▶ Intercultural challenges, as well as discrimination and stigma that young refugees suffer, including the language barriers.
- ▶ “Waitinghood”, in other words, the unstable situation of not knowing whether the legal status of refugee will be granted, or whether the young person will need to be sent back to their country of origin, but also not knowing what will happen after the status is granted.
- ▶ Absence of an appropriate guardianship system which limits the opportunities that young people can access and their inclusion in the host society.
- ▶ Transition to adulthood, especially the situation of young refugees turning 18, when their status changes from being a child (with the related protections under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) to being an adult. This implies a loss in legal protection and lack of access to rights.
- ▶ Emotional trauma, both given the circumstances of reaching the host countries, as well as due to the procedures and instability in the host country (institutional violence).
- ▶ Precariousness of internships and other measures supporting young refugees to access the labour market.
- ▶ Lack of spaces and support for young refugees to express themselves and be active in local life, as citizens. Furthermore, due to the legal status, it might not be possible to access different opportunities, such as youth work.
- ▶ Limited possibilities for the engagement of young women and girls and the difficulties in reaching out to them.

■ In addition to the challenges faced by young refugees, the youth sector itself is facing the following challenges.

- ▶ Unpredictability. It is not clear for how long youth workers will be working with some young people and how the transition to adulthood or the change in legal status will affect their engagement. Furthermore, for some young people it is not clear if they will stay in that host community or will move to another place.
- ▶ Competences of youth workers. While this is not specific to working with young refugees, it is very important to raise the question whether those working with young refugees are trained on issues such as intercultural dialogue and learning, working on first aid in mental health, working with young people in vulnerable situations etc.
- ▶ Intercultural skills. To speak a common language is a basic step in creating relationships of trust. Sometimes youth workers lack the language skills and the intercultural awareness to interact with some young refugees.
- ▶ New fields and situations. Many youth work providers are not used to dealing with mental health and trauma situations. In addition, the stronger focus on safety and legal help is also something new for the sector. This can create stress and pressure on youth workers and lead to burnout.
- ▶ Funding and partnerships. Solutions at local level are essential in contributing to inclusion and participation, but there is a lack of funding available for such



# Support, tips, examples and possibilities for youth work with young refugees



Harmonizing 2 – Collective painting - Seeds of Unity, September 2017

**T**his chapter takes a deeper look into specific issues related to working with young refugees in a youth work context. It puts forward some challenges concerning both youth workers and/or young refugees. It also provides readers with some concrete tips and ideas on how to tackle the suggested issues.

— The chapter does not in any way pretend to be exhaustive. The topics, as well as the contents, were extracted from an international group of youth workers, social workers and young refugees from various European countries in the framework of two seminars organised by the Partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission in the field of youth in Strasbourg (October 2017) and Thessaloniki (December 2017). The challenges and proposals for solutions are based on the daily practice of youth workers present at these seminars.

— However, you may have other challenges, other good ideas and practices, or other issues to tackle. We therefore invite you to use this part of the handbook as a guideline, and to fill in the various subchapters with your additional thoughts and ideas. You can discuss these with colleagues, with young people from your youth work context and with other partners. If you are in the position to influence policies or programmes, this chapter can also offer hints or inspiration for what programmes could be developed to reinforce the role of youth work.

— Finally, at the end of the handbook, you will find some empty pages for you to add a list of local partners you could network with, as well as some further thoughts and project ideas.

## How to manage intercultural learning

Young refugees arriving in Europe have to face various challenges related to safety and security, uncertainty about the future, fear and loss, precariousness, and cultural differences. Leaving one's own culture to reach a completely new place can be very disorientating. Many young people have to learn the language, understand cultural habits and practices, get used to various traditions and differences in beliefs. Often, intercultural learning is already happening in the integration process of young refugees, as they observe, learn, exchange and question. However, it is not automatic and thus intercultural learning is extremely essential when working with young people with a refugee background.

Intercultural learning in youth work is not about youth workers “teaching” young refugees about the local culture. It is about creating an open, secure framework for learning from each other, and about each other, for accepting differences and looking at them. It is about recognising otherness and similarity, and about removing cultural hierarchies. In the particular context of youth work with young refugees, intercultural learning is a way to continue connecting people to the value-based representation of Europe and to the construction of human rights-based, democratic societies. (T-Kit Intercultural learning<sup>6</sup>)

When preparations are being made for living together, cultural differences can be noticed in small, daily situations and can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts if not considered properly. Unfortunately, many of these situations lead to generalisations and categorisations of certain people as being “rude” or “dirty” or “different”. Since 2015, a marked rise in racism and xenophobia could be observed throughout Europe, often linked with generalisations as mentioned above. At the same time, in many European countries, an important solidarity movement arose, as the famous “refugees welcome” movements at train stations showed. Many European citizens warmly welcomed refugees, hosted them and showed interest in learning with/from them. Many people got involved as volunteers in local organisations to provide support. Intercultural learning played an important role in facilitating such encounters and enabling understanding between people.

Intercultural learning cannot be a one-sided process. It is not only about refugees learning to fit in; it is about the “inter-relation”, the creation of new spaces for living together. This, however, can be challenging for youth workers when running their typical youth work activities with young people from different cultures.



The Tree - Collective Creation - “Seeds of Unity”, September 2017

6. Access the T-kit here <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-4-intercultural-learning>

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## Questions related to this chapter



- Are youth workers ready to tackle cultural differences, and if so, how?
- How can youth workers address racism and discrimination against refugees?
- How can youth work contribute to accompanying young refugees towards a better understanding of their new living space?
- How can youth work create a constructive space for living together in diversity?
- What are the risks and limitations of intercultural learning with young refugees?

## Challenges related to intercultural learning in youth work

- ▶ Intercultural learning programmes addressing young refugees often assume that you can “teach” about “our culture” versus “their culture”. This very limiting approach to culture and intercultural learning implies a form of cultural homogeneity, as if one could understand how “the Syrians”, “the Guineans”, etc. work. In the same way, one risk can be to try to “explain” French, German, Greek culture to newly arrived refugees, as if “the culture” existed. So, one of the challenges is to find a balance between providing newly arrived refugees with useful guidelines on how societies function, to be attentive to differences and similarities, and, at the same time, to show some openness in relation to the culture(s) of the other, by leaving space for being surprised by and learning about the person rather than putting him/her into a category.
- ▶ Language barriers. Although young refugees often learn the local language quickly, real dialogue is sometimes difficult, and communication is limited to essential information. Depending on whether young refugees are in transit or have reached their final destination, they will invest more or less in learning a language. Intercultural learning and dialogue require time. Time to actually land, time to understand and orientate, time to mourn, time to find motivation and strength, time to open up and overcome stereotypes and prejudice.
- ▶ Cultural “blindness”. When growing up in a certain culture, we are not aware of our culture and of certain aspects of our society and how specific these can be. Habits, practices, expressions, behaviours then become taken for granted and implicit. These are the most difficult ones to transmit, as they are not explicitly spoken about, but are often still expected from a newcomer. Therefore, explicit information about basic codes and daily aspects of a community can be essential.
- ▶ Ideally, youth work should bring the opportunity for young refugees to meet with local young people. In practice, this can sometimes be difficult, as a certain level of hostility and prejudice can prevent real getting together. Youth workers need to plan these opportunities for getting together and create a safe space for young people, free of prejudice and hostility.
- ▶ The notions of rules, hierarchies, gender roles or generational roles can vary greatly from one culture to another. It can happen that young refugees struggle with accepting certain rules, and even more so when coming from a certain person. This makes youth work difficult when dealing with a group of people with various types of awareness.
- ▶ Young refugees, and even more so unaccompanied minors, are often torn between remaining loyal to their culture of origin and adapting quickly to the local culture. The role of youth work in that case consists in offering a space where both do not get into conflict, but can live together peacefully and offer a broader frame of action and opportunities. It can happen, in some cases, that young refugees fear being unfaithful to their culture, and therefore become even stricter and more closed towards the host culture.
- ▶ Finally, youth workers are also people with their own stereotypes, prejudices and possible fears about integrating others and adapting their own culture

to the new situation where several young people from different cultural backgrounds are involved. The willingness to open known spaces varies greatly depending on personal experience and personality.



### What can youth work do?

First of all, intercultural learning does not exclusively happen in a classroom or as a particular taught module. For young refugees, depending on where they came from, under which conditions etc., there are many new things to understand. Intercultural learning then becomes a transversal element of getting to know each other and settling into a new environment.

Youth work can be a place for young people to “tame” their new living place, to get to know local young people and to live local life naturally. Therefore, it is important that youth work can allow young people with a refugee background to meet local young people, rather than staying all the time with fellow refugees. Any activities related to doing something together (sports, arts, culture, learning) contribute to creating a common place for learning.

Youth workers can have an important role in making implicit rules explicit. Intercultural learning requires a consciousness about the fact that what seems obvious to us is not necessarily obvious to others. This can start from how our public transport functions, to the use of toilets or to cultural “norms”. They are not explicitly written anywhere, because “one knows”. Providing some time for young refugees to ask questions, and providing a space in which those questions can be asked, is an important contribution of youth work. In this sense, youth work can create spaces for young refugees to meet and learn with peers.

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The *Stadtjugendring* Stuttgart, in Germany, is the umbrella organisation of all youth organisations in the city of Stuttgart. In 2015, they developed the project “get together”, which consisted in bringing together young Germans with newly arrived young refugees in a form of mentorship to help the latter get acquainted with local life, with youth engagement, with access to leisure, but also with all kinds of topics concerning “being a young person in Stuttgart”. The young people were trained and mentored by the organisation. You can read more about the project on [get2gether-stuttgart.de](http://get2gether-stuttgart.de)

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Intercultural learning in youth work is about two-sided learning. It is important to move away from a charity approach in which local youth “helps” young refugees, rather seeing intercultural meetings as an opportunity to learn from each other, exchange and develop new competences and broader realities. In this respect, youth work can provide a place for sharing about culture by involving young refugees in the planning of activities. What does youth work look like in their country? What are they good at? Which sports did they play and could show to local youth? What common activities can young people find? Youth work can be a platform for mutual learning, where young refugees can feel valued and recognised for what they are, beyond being “refugees”.

■ Cultural habits and traditions can differ greatly from one region to another, and often also within one community. Not all refugees are Muslim, not all Muslims practise in the same way. Youth work could establish a culture of dialogue with a non-judgmental attitude. Important moments such as death, weddings and births are often strongly culturally impregnated. It is important for youth workers to be aware of this and to have an open ear for particular needs of young refugees when these themes come up.

■ Youth work can go beyond cultural barriers by offering spaces without or with little language. Sports, theatre, dance, are just some examples of how intercultural learning can take place between young people who do not speak the same language. Youth work can create bridges and interest to learn further about/from each other.

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The dance company *CorresponDANSE* (Strasbourg, France) and the *Kunstschule* Offenburg (Germany) developed an intercultural dance project in 2016/17. German and French young people, together with unaccompanied minors living in both countries, developed a common dance choreography by meeting on the bridge between Germany and France every month (unaccompanied minors not being allowed to cross borders). In this way, they could get to know each other and create a joint performance, while considering administrative realities. The project ended with a joint show on the bridge in summer 2017.

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■ Youth work can be a space for learning about intercultural attitudes (such as empathy, openness and tolerance of ambiguity as well as non-hierarchisation of cultures) within a human rights framework. Youth work can play an important role in combating racism and discrimination, both by working with young refugees themselves, and by raising the awareness of non-refugee youth about these issues.



### Ideas for daily youth work practice

- Explain the “obvious”. Even if things seem obvious to you, it does not mean they are for everyone. If they are, the young person will let you know. But if they were not, you provide a safe place for learning without having to ask which, for some young people, could be embarrassing.
- Ask about other cultures. As a youth worker, you are not expected to know about the culture of all young people (“knowing” about a culture is difficult anyway). By showing a curious, open attitude through questions such as “how do you do it back home? In your family? In your country?”, you give a space to their experience and you value differences. This allows for dialogue, and maybe also enables you to better understand certain behaviours.
- Avoid imposing behaviours through the argument “This is how we do it here, in ... (country)”. This could lead to defensiveness and give the wrong message that there is only one way of doing something, which delegitimises young people who act differently.
- When proposing activities, try to take into account cultural aspects: proposing an afternoon at the swimming-pool during Ramadan will exclude certain young people from participating. Again, if you do not know, ask the young people

and involve them in planning activities. It could also be a good idea to invite young refugees to propose activities themselves, so that they can help local young people discover some of their games and leisure activities.

- Avoid explaining everything with culture: violence is not cultural, and neither are other difficult behaviours. Try to see the young person as an individual rather than a cultural representative. Of course, certain habits can be explained by culture, but avoid falling into the trap of confusing negative behaviours with cultural aspects.
  - Treat each young person as an individual young person, independently of where they come from. Young people are sensitive to inequality and unequal treatment. It is not easy to provide a balance between recognising individual needs and providing equality.
  - Be ready to sometimes just be there and listen, without feeling the need to do something or intervene.
  - Create a framework in which values of respect towards each other, openness and mutual learning are “the rule”.
  - Finally, when working with non-refugee youth, provide spaces for learning about/with young refugees, for asking questions and for discussing certain stereotypes. Only then can these matters be considered and deconstructed.
- In order to tackle intercultural learning in youth work, it can be useful to identify specific situations you have faced in your practice, and to explore different ways of tackling these. Here are some examples.
- ◆ Some young refugees refuse to sleep in gender-mixed tents at a Scouting activity, although this has always been the way that Scout camps have been organised. What can you do?
  - ◆ Some young people regularly arrive late to the activities, but do not seem to realise that it causes a disturbance. How can you address this?
  - ◆ Young refugees in your youth centre tend to be less ready to co-operate with female youth workers. What can you do?
  - ◆ Your youth organisation is a faith-based youth centre. Can you integrate young people from another faith group, and how?
  - ◆ You do not involve young refugees in your activities, but the young people you work with have discriminatory attitudes towards refugees and also other groups. What could you do?

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Do you have any more examples like these? One idea could be to sit with your colleagues and/or with the young people and to explore common solutions.

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■ To sum up, youth work can provide the conditions for creating commonality in difference and creating a safe, respectful framework for human encounters. Youth workers can help young refugees in finding their place in the new society by providing a space where both the culture of origin and the new culture can co-exist.



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## On the Road: Along the Migrants' Routes - Autonomous Provinces of Trento and Bolzano and Youth Organisations

Italy (Trentino Alto Adige-Suedtirolo Region) and migrants' routes across Europe (Balkans, France, Lampedusa, Greece), April 2017 - ongoing

### Who?

The project "On the road" is a local project aimed at improving the knowledge and raising awareness on migration and refugees among young people aged 18-30. The project is led by the Province of Trento through its Agency of family, parenting and youth policy in collaboration with the Province of Bolzano. Its management has been delegated to some local youth organisations such as *Piattaforma delle Resistenze Contemporanee*, *Arci Bolzano*, *Punto Europa*, *T.A.U.T.*, *Sanbaradio*, *Universitario*, *Fondazione De Gasperi*, *Club Alpbach*, *Il Gioco degli Specchi*, *Kaleidoscopio* and *Deina Trentino*.

The project engages 50 young people from Italy, benefits young refugees involved in other local projects and the community in general.

### What?

"On the road" aims to improve young people's knowledge on migration and refugees. It lets young people "experiment" migration through visiting the European borders (Balkans, Greece, Northern France, Lampedusa) and it also connects existing projects and initiatives.

The project empowers young people by providing them with all the necessary theoretical and concrete instruments to work in important local projects that focus on young refugees (such as participatory arts, urban gardens). The project started in April 2017 with workshops on migration, refugees, nationalism, European and Italian policies and group building activities. Participants were then divided into groups corresponding to the three migrants' routes: the Balkans, the Greek and the French. In June 2017, participants left for their route from the Brenner Pass, a symbolic starting point, which forms the border between Italy and Austria. They travelled across Europe, crossing borders with the privilege of an Italian passport, trying to see and understand the phenomenon of migration. They met refugees in the camps and documented their journeys. The participants' work is to be shared with the community through public events with the purpose of sharing experiences and connecting other initiatives with this project. One of the connections will be with a project managed by *Kaleidoscopio*, a social co-operative, which has opened a refugee centre, mainly for young refugees.

### Achievements and adaptability

This type of initiative is a starting point to raise awareness on migration and inclusion among young people and to involve them in local projects. The main purpose is to generate collaboration and relationships between local young people and young refugees, so that we could finally and simply refer to "young people".

More information is available at

[www.piattaformaresistenze.it/it/on-the-road-sulle-rotte-dei-migranti.html](http://www.piattaformaresistenze.it/it/on-the-road-sulle-rotte-dei-migranti.html)

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## Seeds for Integration – Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU)

10 European countries (local initiatives), July 2016 - December 2017 (new edition 2018 -2019)

### Who?

Seeds for Integration is a project of OBESSU funded by Open Society Foundations. OBESSU provides seed-funding to secondary school students so that they can implement their own initiatives on the inclusion of migrants and refugees in the secondary education environment. Students with and without a migration background and their communities are the main beneficiaries of the initiatives.

### What?

The overall aim is to provide small-, medium- and large-scale seed-funding to secondary school student unions operating at local, regional or national level or, if there is no student council in the school, to independent groups representing the school students, in order to empower them to implement initiatives aimed at enhancing the integration of refugee students and pupils with a migration background. The project is designed around the core idea that school students – regardless of where they are from – have the will and capacity to come up with targeted initiatives to tackle issues regarding the integration of migrant pupils in the field of education. During the Seeds for Integration project implementation there were three application periods when secondary school students could submit their initiative proposals.

### Achievements and adaptability



Currently there are more than 30 ongoing student-led initiatives in more than 10 countries with different impact levels and outcomes. To support the development of new initiatives around Europe, OBESSU and 15 project leaders are working together to draft guidelines on how to successfully design and implement projects tackling the topic of the inclusion of migrants and refugees into the secondary school environment at grass-roots, regional and

national levels; and on what kinds of activities can have a sustainable impact at national, regional and local levels. The aim of these guidelines is to support secondary student unions or groups of students and youth organisations throughout Europe in having a good overview on the possible activities to organise and the potential steps to take to implement solid projects on migrant and refugee inclusion.

More information is available at [www.obessu.org](http://www.obessu.org); [www.seedsforintegration.org](http://www.seedsforintegration.org)

## How to support young refugees in accessing their social rights

Human rights are universal. All human beings have human rights, independently of their citizenship, country of birth or residence. Human rights are unalienable. You cannot take them away from anyone. And human rights are indivisible: everyone has all human rights, it is a package from which you cannot pick and choose.

Young refugees, and particularly unaccompanied minors, are often struggling when it comes to accessing their rights, and in particular, their social rights.

Social rights are human rights. As such, they are included in international human rights law (the European Social Charter or the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child), and also included in national level laws, procedures and services.

Social rights include, among others:

- ▶ the right to education
- ▶ the right to health
- ▶ the right to employment
- ▶ the right to non-discrimination
- ▶ the right to decent housing
- ▶ access to leisure
- ▶ access to information.



Fractal - Collective Art Piece –  
"The Art of the Other", July 2017

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## Questions related to this chapter



- Is it the role of youth work to ensure access to social rights for young refugees?
- Can young refugees afford to get involved in youth work when struggling to access their social rights?
- How can youth workers support young refugees in their access to social rights?
- Are youth workers themselves sufficiently trained in human rights education to address it with young refugees?

## Challenges related to access to social rights

■ The challenges in relation to access to social rights concern both youth workers and young refugees themselves.

- ▶ To start with, in the absence of immediate or sufficiently quick responses by states, youth organisations and NGOs in general have taken over responsibilities in supporting young refugees in their access to social rights, with the consequence of being overwhelmed, overburdened, and without sufficient recognition by state institutions.
- ▶ Access to adapted housing and foster care. Very often, housing conditions for young refugees are not adapted for their needs and are even dangerous. When young refugees come to Europe with their families, they can spend long months in shelters with many other people, having no privacy or specific child protection. If the young refugee comes alone, practices vary greatly from one country to another. In some cases, minors can be left alone in hotel rooms, which makes them extremely vulnerable. In other cases, they are in child- and youth-specific shelters or homes. Here again, conditions vary greatly in terms of access to privacy (often sharing a room with other young people, and with young people who do not speak the same language). Finally, some young people are lodged in shared accommodation apartments, with the aim of moving them towards autonomy.
- ▶ Access to education. Depending on the age of young refugees when they arrive in Europe, they do not necessarily get access to school. Some children have never been to school before, and would need intensive support in learning literacy and numeracy. Access to local language classes also varies greatly in accessibility and availability. Furthermore, when young refugees already have diplomas or have acquired a certain level of education in their home country, they often struggle to get recognition of these diplomas and to be allowed to use them at an equal level in the host country.
- ▶ Access to employment. Often, it is important for young refugees to earn some money, either for their own needs or for sending some money home. However, access to employment is often restricted or made difficult. When employment is available, young refugees often struggle for recognition of their previous diplomas and competences. Thus, they often land up in lower positions than their actual grades should entitle them to, which can lead to frustration, reduction of motivation and of willingness to commit.
- ▶ Access to leisure. Young refugees are not always offered the opportunity to enjoy leisure time. They are often busy with administrative matters, and are also frequently asked to translate for adults or parents. Access to leisure and to free youth work activities should be an essential priority for young refugees, and such access also serves as a way of meeting local young people and having a chance to learn from each other. In some cases, youth work and access to leisure (sports, arts, culture) is either too expensive or requires some official papers which most young refugees do not have.

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In 2015, when young refugees started arriving in the Greek islands, the Greek Scouts mobilised strongly to welcome young refugees. They also realised that many young people arriving in Greece had been Scouts in their countries of origin or were highly motivated to become Scouts and provide help themselves. Although the original Scouts' constitution states that members should be Greek and Christian, the Greek Scouts decided to open membership to young refugees. In this way, they offered a space for shared competences, common values and leisure.

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- ▶ Non-discrimination. Many young refugees face daily discrimination in their access to rights. They often have to face racism and hate speech, as well as structural discrimination whereby they are not provided equal opportunities with local youth.
- ▶ One general challenge in relation to all these rights, however, is the lack of information which young refugees have about their rights. Very often, there is either no communication at all, or communication in a language the child/young person does not understand.
- ▶ Hierarchisation of rights. Young people who do not have proper access to information often do not consider the indivisibility of rights. They tend to prioritise by focusing on access to employment for example, thus emphasising some rights as being more important than others.
- ▶ Public discourse about young refugees and their “privileges” can make youth work difficult. In many countries the local population also struggles with access to social rights. The arrival of refugees and the work of NGOs provide some citizens with a feeling of inequality and injustice. It then becomes a “competition between the poor”.
- ▶ Access to youth work is particularly difficult for young people who are stateless, in transition or without any legal status.
- ▶ Young refugees in transition to adulthood are a particularly vulnerable group when it comes to access to social rights, as, depending on their administrative and integration situation, they risk losing their child protection status and therefore face possible exclusion from European systems or, in the worst case, being sent back to their home countries.

### What can youth work do?



- As already mentioned above, youth work can play an important role in supporting young refugees in accessing their social rights.
- To start with, youth workers can/should inform young people about their rights. Youth workers should be able to explain, in a simple and transparent way, matters such as what an asylum procedure looks like, how the system works in relation to school and education, whether a young person can lay claim to family reunification and what the role of a guardian is.
- Often, this information is provided by official authorities with the help of an interpreter straight after the arrival of young people in Europe. However, it is a lot of

very abstract information, not easy to understand. A youth worker often plays the role of a trusted person for young refugees, someone with whom they can share thoughts, feelings and worries. Therefore, a youth worker is also the best-placed person to provide young people with information. Providing information once may not be enough. It is important to check again if the young person understood it and is aware of the consequences of information for his/her situation.

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The Children's Rights Division of the Council of Europe is carrying out several projects related to child-friendly information for children in migration and life projects, to mainstream good practices and communications methods or tools used to enhance access to rights and procedures for children on the move and otherwise affected by migration throughout Europe.

For more information: [www.coe.int/en/web/children/projects](http://www.coe.int/en/web/children/projects)

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■ Providing information could be done in creative ways, through drawings, by using pictograms or developing games. It can also be very useful to ask former young refugees about the information they received and/or did not receive and would have needed. This can be useful information to be shared in peer groups.

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In a workshop on access to information with unaccompanied minors in the framework of a Council of Europe conference, young unaccompanied minor refugees were asked to imagine that their brother/sister wants to come to Europe and that they were to write them a letter to give them important information and/or advice. Here is an example of the letters (translated from German/French):

M., Syria (13 years old)

*"Life here is hard and not hard. The rules are a bit complicated. There are many rules, and I don't understand them all. People are nice, children are well treated. When you arrive here, you need to go to the police or to give your finger prints, and then you need to wait for an ID. Then you go to school. Some teachers are trying. Here, parents are not allowed to hit their children. Teachers are not allowed to either. During the travel, you go through hard things. For one month, you eat badly, you cannot have a shower. You live through horrible things. But once you arrive, you have a good life. Children get pocket money!"*

S., Iraq (15 years old)

*"Dear friend,*

*What they tell you in Iraq is not true, for example that after 4-6 months you will be able to bring your family. Here, you have to go to school, but everyone has the same rights of freedom and equality. Food here is not good. Here you have to work. When you are alone, the first 6-8 months are very difficult, but then it starts to become better. But I don't think that you will cope with German life in a shelter, because you will see many things you have never seen in Iraq."*

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■ Furthermore, local authorities have a responsibility in providing access to rights for young people. It could be useful for youth workers to create links between

municipalities, local stakeholders and young people in order to provide spaces for direct dialogue and feedback. This is also a way to introduce young refugees to all existing opportunities for volunteering, for learning, for counselling, for education and for engagement. Young refugees very often lack a clear understanding of the functioning of structures and the possibilities that exist. Together with youth workers, they can learn to look for information and thus become more independent, informed citizens.

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In many European cities, language cafés have opened. This concept allows refugees to meet with local stakeholders and to discuss important issues in a cosy atmosphere. It aims to find grass-roots solutions and create valuable networks.

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■ Youth workers are often also considered to be highly competent in networking. They can be resourceful in helping young refugees to find internships or paid jobs, or in orienting them in their educational choices. This, however, requires a lot of extra work or time which youth workers often do not have.

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The association *Oberholz, Domie II*, in Strasbourg, works with unaccompanied minors. Besides youth workers and educators, the association has developed a “resource pool” which specifically focuses on access to employment, internships, housing and education for young people. This allows the social workers to focus on their more educational role and to make sure that young people know where to go for help or information on their rights.

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### Ideas for daily youth work practice

- Youth workers and local NGOs could make a local map of partners and structures to contact when it comes to accessing social rights. Depending on the situation of young people, they could then be sent to the specific structure or person competent in the particular field.
- Youth workers can organise workshops on social rights and to inform young people about their rights. Many non-formal education tools, such as the manual Compass, or Have your say!, can be used.
- Youth workers can play an important role in listening to young people’s stories and in supporting them to identify which rights are at stake, and which type of support they might require.
- Youth workers could organise local meetings between young people and local decision makers or the municipality to exchange information about their challenges and explore potential solutions.
- Youth workers could also be involved in larger advocacy actions or movements on access to social rights for all young people, and for young refugees specifically. By networking with existing structures, international NGOs or networks, youth workers can contribute to raising awareness about challenges and to proposing specific solutions.

■ In order to tackle access to social rights in youth work, it can be useful to identify specific situations which you have faced in your practice, and to explore different ways of tackling them. Here are some examples.

- ◆ One of the young refugees you work with wants to participate in a summer camp with other young people. In order to register, he/she has to provide a residence card or ID. The young refugee is still in an administrative procedure and does not have papers. What can you do?
- ◆ A young refugee who has been active in your youth work structure is turning 18 soon and has to leave the shelter in which he/she has lived so far. He/she is struggling to find a flat, as owners are very reluctant to rent out to young refugees with no stable situation. Any ideas on how you can support?
- ◆ In the local school which many young refugees from the camp attend, local parents are starting to remove their children from that school as they do not trust the young refugees and feel their presence harms the level of education. What can you do?

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Do you have any more examples like these? One idea could be to sit with your colleagues and/or with young people and explore common solutions.

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■ Access to social rights is a challenge for many young people, not only for young refugees. Young refugees, however, can be particularly vulnerable, partly due to their conditional right to remain in Europe, but also because of the amount of information they have to grasp and assimilate when and if the information is provided. One could argue that access to social rights is the task of social workers and, therefore, does not belong to youth work. At the same time, youth work has a fundamental role in providing young people with keys for integration and development. Beyond access to leisure, young people need minimum conditions for healthy development, and this includes access to all human rights. Youth work, in its basic approach of seeing a young person as a complex human being, and not just a “refugee in a youth club”, can provide useful and enriching support in networking with other structures, explaining things and making some social rights more accessible.



## Migrant Youth Helsinki – Helsinki City Youth Services

Finland (Helsinki), 2016-2020

### Who?

Migrant Youth Helsinki is a project promoted by the Helsinki City Youth Services in partnership with the We Foundation. Partnerships with civil society organisations, international organisations and the private sector have also been established to support the project.

### What?

The main objective is to promote better equal opportunities for migrant youth in the fields of work life, education and social landscape. It is targeted at young migrants in general and each group varies within the five major initiatives.

In Helsinki, 4% of native born young people, after their compulsory studies, fall outside work life or further education. The corresponding number with migrant youth is 25%.

The initiative has five pilot schemes.

1. Buddy School system. This is aimed at promoting learning results through peer teaching.
2. Youth Court. This deals with the criminal acts of children under 15 with a jury of their peers.



3. Microwork. This creates first job opportunities for migrant youth, using a Finnish mobile app, Tremer, as one of the tools.
4. Parental education. This is concerned with Finnish educational and professional life and education in cases where there are mental health issues or drug or alcohol abuse in the family.
5. New voices. This scheme trains young migrants as professional speakers to raise the voice of the migrant communities.

This local and national project tackles research, policy and youth work dimensions.

### Achievements and adaptability

Young refugees are not just the beneficiaries, they have also been engaged with an active role in the project, and thus it is co-managed and implemented by them as well. In the planning process, a human-centred design tool kit has been used and an expert group was created to evaluate the process. The group consisted both of young migrant females and males. In addition, in the pilot work, young women have started the company “Hennagirls” and the project has also hired young females as part-time workers to work with younger migrants and serve as role models.

All these pilots are designed to be measurable and expandable and to reach thousands of young people. The main target is to build the models so that they stay in the municipality or in the relevant NGO structures: when the actual project finishes, the work continues. The models can be expanded around Finland, but there is also a desire to make them transferable and adapted across Europe.

For more information see:

[www.nuoriso.hel.fi](http://www.nuoriso.hel.fi)

[www.maahanmuuttajanuortenhelsinki.munstadi.fi](http://www.maahanmuuttajanuortenhelsinki.munstadi.fi)

[www.mesaatio.fi](http://www.mesaatio.fi)

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## Tandem – a citizens' initiative

Belgium (mainly Brussels), 2016 - ongoing

### Who?

Launched on the World Refugee Day 2016, Tandem is a community association, co-led by refugees and by individuals with a background in EU-level civil society. This ethic of co-operation is central to how Tandem functions and lies at the heart of its objectives. Since Tandem was established, the initiative has received advice and support from the European Volunteering Centre (CEV), *Het Punt* and *La Plateforme Francophone du volontariat*. Tandem works closely with Belgian volunteering agencies.



### What?

Tandem is designed to support the integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Brussels by creating opportunities for them to bring their skills and experience to European-level NGOs via short-term volunteer placements. Although it engages many young people, it is not specifically addressed to this target group.

Tandem has two sets of objectives. For refugees/asylum seekers, it aims to offer opportunities to support their autonomy and build social/professional networks; alleviate financial uncertainty; and support change-makers through exposure to the skills/expertise of civil society organisations (CSOs). For CSOs, the objectives are to support their role in (local) integration work; bring new perspectives to their work; and to increase (temporarily) their capacity.

Tandem works by matching refugees/asylum seekers as volunteers with non-profit organisations in Belgium. Potential volunteers register, providing basic information on their skills and experience; meanwhile, organisations sign up and outline provisional tasks and dates for a proposed placement. Based on the information provided, the Tandem team identifies a suitable volunteer for each placement, and facilitates the preparations. While Tandem provides administrative and legal guidance, the volunteer and the host organisation are encouraged to work directly together to shape the placement in advance, and agree, for example, on the specific work and objectives. Each host organisation is required to offer an initial full-time placement for two weeks, and provide the volunteer with €25 a day as a volunteer allowance.

The vast majority of Tandem volunteers are male. This gender imbalance was apparent to the Tandem team following the very first wave of registrations in July 2016, and efforts are being made to reach out to young refugee women as a particular priority (in the first instance, by reaching out to refugee women's organisations); and similarly, to prioritise matching placements to women who have already registered.

Tandem continues to work to secure placements with host organisations, and is exploring pilot co-operation projects with other organisations to look at overcoming some of the problems facing asylum seekers in accessing volunteering opportunities.

### Achievements and adaptability

Up to June 2017, Tandem has secured 40 individual placements, as well as facilitated the participation of Tandem volunteers in asylum-/migration-related activities and conferences, for example proposing four participants for the Greens/European Free Alliance Group activities at the European Parliament on World Refugee Day 2017. At least two of the placements have resulted in the volunteer obtaining a short-term paid work contract at the host organisation; meanwhile, several organisations have maintained a longer-term volunteering engagement with the Tandem volunteer beyond the minimum 10-day placement.

Tandem is designed to be a practical solution to support integration efforts and is built upon co-operation between refugees/asylum seekers and people without refugee backgrounds. It is a low-cost solution and, due to the legislation governing volunteering in Belgium, it requires very little administration. In addition, it has been greatly supported by the Belgian volunteering agencies. The basic Tandem concept can be easily adapted and implemented in other countries, at the local and national level. Language issues could be a factor, however. Tandem began to work primarily by targeting EU-level CSOs to be host organisations, partly as these organisations work in English. Where newcomers spoke a foreign language, English was more common than French or Flemish. However, Tandem is now expanding to target Belgian-level organisations, as volunteers improve their language skills.

For more information see

[www.tandemvolunteering.org](http://www.tandemvolunteering.org)

[www.facebook.com/Tandemvolunteering](https://www.facebook.com/Tandemvolunteering)

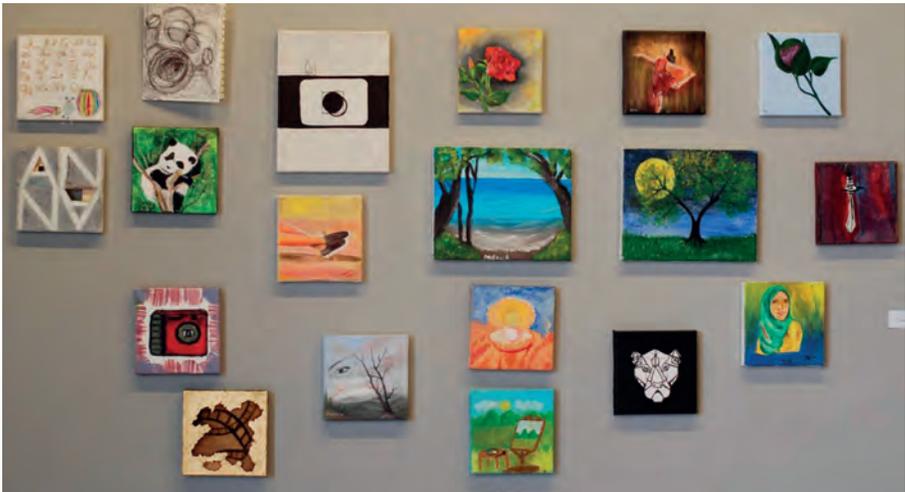
## How to involve young women refugees

Young women must be considered as a specific target group because of their vulnerability during exile and upon arrival in European societies. Obviously, the situation of young girls and women arriving in Europe shows great variety. Some come alone, others with their partners and children. Others again are single mothers with children. And, in some cases, young unaccompanied minor refugee girls also arrive on European soil.

Many of them had to face extreme violence, sometimes in their home country, most of the time on the exile route and often in the camps upon arrival in Europe.

Depending on their situation and level of protection, young girls and women often have limited access to their social rights. In certain cases, and especially when they come with family or community members, girls are not allowed to participate in youth work activities and hence are kept back from proper social inclusion.

On another level, young women often face more difficulties than men in accessing the labour market. This also depends on their previous level of education and their access to information about rights.



Harmonizing 2 – Collective painting - Seeds of Unity, September 2017

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## Questions related to this chapter



- How can youth work reach out to young refugee girls or women?
- How can youth work contribute to creating safe spaces for young female refugees?
- What are the limitations of youth work in including young female refugees?

## Challenges in relation to youth work with young girls/women

- ▶ Youth work with young refugees often focuses on working with young boys or men, simply because young women are often less accessible or reachable and, in some cases, because the offer does not fit their needs.
- ▶ In general, there is very little data available about young refugee women and girls, which makes it difficult to understand their situation and potentially to put forward some adapted activities that would correspond with their needs.
- ▶ There is a general lack of strategic thinking in regard to the role of men when tackling challenges which young women face. A systemic approach would be needed to involve young women by involving/having dialogue with men.
- ▶ In some cases, there is a lack of empowerment of young women due to traditional gender roles. Some of the young refugee women and girls grew up in a culture where women's activities were exclusively in the household, and therefore youth work or intercultural interaction has never even occurred to them.

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One of the young women we work with said: "Everybody asks me about the things I want, but I'm used to being told what to do, not to want." (Quote by a youth worker who participated in the seminar on youth work with young refugees in Strasbourg, France.)

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- ▶ Many young girls or women with refugee backgrounds do not have any or very little information on sexual and reproductive health. This brings them into direct danger of abuse, sexual vulnerability, diseases and unwanted pregnancies.
- ▶ Young female refugees often lack financial autonomy, either because they have never worked or have difficulties accessing employment, or because in traditional family models they were not expected to earn money. This can limit their possibilities to participate in youth work activities.
- ▶ Young female refugees have often faced extremely hard journeys to reach "safety" in Europe. They therefore often lack confidence in themselves and even more so in others.
- ▶ Young female refugees are often not informed about their rights.
- ▶ Only very few organisations focus on working with young refugee women.
- ▶ In many cases, young female refugees have different cultural codes, particularly in relation to gender roles and mixed societies, which can keep them from participating in social activities where men are also present.
- ▶ All the points mentioned above contribute to higher vulnerability and the risk of becoming victims of human trafficking.
- ▶ Finally, when coming with partners, some young refugees face problems of domestic violence and dependency on the male partner.



### What can youth work do?

■ One youth worker in the seminar on youth work with young refugees in Thessaloniki, Greece said: "To work with those women you need a network and good relationships. The women need to feel safe and trust someone who understands them".

■ Youth work can provide a safe place for young women and girls to find out about themselves, their needs and wishes, as well as about the society they now live in. This can only happen if youth workers dedicate time to the young girls and women to get to know them, their fears, their backgrounds and their wishes.

■ Youth work can be a place to bring together refugee women with local women, through common activities and shared meetings. Very often, the female to female relationship supports young women refugees in gaining trust and confidence and developing a supportive network.

■ It can be useful for youth workers to be trained on gender roles and gender identity, and to have some sensitivity for cultural norms and codes related to gender (without falling into the trap of generalising).

■ Youth work can be an inclusive place for young mothers and their children, in order to allow them to share social moments without having to leave their children behind.

■ Youth workers can act by creating a network of partner organisations to support young girls and women in their various tasks/needs.

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The Home project in Athens runs shelters for young unaccompanied female minors, which are also called “safe places”. 10-12 young girls from various countries live there. They are supported in their daily life by youth workers, social workers and psychologists. Some of them are young mothers and get additional support for their children, so that there is also space for them to develop. The safe place allows the girls to feel comfortable (for example not to wear their headscarves). Whenever male staff members enter, girls are told in advance so that they can accommodate accordingly.

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## Ideas for daily youth work practice



■ Collect experiences of youth workers about working with refugee young women and girls. What were the main challenges? What was different? What worked well?

■ Organise workshops for young refugee girls and women on sexual and reproductive health rights, health and well-being, role models, access to rights, autonomy, etc.

■ Do not automatically assume that young women will have a problem with working with young men. It is far from always being the case.

■ Create a network of contact persons, possibly female professionals, to whom you can send the young girls when particular advice is needed.

■ In order to tackle youth work with young girls and women, it can be useful to identify specific situations you have faced in your practice, and to explore different ways of tackling these. Here are some examples.

◆ Some young girls are not allowed to join activities in the evening or when it gets dark, after school. How can you take this into account?

- ◆ In certain cases, young girls and women will not come to a youth club if there are men present. This can even include male youth workers. How can you still work with them by knowing this?

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Do you have any more examples like these? One idea could be to sit with your colleagues and/or with the young people and explore common solutions.

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Working with young girls and women can, but does not have to be different from working with young people in general. However, being aware of potential trauma and cultural habits as well as individual situations can help youth workers to provide a safe and appropriate space for young women to express themselves, exchange ideas with each other and learn.

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## Support to Young Refugees Project – Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG)

Turkey (Ankara- Hatay- Diyarbakır- İzmir), December 2015 - ongoing

### Who?

The project is an initiative of TOG, in partnership with UNFPA Turkey and Youth Approaches to Health Association (YAHA). Although the initiative was initially promoted by non-refugee groups/organisations, currently the project is co-managed with young refugees in all project phases.

### What?

The aim of the project is to empower refugee young people and support the skills of young people from both Turkey and Syria for social cohesion and living together.

The project has been implemented in 3 cities and at the beginning of September 2017 a new centre joined the project. The project reaches out to young people aged 15 to 30 (in total approximately 350 young people). Courses, workshops, meetings, non-formal education activities, peer education activities and social responsibility projects have been implemented by young people in order to empower Syrian young people. There are also youth friendly health units in every centre where a health worker and psychologist provide (individual) consultation about gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health to young women. They hold individual sessions with young women, awareness-raising sessions with groups, workshops, seminars and meetings. The aim is to empower young women about their rights and give them access to further health care systems.

Spaces are created to share cultural, ethnic and gender dimensions, such as women's group meetings on gender awareness, social meetings (cultural evenings, films, sports tournaments, and theatre performances performed in both Turkish and Arabic and picnics where cultural games can be played). All the initiatives are created with great care to support refugee women and in all of them young women from Turkey are also engaged. When a space is created where all actors are involved equally and freely, they have the opportunity for integration.

## Achievements and adaptability

Achievements are related to awareness-raising and social cohesion. There are stories of young women who feel freer to express themselves and they see themselves as more powerful. In addition, the youth centres become spaces where young people from Turkey and young people from Syria come together thereby helping to build peaceful spaces for everyone.

The youth centre model for social cohesion can be adapted and transferred. Although, for budgetary concerns, opening youth centres may not be easily adapted, the principles and structure of the centres can be. It is important that young people have spaces to express themselves, to decide on activities that are implemented and to have a youth worker to consult. The provision of materials in the language of beneficiaries and outreach activities is essential to reach young women who might not feel confident to go to a youth centre. Often it contributes to the gaining of confidence and to the start of visiting a youth centre on a regular basis.

For more information see

[www.tog.org.tr](http://www.tog.org.tr)

[www.facebook.com/gmdprojesi/](https://www.facebook.com/gmdprojesi/)

## How to support the participation of young refugees

— Youth participation is about “having the right, the means, the space and the opportunity and where necessary the support to participate in and influence decisions and engaging in actions and activities so as to contribute to building a better society” (Council of Europe 2016a).

— Youth participation can take place in many ways. On the one hand, it is about ensuring that young people have access to youth work activities and can participate in what is proposed to them. Often, youth participation projects for young refugees exclusively target young refugees, with the risk of tokenising them and provoking exactly the opposite of what youth participation and inclusion are supposed to be. Youth participation can and should also be about creating the opportunities for young refugees to develop self-led initiatives. In order to do this, they need to be informed about project management, funding opportunities, existing youth programmes, etc.



Freedom – Collective Art Piece –  
"The Art of the Other", July 2017. (Elham  
Vazifeh Shenaz, Sana Shuaibi, Zozan Hamo)



On the other hand, in a broader sense, youth participation is about ensuring that young refugees can be considered as citizens in the place they live in and can equally participate in society. It is about providing young people with the space to be involved in the local life of their neighbourhood, their community, their local authority. It is about acknowledging their contribution to the host society they live in. It is about providing them with opportunities to express opinions, to reflect on how to improve the situation and to get involved in improving it.

## Challenges in relation to youth participation

If we look at the keywords of the above definition of youth participation, we immediately reach the main challenges faced by young refugees in participating actively in society.

- ▶ The right. In many youth organisations, participation is only possible if the young person has official papers, an ID, a passport or a residence card. This automatically excludes young refugees, especially those in transition between countries or waiting to be told their residency status.
- ▶ The means. When youth work involves financial costs, young refugees are often excluded by the simple lack of financial resources to enable their participation in projects, or to pay for membership fees, trips or daily activities. Young refugees can also be limited when it comes to funding opportunities, human resources to support them, training opportunities or information.
- ▶ The space. Depending on where young refugees are living, they do not necessarily have easy access to spaces for either developing their own activities or participating in the existing ones. Refugee camps often lack opportunities or physical space for such activities. When young refugees are outside cities or towns, access to youth work activities is often limited.
- ▶ The opportunity. Young refugees do not always have access to information on what exists and what can be done. If they are not specifically targeted by youth workers or youth organisations, they may not hear about opportunities or existing programmes.
- ▶ The support. Young refugees do not always have the necessary tools, know-how or information needed to be fully able to participate. Youth workers can play an important role in supporting them in their ideas and wishes.
- ▶ Traumatized young people struggle to participate in anything, to integrate into a group or to share. Their behaviour can be misinterpreted as lack of motivation. However, due to life experiences, some young refugees are not ready to participate.
- ▶ In the context of integration, waiting to be told about residency status and administrative uncertainty, youth participation in youth work can be considered a luxury rather than something important or a priority. Young people can be

busy learning the language, settling or, in some cases, earning money, so that youth work is not considered as something important.

- ▶ Youth participation in youth work structures is often made more available to young refugees living in shelters or who are unaccompanied minors. Young people in camps, with family, are often not informed about possibilities of getting involved and, therefore, do not participate as much.
- ▶ There is often a misunderstanding about what youth work is, and is not. Some young refugees expect their youth worker to take care of their social rights, their papers or administrative issues. If this is not done, they do not feel supported and can stop participating.
- ▶ Language barriers can, once again, keep young refugees from getting involved in youth work or actively participating.
- ▶ Some examples in recent and less recent history show that youth work opportunities were sometimes used by state institutions to “brainwash” and/or manipulate young people. Participation was not real, but rather used as propaganda. In order to avoid creating mistrust among young people, clear communication needs to be made about the organisation leading a project, the aim of it and the role in it of young people.



### What can youth work do?

- Youth work can be a possibility for young people to find out about youth opportunities, to share their own wishes, needs and ideas.
- Young people can be supported in developing their own projects based on their competences and interests.
- Youth work can help young people become active again, after some have been in limbo concerning their residency status for a long time. Participation is a way to develop confidence and self-esteem and to feel useful in the society they live in.
- Young refugees' life experience can be valued greatly if they feel like sharing it. Their expertise on “life”, the things they have been through and survived, can help other young people to find some motivation and confidence. Young refugees can therefore act as role models and be inspirational speakers in schools, municipalities or international organisations. They can become advocates of change through their own life experiences. This, however, should only be proposed to young people who are in a safe, stable situation, and who are not vulnerable or traumatised anymore. And, even more importantly, to young people who wish to do so.
- Youth work can be a place to train young refugees in political participation and to introduce them to local structures.
- Youth work can be a way of giving young refugees responsibilities by involving them in activities or asking them to organise or run some activities themselves.
- Youth work can tailor activities depending on who comes. Instead of having a fixed programme, it can be interesting to ask young people to co-develop the programme.

■ Youth work can encourage peer-to-peer education: young people can meet together and exchange competences about things they are good at (tandem language learning, for example)

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The European network Voices of Young Refugees in Europe (VYRE) was created by young refugees in 2008. Today, 80% of the members are refugees or IDPs. Participation is one of the main priorities of VYRE. The organisation works with multipliers and provides study sessions for young people and youth workers using non-formal education methods. It encourages member organisations to include young people in the early stages of project management, so that they are involved from the beginning. In parallel, VYRE works directly with decision makers at local, national and European level to build their capacity to increase participation by young refugees.

[www.wearevyre.net](http://www.wearevyre.net)

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### Ideas for daily youth work practice

- Be flexible in your activities. When young people come, be ready to integrate them into the programme, even if it changes your initial ideas.
  - Ask young refugees to share their practices of youth participation, but also their needs and challenges. Think about how youth work could possibly tackle some of these challenges.
  - Try to support young refugees when they come up with concrete project or activity ideas.
  - Do not treat young refugees as a special group, but rather try to integrate them into youth work activities in general, and to create links with local youth by identifying common interests or competences.
  - Do not force participation. Some young people are not ready to participate. They will undoubtedly have good reasons for this. Do not exclude them, but provide a space for choice.
  - Be aware about different time and commitment concepts. For many young refugees, committing to a project or activity over months can be extremely difficult, as they have trouble with projecting the future, they are experiencing uncertainty and, in some cases, are awaiting relocation or are in transit. Try to be flexible and enable them to still be involved somehow.
- In order to tackle participation by young refugees, it can be useful to identify specific situations you have faced in your practice, and to explore different ways of tackling these. Here are some examples.
- ◆ You propose many activities throughout the holidays. For some reason, the young refugees do not subscribe to any of them. What can you do?
  - ◆ A group of young refugees comes to you with a concrete project idea. They do not have any experience in project management or funding opportunities. What can you do?

- ◆ Most young refugees are not allowed to vote but they are interested in local and national policies and politics. How can youth work still support their participation despite administrative/legal constraints?
- ◆ You would like to be able to take the time and consult young refugees about the activities of your youth centre and perhaps develop some new ones with them, but you cannot find the time, and your co-workers are also under pressure to deal with emergencies. What could you do?
- ◆ Some of the young people you work with have a business idea and they share it with you. Strictly speaking, you are a youth worker and responsible for leisure time activities in a youth centre, but it would be a pity not to do something with their idea. What could you do?
- ◆ Some of the young refugees you work with shared some situations in which it is quite clear that there could be a violation of their rights. What could you do to support them in claiming their rights?

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Are there any other concrete situations you can think of that you have experienced in your youth work practice? Can you share ideas with colleagues and with young people?

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■ Participation by young refugees in youth work activities is about providing them with the opportunity to be fully included in the host society and to have the right to be young, to express opinions, to create projects, develop ideas, raise awareness and get involved in various actions or contexts. Although the administrative situation of young refugees can sometimes limit their active participation, youth work can provide a safe place for experimentation and for stimulating young refugees' potential and competences.

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## Wereldspelers/GloBall – Youth Work without Borders

Belgium, Flanders, April 2016-December 2017

### Who?

The GloBall Platform consists of 35 partner organisations, among which there are several national youth organisations and services, including the network for youth work with youngsters with fewer opportunities (*Uit de Marge*), the support structure for local youth work (VVJ), the support structure for youth work in Flanders (*Ambrassade*), the Flemish Youth Council, the Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (*Fedasil*) and the support structure for asylum seekers and refugees, (*Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen*).

### What?

The end goal of GloBall is that every shelter for children and youth on the move will work together with local youth work. The initiative targets 140 unaccompanied minors as participants in the activities.

Several initiatives are already in place: local youth movements are spontaneously visiting asylum centres in their neighbourhood and getting involved with the children and young people. GloBall wants to give these initiatives the attention they deserve, but not only that. The idea is to get organised as a sector, both structurally and long term. GloBall also calls attention to the need for training and for peer learning, which is why it has started several experimental initiatives, which all fall under the label 'Wereldspelers' - or GloBall in English.

Every two weeks, since April 2016, a group of youth work volunteers has spent a full weekend in the centre for unaccompanied minor refugees in Dendermonde. As from November 2016, they have also been organising weekends in the care shelter at Lint. Teams of volunteers lead activities here with young refugees for full weekends, and

afterwards all those involved share their experiences and information with other young people. In addition, in 2016, 300 young volunteers from all over Flanders participated in the GloBall project, and spent a weekend in Dendermonde or Lint and so far 140 unaccompanied minors have participated in the activities organised.

In 2017, the main goal of the project was to capture the feedback of these experiences and translate it into support material. This support material provides tips and ideas for youth workers who want to include young refugees in their organisation.



## Achievements and adaptability

A testimony from a social worker in one of the asylum centres where the activities took place highlights one of the main achievements: 'The most valuable aspect of the collaboration with youth work is the fact that young refugees meet potential new friends. They interact with people of their own age but with a different cultural background. The added value of the GloBall project in our centre is the meeting between these two groups. Without the project, the youngsters would spend a lot more time in their rooms in the weekends. Now they learn there are a lot of people that are interested in their lives, and they feel like they're welcome in our society.'

This initiative can be adapted and is transferable to other contexts as there is a 'train the coach' tool, which can be translated to other countries and levels.

For more information see

[www.ambrassade.be](http://www.ambrassade.be)

[www.wereldspelers.be/dream](http://www.wereldspelers.be/dream)



## Speak Out! – National Youth Council of Switzerland

Switzerland, 2010 – ongoing

### Who?

Speak Out! is an initiative of the National Youth Council of Switzerland, in partnership with the cantonal centres for asylum seekers and *Anlaufstelle für Sans-Papiers* (Basel)

### What?

The goal is to give children on the move in Switzerland the possibility to make their voices heard and to improve their participation. Speak Out! targets unaccompanied migrant minors (UMM) seeking asylum and undocumented minors.

This project encompasses a policy-making and a youth work dimension. The participants share the positive and negative aspects of their lives in Switzerland, provide their ideas and messages and define priorities with the determined issues. The rights-based approach is crucial for the project; that means that the UMM seeking asylum are not only included to decide about the project contents and the external guests to be met, but are also informed about their individual rights, responsibilities and their role in the Swiss society. They learn about children's rights, Swiss institutions and the functioning of Swiss politics, so that they can place their demands in the context of Swiss and international institutions. They also have an active role in managing the project (for example through the peer-to-peer approach).

Activities vary greatly from local to national activities, group building, public space initiatives with regional authorities, summer camps and workshops in collaboration with partners. National conferences or encounters with federal authorities are also organised. Young women are also part of the project, even if they are less represented among the participants. To discuss topics specific to women and to men, two separate workshops are organised each year.



## Achievements and adaptability

Through the project Speak Out!, it is ensured that UMM seeking asylum and undocumented are in a better position to deal with the problems and risks they might encounter during their stay in Switzerland. Moreover, they themselves can raise the awareness of the responsible policy makers and young people living in Switzerland; they can also suggest adequate solutions. The *MNA Charta* written by the UMM during the project has already been considered by the Conference of the Cantonal Director for social affairs in Switzerland for its recommendations concerning access to school, accommodation, health, support and transition to adulthood ([www.sajv.ch/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/MNA-Charta-A4\\_D.pdf](http://www.sajv.ch/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/MNA-Charta-A4_D.pdf)). In addition, films have been produced to give voice to participants' aspirations and have been shown ([www.sajv.ch/projekte/speak-out/kurzfilme-unsere-wuensche/](http://www.sajv.ch/projekte/speak-out/kurzfilme-unsere-wuensche/)). The work is going further in 2018 with more workshops on UMM and their challenges and with advocacy activities to raise their claims.

The participative methodology of the Speak Out! project can also be transferred to give a voice to other young migrants in other countries, as well as at a local and regional level.

For more information see

[www.sajv.ch](http://www.sajv.ch)

[www.sajv.ch/speak-out-mna/?lang=en](http://www.sajv.ch/speak-out-mna/?lang=en)

## How to tackle mental health and trauma

Some young refugees arriving in Europe have faced extremely difficult situations during their exile and can show signs of traumatisation.



Harmonizing 1 Collective Art Piece,  
"Seeds of Unity", September 2017

The American Psychological Association defines trauma as "an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape or natural disaster. Immediately after the event, shock and denial are typical. Longer-term reactions include unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships and even physical symptoms like headaches or nausea."

It can also be defined as a high level of stress that temporarily prevents a person from coping.

However, 75% of human beings manage to self-integrate and overcome traumatic events within 2 months after the event. Thus, young refugees should not be considered as victims or "ill people", but rather as survivors with infinite resources.

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## Questions related to this chapter



- How can youth workers recognise trauma or mental health issues?
- What can youth workers do without being therapists?
- What are the limits of youth work when working with traumatised young refugees?

## Challenges in relation to trauma and young refugees

- ▶ There are many reasons for young refugees to be traumatised. Some of them include:
  - loss of family, friends, home;
  - war and effects of war;
  - exile, violence, rape, dramatic experiences on their path to Europe;
  - disorientation, loss of comfort zone (language, habits, religion, rules etc.).
- ▶ Unfortunately, trauma does not necessarily stop when young refugees reach a European country. Beyond experiences of exclusion, racism, poverty and marginalisation, young refugees often face institutional violence.
- ▶ The very long wait for administrative regularisation. Many young people, and specifically young refugees seeking asylum, sometimes have to wait for long periods (up to 24 months) to get a first positive or negative response to their request to remain in the country. This creates high levels of stress, anxiety and fears for the future.
- ▶ Being often moved from one shelter to another keeps young people from fully settling, investing in sustainable relationships and developing a feeling of safety.
- ▶ Family reunification is often made difficult or impossible. Many young people arrived in Europe with the aim or hope of seeing their remaining family members join them. When this hope fades away for various reasons, young people suffer loneliness, guilt feelings and demotivation to pursue their inclusion process in Europe. Some even express the wish to go back to their home country despite war.
- ▶ The age of young refugees is sometimes assessed in dubious and traumatising ways.
- ▶ Depending on the host country's policy, not all refugees have access to school and education.
- ▶ The fear of death. Young refugees often fear dying in a country far from home without any of their family members knowing about it and without the possibility of their bodies being sent back home. Leaving no trace behind can create a lot of anxiety and fear. All these aspects contribute to re-traumatisation in the host country and prevent young refugees from settling and integrating.
- ▶ So far as youth workers are concerned, the following challenges can be identified.
  - Youth workers are not trained in trauma and mental health issues, and often feel overwhelmed by such situations, without knowing the first actions or steps to take to stabilise the person or how to contact the relevant resources.
  - The high level of emotional stress youth workers have to face and the complexity of the task to assist this particular target group with specific needs can lead to exhaustion and even burnout of youth workers.



## What can youth work do?

■ The role of youth workers could/should be to help young refugees connect with their resources, recognise them, transform them and feel more confident to use them in their new societies.

■ The youth workers' role is not to focus on the trauma, but rather on the strong resilience of young refugees.

■ These young people are often very tired of having to tell their story, and the traumatic aspects of it, over and over again to various institutions and offices. Youth workers should therefore avoid looking for the traumatic stories, but rather focus on "everything else that makes the person be a young person". As Steve de Shazer, the co-creator of solution-focused therapy, used to say, "if you're fascinated by details, read thrillers". He also said "problem talk creates problems; solution talk creates solutions".

■ This does not mean that youth workers should ignore trauma. Traumatized young people often show symptoms of sudden fear and flashbacks, sudden anger, difficulties in concentrating, lack of trust and difficulties in investing in new relationships. In these cases, youth workers should of course be able to refer young refugees to professionals who can address the trauma.

■ Youth workers are not psychologists or therapists, they should therefore avoid adopting this role; firstly in order to ensure that any counselling received is professional and appropriate, and secondly to protect themselves from vicarious trauma by hearing terrible stories. If, for some reason, youth workers are confronted with the exile and trauma stories of young refugees, it is important that they are provided with a framework for debriefing with colleagues or other specialists.

■ Youth work can rather be a space for creating a new comfort zone, enabling young people to create spaces of trust, "normality" and opportunities to be young, engaged and busy with topics that concern youth. Young people need to feel that nothing particular is expected from them, that they do not need to perform or tell their story but, that in this "safe place", they can develop trust and confidence with other young people and youth workers.

■ Youth work can be a place where traumatized young refugees can understand that their reactions are "normal reactions in an abnormal situation". It can be worthwhile explaining what trauma is, namely that it is a natural physiological reaction to danger, that it is useful for human beings to have this reaction, and that there are ways to then go back to calming the body and continuing with a normal life.

■ Youth work can be a place to break taboos and also discuss painful or embarrassing topics, such as religious beliefs and practices, death and rituals around death, fears and wishes. This can help young refugees to express themselves about difficult topics and to exchange with local young people about similarities and differences.

■ Finally, if all the points mentioned above are taken into account, youth workers have a great opportunity to reframe general narratives about young refugees by sharing counter and alternative narratives through success stories of young refugees.

■ Youth workers should be trained in psychological first aid. Just as with traditional physiological first aid, it is essential to know the basic first actions in order to calm down an over-active person, to deal with trauma and acute stress, and also to calm oneself down in highly stressful situations.



## Ideas for daily youth work practice

Youth work is about helping young people to find out what they like, what they are good at, and what their strengths are. It is about acknowledging and recognising young refugees' resilience. This can be achieved by the following methods.

- Focusing on past successes. Young refugees had a life before becoming refugees, so ask them what they liked, what they used to do, what they were good at. You can also ask them how they managed to get through everything they went through. This question puts the focus on abilities and underlines the efforts made.
- Focus on what is going well (even the simplest things). What is better than the rest? What is successful? With any answer you get on these topics, focus more on these aspects (e.g. what about school is great?). Making young refugees speak about what works well reinforces positive networks in the brain and enables the young person to develop a more positive self-image. And don't worry; there are enough other professionals to focus on problems.
- Treating each young refugee as an individual: they are not all the same. They do not function in the same way just because they come from the same region or because they are refugees. They do not aspire to the same goals. They do not like the same things. They do not carry the same trauma. Give every young refugee the opportunity to be themselves. There is no one universal approach for everybody.
- Youth work with young refugees requires some cultural awareness and the ability to respect cultural beliefs and habits; this is also necessary in relation to health and mental health issues. In some countries, witch craft is a part of cultural practices, and some young refugees will share their stories in relation to spirits, ghosts or witch craft. Even if you as a youth worker do not believe in it, it is important to respect the cultural reality of the young person rather than trying to convince them of mental illness or calling it trauma or using other diagnostic terms.
- Youth workers can provide a space for peer-to-peer learning by bringing together young refugees and young locals.
- Do not be afraid of emotions and for allowing space for them. It is OK for a young person to feel sadness, anger and fear. Let them know that they can express these emotions freely, and that you are ready to listen if they so wish.
- Death is an important topic for young refugees. Many of them strongly fear the loss of a family member back home, or their own death in a foreign country far from home. It can be useful to address the topic of death, the different ways cultures deal with it and the practices and beliefs around it.

- Create a cosy physical space for young refugees to just “be”. It can be a corner with pillows, or a table with hot drinks, or whatever you can think of. A place where they can come and hang out without any obligation of doing something.
- Identify local specialists/networks who could provide support if needed. You do not have to act as a therapist yourself.

■ In order to tackle the trauma and mental health of young refugees, it can be useful to identify specific situations you have faced in your practice, and to explore different ways of tackling them. Here are some examples.

- ◆ As you are running a group activity, one young refugee bursts out with anger and becomes very agitated. You do not know what provoked this reaction. What can you do?
- ◆ One young refugee often comes to your youth club, but you notice that he/she is isolated, does not communicate with others and even looks absent sometimes. What can you do?
- ◆ One young refugee finds out about a relative’s death back home. He/she cannot fly back to be at the funeral or say goodbye. What can you do?

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Can you think of any other situations related to trauma with young refugees? Share with your colleagues and discuss these themes with the young people themselves.

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■ Young refugees can be subject to trauma due to their life stories, as can other young people. The role of youth workers in this situation is to recognise symptoms of trauma and possibly arrange for a transfer to specialists. At the same time, youth work is a great place for helping young refugees to reconnect to their many internal resources so that they can overcome difficult situations. By focusing on successes, competences and nice memories, youth workers contribute to developing young refugees’ resilience.

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## Time to be welcome

Greece (Athens), France (Paris), December 2016 - ongoing

### Who?

“Time to be welcome” is a collaborative partnership between 10 youth organisations: *Bureau Européen du Scoutisme* ASBL (WOSM); *Soma Hellinon Proskopon* (Scouts of Greece); Scouting Ireland – IE; Scout Association of Macedonia; Youth for Exchange and Understanding (YEU) International; European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL); British Red Cross; *SkataMot efh* (Icelandic Scout Association); *Eclaireurs et Eclaireuses Unionistes de France*; and SINGA France. The project is co-funded by the ERASMUS+ programme of the European Union.

## What?

The project aims at encouraging young volunteers and youth organisations all over Europe to welcome young refugees and migrants and to support their integration process, through the use of non-formal education and youth work. The objectives are:

- ▶ to give young Europeans the opportunity to take action to welcome young migrants who are newly arrived in Europe;
- ▶ to provide young migrants with access to education and leisure, by developing their skills and competences through non-formal activities to promote education and well-being;
- ▶ to increase understanding and respect between communities, and overcome cultural and religious prejudice and disparities, in order to facilitate integration in European societies;
- ▶ to provide migrants, refugees and asylum seekers with the knowledge and support that will help them to feel integrated in their host country, enabling them to pass this knowledge on to other migrants arriving in Greece and France (specifically, Athens and Paris);
- ▶ to help asylum seekers and migrants on a daily basis with access to psychological and healthcare support;
- ▶ to raise awareness about the situation faced by asylum seekers, and encourage local communities to welcome newcomers from different backgrounds and cultures;
- ▶ to develop the capacity of youth organisations and support them to develop their youth work practices to ensure long-term integration of migrants;
- ▶ to empower volunteers to implement actions aimed at welcoming young refugees and newly arrived migrants into their host communities;
- ▶ to facilitate the interaction between refugees and local communities, thus setting a strong foundation for their future co-operation and mutual understanding.

Over 40 young volunteers working with refugees in Greece and France are trained in a two-day course on “introduction to psychological first aid”. This course enables them to learn concrete tools to identify trauma and to be able to react in a stressful situation in order to calm others and themselves down. The training course is provided by the Intercultural Institute for Systemic Competences (IICoS).

For further information see

[www.timetobewelcome.eu](http://www.timetobewelcome.eu)

[www.iicos.org](http://www.iicos.org)

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## Learn more

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# Drawings' titles and explanations

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## **FREEDOM – “The Art of the Other”, collective creation by 22 artists**

What is freedom for me? What makes me feel free? Is there one only freedom? 22 artists compared the images of freedom that each one holds within, deepening the relativity of the concepts and also their universal dimension.

## **COMPLEXITIES – “The Art of the Other”, collective creation by 22 artists**

Each person is a moving world on their own, constituted by their own experiences, visions, stories and interactions. Each one of us is constantly moved and transformed by others, while the others move and transform us continuously. This work was shaped by the artists throughout the workshops separately and together, as a symbol of the great diversity and complexity that transforms us daily.

## **FRACTAL – “The Art of the Other”, collective creation**

“When the tongue is unable to speak and the mind is unable to think, leave the talking, tell about my pain and my tragedy.” The central piece (red jacket) was worn by an artist on the boat crossing from Turkey to Greece. “This jacket had a terrifying imprint for me, I wanted to get rid of it. Today, thanks to this art piece, I love it again, it has a totally new meaning” (Elham Vazifeh Shenan). 22 artists brought a piece of cloth worn or used by them or their relatives in the past. They used this past to build together a new image; a new present and future.

## **HARMONIZING I and II – “Seeds of Unity”, collective creation**

Let imagination rise and shine! No rules other than being inspired by others apply: use fellow artists' line to guide and imagine my own. Dare to exceed limits using the existing patterns. Integrate our own differences among others to create together a brand new reality.

## **THE TREE – “Seeds of Unity”, collective creation**

Roots deep inside the ground, we never know how deep they go. A trunk is strong and solid, its branches expand in the air, branching, opening, crossing each other. The origin is common, the route is completely unpredictable. The tree as a symbol and shape becomes the spine of the drawing installation, the reference point for each artist. The lines and the forms of the tree were developed from each one as they wished. Realistic or minimal expression, painting, collage or photography, tree reference or not, each canvas carries the personal imprint of each artist, but only through the composition of all the images is the artwork complete and existing.

## **SECRET FRIENDS – “Seeds of Unity”, collective creation**

For two months each artist observed another artist, their “secret friend”, and depicted what they learned about their secret friend through colours and images.

# Appendix – Participants

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## Workshop Brussels, November 2016

Elisabeth GRAF – Don Bosco Youth Net (Austria), Emin MAMMADLI – Voice of Young Refugees in Europe (Azerbaijan), Abdellbaset ALHEESHAN – Tandem Volunteering (Belgium), Tony GEUDENS – SALTO Inclusion (Belgium), Andreia HENRIQUES (Belgium), Minne HUYSMANS – VUB (Belgium), Marija KLJAJIC – JINT (Belgium), Illias MARRAHA – SCOUTS EN GIDSEN VLAANDEREN (Belgium), Michalis MOSCHOVAKOS – European Commission (Belgium), Ahmad Alabbas OUBARI – Tandem Volunteering (Belgium), Camilla PALAZZINI – World Scout Bureau - Europe Support Centre (Belgium), Mark PERERA (Belgium), Natasja RYKACZEWSKI – Techfugees (Belgium), Malaz SAFARJALANI – Jamiya (Belgium), Jan VANHEE – Member of the European Steering Committee on Youth, Council of Europe (Belgium), Andrea VONKEMAN – UNHCR regional Bureaux for Europe (Belgium), Abdulkader ZARKA – Tandem Volunteering (Belgium), Franziska ZIEGLER – European Commission (Belgium), Sofia LAINE – Finnish Youth Research Network (Finland), Veronika HONKASALO – Finnish Youth Research Network (Finland), Ulrich GOLUKE (Germany), Julia LAUER – Diakonie (Germany), Suhail ABUALSAMEED (Greece), Dan BISWAS – Faros (Greece), Mary DROSOPOULOU (Greece), Barbara Giovanna BELLO – Pool of European Youth Researchers (Italy), Andrea CHIRICO – National Agency ERASMUS + programme (Italy), Gulchekhra RAKHIMOVA (Italy), Josephine GOUBE – Techfugees (Jordan), Maria PISANI (Malta), Miriam TEUMA – Agenzija Zghazagh (Malta), Nevena GOJKOVIC TURUNZ (Serbia), Mohamed ALSAUD – The Young Republic (Sweden), Maria BERG (Sweden), Komalsingh RAMBAREE – University of Gävle (Sweden), Kwaku ADOMAKO (Switzerland), Nick SORE – UNHCR (Switzerland), Robert THOMSON – Pool of European Youth Researchers (Switzerland), Ivan SHTERJOSKI – YMCA Macedonia (“The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”), Guldan KALEM – YAŞAR UNIVERSITY (Turkey), Mehmet Gokay ÖZERİM – YAŞAR UNIVERSITY (Turkey).

## Workshop Strasbourg, October 2017

Lisa WOLFSEGG – Asylkoordination Österreich (Austria), Zibar HUSEYNOVA – Voices of Young Refugees in Europe (Azerbaijan), Bram BONTE – Agentschap Integratie & Inburgering (Belgium), Tony GEUDENS – SALTO Inclusion (Belgium), Ali KHADIM CHALLOB – Flemish Refugee Action/Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen (Belgium), Najomi SMETS – Flemish Refugee Action/Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen (Belgium), Jan VANHEE – Member of the European Steering Committee on Youth, Council of Europe (Belgium), Rasha ZEINA – Tandem (Belgium), Lana PASIC – Member of the Pool of European Youth Researchers (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Irma SIPPOLA – City Of Helsinki, Migrant Youth Helsinki Project (Finland), Lamine DIABY – Mission locale de Franconville (France), Muriel GRENET – Mission locale de Franconville (France), Nadine LYAMOURI-BAJJA (France), Thierno DIALLO – Le Pensé Critique (France), Gaëlle LE GUERN – Association Oberholz (France), Hannes KÄCKMEISTER – Université de Strasbourg/Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg (France/Germany), Emmanuel KLAINGUER – Association foyer Notre Dame (France), Janaina PAISLEY

– Direction de la jeunesse, de l'éducation populaire et de la vie associative (DJEPVA) (France), Angèle SCHMITT – Association Oberholz (France), Nelly HOLTZ – Association Oberholz (France), Mohammad Faisal ALEEFI – Jugendwerk der AWO Württemberg e.V. (Germany), Philipp BOETZELEN (Germany), Aylin ROMÉY – InitiativGruppe e.V., Project MIKADO (Germany), Thomas ROESSLER – Jugendberufshilfe Ortenau e.V. (Germany), Maria ROIÐI – Member of the Advisory Council on Youth, Council of Europe (Greece), Sotiria VASILEIADI – Soma Hellinon Proskopon – Scouts of Greece (Greece), Mairi DROSOPOULOU (Greece), Nikolina ZERVOU – member of the Guardianship Network for unaccompanied children (Greece), Aoife DARE – Irish Refugee Council (Ireland), Guelord MFUNYI – European Youth Migration Forum (EYMF) (Ireland), Maria Elisa MARZOTTI – Agenzia Nazionale per I Giovani, project “Be part of Europe” (Italy), Bala TRAORE – SPRAR Cordova (Italy), Valentina VIVONA – SPRAR Cordova (Italy), Paola BLANCO – Migrant Women Association (Malta), Sepideh HAJ MODIRI – NIDOS (The Netherlands), Alina BARYSNIKOVA – Oslo municipality, Alna district/NAV Alna (Norway), Tomas DJURFELDT – Municipality of Trelleborg Arbetsmarknadsförvaltningen (Sweden), Mayssa REKHIS – The Young Republic (Sweden), Catherine Raya POLISHCHUK – Essaim d'Accueil (Switzerland), Ember HIBBERT – Red Cross (United Kingdom),

## Workshop Thessaloniki, December 2017

Lusiana MAILAJ – People First Association (Albania), Julia RAINER – European Youth Forum, Migration and Human Rights Network (Austria), Manfred ZENTNER – Danube-University Krens / Department Migration and Globalization (Austria), Eveline MEYLEMANS – Flemish Youth Council (Belgium), Andreia HENRIQUES (Belgium), Diana NEVEDA – Caritas Sofia (Bulgaria), Tena ZALOVIC – Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (Croatia), Mazen BESHTAWE – Strengthening Asylum - Future Worlds Centre (Cyprus), Eleni HADJICHRISTODOU – Future Worlds Centre - Humanitarian Affairs Unit (Cyprus), Marianna SAVVA – HFC “Hope for Children” CRC Policy Centre (Cyprus), Gaëlle LE GUERN – Association Oberholz (France), Camille THOMAS – Voice of Young Refugees in Europe (France), Sarah VALENTIN – Association OBERHOLZ, DOMIE 2 (France), Nadine LYAMOURI-BAJJA (France), Katharina von HIPPEL – Scouts DPSG Marburg (Germany), Aikaterini ANASTASOPOULOU – Hellenic Red Cross - Social Welfare Department - Patras branch (Greece), Lydia BISARA – METAdrasi (Greece), Niamh DONNELLY – “Time to be Welcome” ERASMUS+ Project - Scouts of Greece (Greece), Mairi DROSOPOULOU (Greece), Usaama KAWEEESA – “Time to be Welcome” ERASMUS+ Project - Scouts of Greece (Greece), Sotiria VASILEIADI – “Time to be Welcome” ERASMUS+ Project - Scouts of Greece (Greece), Maria KOUTATZI – Caritas Hellas (Greece), Erika PAPANTONIOU – Caritas Hellas (Greece), Argyro MOUMTZIDOU – Association for the social Support of Youth (ARSIS) (Greece), Sofia PAPAÐOPOULOU – Association for the social Support of Youth (ARSIS) (Greece), Anestis ISCHNOPOULOS – NGO PRAKSIS (Greece), Charalampos (Babis) PAPAIOANNOU – Greek Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning and Youth - Youth Department (Greece), Maria ROIÐI – Member of the Advisory Council on Youth, Council of Europe (Greece), Ionna STOUPA – System & G (Greece), Marton BISZTRAI – SOS Children's Villages Hungary and MENEDÉK – Association for Migrants (Hungary), Stefania Erzsebet FABIAN – SOS Children's Villages (Hungary),

Noemi FILOSI – Kaleidoscopio s.c.s (Italy), Dushica NOFITOSKA – Youth Forum Bitola (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”), Ivan SHTERJOSKI – YMCA Skopje (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”), Sepideh HAJ MODIRI – NIDOS (The Netherlands), Elena Oana TEODORESCU – Save the Children (Romania), Jelena ILIC – Foundation ADRA - Adventist Development and Relief Agency (Serbia), Ivana PATARCIC – Centr for youth integration (Serbia), Rohullah NAIKZAD – Mareena (Slovakia), Andrej NAVOJSKY – Mareena (Slovakia), Vanja METELKO – Srednja gozdarska in lesarska šola Postojna (Slovenia), Selma KARABEY – Association of Trace in Individual and Community Mental Health (Turkey).

## Artists in Expressive Art Exhibitions

Dimitra Aésopou (Greece), Merwan Ahme (Syria), Vasilis Alexandrou (Greece), Fatma Al Hassan (Syria), Nawwar Kamal Al Hassani (Iraq), Rama & Sidra & Rimaz Al Muhammad (Syria), René Jean Amba (Cameroon), Asifa Aslami & Masoud Aslami (Afghanistan), Zefi Athanasopoulou (Greece), Maassoum Diyaa Al Din Daoud (Syria), Yiorgos Drosos (Greece), Mohammad Zeki Farho (Syria), Borislava Georgitseli (Bulgaria), Zouzan Hammo (Syria), Mohammed Hussein Hassan (Syria), B.K (Turkey), Kali Kastori (Greece), Georgios Katsagelos & Smaro Katsangelou (Greece), Anna Kondakciu (Greece), Theodora Lefkimuiati (Greece), Anna Fenareti Lioka (Greece), Kawa Abd Al Aziz Hajji Majid (Syria), Bakr Mohamad (Iraq), Alexandros Moudioutis (Greece), Mahmud Nabil (Syria), Tasnim Nakrash (Syria), Yoanna Nasi (Greece), Moayad Nasser (Palestine), Ahmed Qaisaniya (Syria), Evi Papavergou (Greece), Eleni Papnopoulo (Greece), Mirwais Rasooli (Aghanistan), Hussam Al Dine Shalabi (Syria), Muhammad Bassam Shalabi (Syria), Sanaa Shuaibi (Syria), Elham Vazifeh Shenan (Iran), Abraham Tekle (Eritrea), Sabahattin Toprak (Turkey), Giorgos Tsakivis (Greece), Fares Yazidi (Iraq), Manolis Yiannadakis (Greece).

## EU – Council of Europe youth partnership secretariat

Marta Medlinska, Tanya Basarab, Mara Georgescu

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And now, over to you! What are your thoughts and your next steps concerning working on these topics?









The situation of young refugees in European societies is an important topic for human rights, democracy, living together in diversity and social cohesion. Among different sectors working for and with young refugees, youth work offers a diversity of spaces and initiatives for these young people to participate fully in their communities and to have a voice in all matters that concern them.

This publication offers practical tools for youth work on the inclusion and participation of young refugees at local level. It focuses on youth participation and inclusion as key dimensions to building inclusive societies and, at the same time, creating an enabling environment for young refugees to be fully fledged actors in their personal and community development. The following themes are explored: intercultural learning, access to social rights, young women refugees, youth participation and mental health and trauma.

<http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int>  
[youth-partnership@partnership-eu.coe.int](mailto:youth-partnership@partnership-eu.coe.int)

The **Council of Europe** is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

The **European Union** is a unique economic and political partnership between 28 democratic European countries. Its aims are peace, prosperity and freedom for its 500 million citizens – in a fairer, safer world. To make things happen, EU countries set up bodies to run the EU and adopt its legislation. The main ones are the European Parliament (representing the people of Europe), the Council of the European Union (representing national governments) and the European Commission (representing the common EU interest).

<http://europa.eu>



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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE