

Youth Partnership

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



INFORMATION TEMPLATE ON SOCIAL INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE



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1. The socio-economic situation of young people

1.1 Please inform which groups of the young people are perceived as being socially excluded. What are the main factors for being socially excluded as a young person in your country?

Minorities due to ethnicity, culture, sex, individual different characteristics, e.g. poverty, physical malfunctions, mental malfunction, etc.

1.2 Please provide the percentage representing the share of young people (18-24) who are at risk of poverty (and/or severely materially deprived and/or living in a household with very low work intensity).

Please compare it to the general population risk of poverty rate. What is the trend in your country – is the rate growing etc.?

Note: When available, please use the EUROSTAT data. If EUROSTAT data is not available, please refer to another indicator of youth poverty used in your country indicating the source.

According to the last survey of the Statistical Services of Ministry of Finance which was conducted for the years 2009 – 2013, the risk for poverty in 2013 was as follows:

Ages 0 – 17	Rate of risk 27.7%
Ages 18 – 64	Rate of risk 28.2%
Ages 64+	Rate of risk 26.1%
All ages	overall rate: 27.8%

There is not a more analytical official representation of the above mentioned indicators

Rate of sex is w:m 28.8:26.8

Another measure examines how the rates are formed when considering as a variable the country of origin:

Born in Cyprus 25.3%

Born in EU 34.5%

Born in non EU country 43.4%

Rates for severe material deprivation for 2013 was 16.1%

Rate for very low work intensity was 6.5%

1.3 Has an impact of the current financial crisis on young people been observed in your country? *Please answer by referring to their access to social rights, discrimination, economic exclusion*

There are not any official reports available, but in the report of Statistical Services for 2010 – 2013 it is mentioned that in 2013 there is an increase of families who cannot afford the payments of unexpected yet necessary occasions, an increase of families who cannot afford the cost of a one-week vacations, an increase of families who cannot provide high nutritious quality food for its members at a three times a week basis and finally an increase of the number of families who report being in financial constrains regarding keeping their home adequately warm during winter days.

It is also observed an increase of demands for counseling and support services from young people and families with children and adolescents. This increase is partly explained by the fact that many families report that they cannot afford visits to private section, partly by the fact that many non-government organizations have decrease their services and as a result there are huge waiting lists in governmental services and finally many families regard. Psychological and counseling services as a “luxury” and not as a necessary provision for their vulnerable members.

2. Policy measures for young people at risk of social exclusion

2.1 Social subsistence/ protection and health cover for young people living in poverty

Please describe country's social protection provisions for young people living in poverty (list of benefits young people living in poverty are entitled to).

The most recent provision is the minimum guaranteed income, which is not targeted to young people but is provided for those who fulfill certain criteria of extremely low incomes and sources.

Health care is provided in governmental hospitals with a minor charge both for services and for medicines (both for physical as well as for mental health)

Allowances from Social Services when fulfilling certain criteria

Basic education is free for all children aged 5 8/12 to 18.

Housing for students in poverty who study in one of the two public Universities.

The YouthBoard of Cyprus, provides for all population free psychological and counseling services, services for vocational & / or academic orientation and legal services. Furthermore low cost art, music and dance lessons and computer lessons.

Some non - governmental organizations provide services mostly for support (eg Cyprus Family Planning Association, Domestic Violence Association, ACCEPT (for the LGTB) etc)

Municipalities provide low cost lessons and entertainment activities via the Open Schools institutions (sport activities and lessons, arts, computers etc).

2.2 Measures to meeting the medical Care needs of Young people at risk of social exclusion

Please describe any measures taken to meet the medical care needs of young people at risk of social exclusion.

There are no targeted actions to young people at risk of social exclusion. But in all primary schools there are free vaccinations and dental care twice a year for all children, free diagnostic screenings for hearing and vision all provided via the Ministry of Health

2.3 Measures to re-engage the young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)

Is there a government strategy or programme addressing the young people not in employment, education or training? If yes, please explain.

According to the National Action Plan for Youth Employment which implements the EU Youth Guarantee Recommendation:

Priority 3: Introducing the National Youth Guarantee

The introduction of a National Youth Guarantee aimed at offering school leavers and newly unemployed youth (15-24) with an opportunity for education, training, work experience or employment within four months from leaving school or becoming unemployed. The delivery of the Youth Guarantee is organized around an integrated service delivery model that includes:

- i) employment services (information on vacancies, group counseling and job search assistance);
- ii) individualized counselling and guidance assistance for those unable to gain a foothold in the labour market within the first four months; and
- iii) intensive support, including referral to active labour market/return to education schemes.

Moreover, one of the goals of the Lifelong Learning Strategy is the promotion of the inclusion / re-inclusion of young people in the labour market. Among others, the Strategy provides for the “Contemporary Apprenticeship Programme”. The Programme is co-funded by the Central European Bank and the Government of Cyprus. It is applied and managed in Cyprus by the Cyprus Productivity Centre and it aims to:

- I. Provide the chance to school and formal education drop-outs to become able to receive further education or find employment.
- II. Secure mobility between the formal educational system and employability.
- III. Improve employment offered to young qualified people.

The Cyprus Government aims at promoting this “Contemporary Apprenticeship programme” to other structures of the Republic of Cyprus. Moreover, it will be further expanded to new industrial sectors such as natural gas and hydrocarbons. It will include both professional and business aspects. The Apprenticeship Programme will receive young people within the framework of the Action Plan for the Youth Guarantee.

Finally, the National Action Plan for Youth Employment, already mentioned above, is part of the Lifelong Learning Strategy.

2.4 Measures to ensure access to decent housing for young people at risk of social exclusion

Please describe any government measures to provide decent housing to young people at risk of social exclusion.

Due to the severe economic crisis and the subsequent economic reductions imposed to the national governmental budget, the Ministry of Interior has stopped the special Housing Program it used to run for young people who faced economic difficulties.

2.5 Measures addressing the social integration of young people with disabilities

Please describe any measures addressing specifically the integration of young people with disabilities. Alternatively, discuss the areas that may require further policy measures.

There are not specifically targeted measures for young people. Measures are general for all ages. The Department For Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities has as its mission to undertake, as a central agent, the formulation, co-ordination and implementation of social policies for persons

with disabilities, in co-operation with the co-responsible Ministries and Services as well as the Pancyprian Confederation of the Organisations of Persons with Disabilities.

2.6 The contribution of youth work (and youth centres) to social inclusion of young people

Have there been measures taken at all levels (national, regional, local) to ensure youth work and youth centres have the means to contribute towards the social inclusion of young people? If yes, please explain.

Youth Board of Cyprus is funding youth groups and youth centers for educational, entertainment and sports activities and for acquiring equipment for youth centres.

Cyprus Youth Clubs Organization is the coordinating instrument of more than 100 Youth Clubs of the Republic of Cyprus. CYCO is an active member of the European Confederation of Youth Clubs (ECYC). CYCO's main aim is to support opportunities for young people to develop their physical, social, cultural, emotional, and cognitive abilities.

3. Research on social inclusion

3.1 Is there any national report/ national survey investigating the social exclusion of young people in your country, including issues of discrimination? Please provide brief descriptions of the most representative and links, if available.

EVALUATING THE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAW IN THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS: A CRITICAL REFLECTION

Source: http://www.prio.org/Global/upload/Cyprus/Publications/4_TRIMIKL_DEMETRIOU.pdf

THE EUROPEAN DILEMMA: INSTITUTIONAL PATTERNS AND THE POLITICS OF “RACIAL” DISCRIMINATION

Source: <http://symfiliosi.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/WP1.Cyprus--MAPPING-DISCRIMINATORY-LANDSCAPES-%CE%99%CE%9D-CYPRUS-ETHNIC-DISCRIMINATION-IN-THE-LABOUR-MARKET-AND-EDUCATION.pdf>

“THE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN CYPRUS”

Source:

[http://www.olc.gov.cy/olc/olc.nsf/all/B700255109A13DBCC22574E8002C6F5A/\\$file/The%20Gender%20Equality%20and%20the%20Empowerment%20of%20Women%20in%20Cyprus.pdf?openelement](http://www.olc.gov.cy/olc/olc.nsf/all/B700255109A13DBCC22574E8002C6F5A/$file/The%20Gender%20Equality%20and%20the%20Empowerment%20of%20Women%20in%20Cyprus.pdf?openelement)

3.2 Is there any longitudinal research focused on the cumulative nature of disadvantage (taking place across generations of the same family). Please provide the title and the link, if available.

N/A

3.3 Apart from national reports and surveys, are you aware of other research that is valuable for understanding the situation of young people (esp. those with fewer opportunities) in the current crisis? Please provide the title and the link, if available.

The Cyprus Antidrug Council in the National Report for 2013, regarding drug use, reports that the average profile of the drug user that requires therapeutic interventions in Cyprus is: male, 27yrs, after 9 years of cannabis abuse, 4/10 are unemployed and 35% has not completed the 12 yrs basic education.

Source: http://www.ask.org.cy/index.php/en/file/_5Tp72BZOqjIVBvktrmPlg==

POGO which is a non-governmental womens organization, has conducted a survey and published the findings and results under the title: *The effects of the economic crisis on the quality of life of young women.*

Source: <http://www.pogocy.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/erevna.pdf>

4. Examples of policy responses and practices

4.1 What are the relevant initiatives/projects at regional/ national level promoting the social inclusion of young people? *Please describe policies, regulations, legislation put in place or major initiatives/ projects (from the governmental or the third sector) which had the social inclusion of young people as major focus. Please also consider initiatives going beyond economic (e.g. employment) initiatives.*

The **Youth Information Centres (YIC)**, run by the Youth Board of Cyprus in all major cities but also in rural areas, guarantee the right of yp to have free access to extensive, up-to-date and reliable information on all issues they are concerned or interested. Generalist youth information aims to support young people who need to take decisions by giving them access to the necessary information concerning their options and opportunities and the services and programmes available and helping them to evaluate and judge the information through various forms of intervention.

Information is also considered to be a prerequisite for participation – only those young people who are well informed about their rights and duties as young persons and citizens and know how to use and fulfill them can be active members of civil society.

What's more, YIC include youth counselling services on Career Guidance, Legal Advice and Psychological support. They also provide yp with access to computers and internet, which facilitates their research and communication.

National Action Plan for Youth Employment, implementing Youth Guarantee Recommendation (Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance):

The priorities to improve youth employment prospects focus on:

- (i) Preventing early school leaving and easing the transition from school to work;
- (ii) establishing activation strategies through targeted labour market policies for the disadvantaged youth 15-29, including
- (iii) The implementation of a National Youth Guarantee;
- (iv) Boosting labour demand through sectoral growth, promotion of micro- and small-enterprises and entrepreneurship development;
- (v) Formulate outreach strategies and increase labour market integration of youth
- (vi) Enhancing effectiveness and impact of employment services and labour market policies.
- (vii) Establishing a monitoring and evaluation system

The strategy underpinning such policy interventions combines preventative approaches – to ensure a smoother transition of young people to the world to work– and remedial measures to

address the multiple barriers certain groups of young people face in gaining a foothold in the labour market. It addresses both structural and cyclical issues that are affecting the youth labour market.

Educational Priority Zones

Certain pre-primary and primary public schools are defined as “educational priority schools”, which are connected to one another. One of the criteria for a school to be defined as an educational priority school is its percentage of school drop outs, school failure, number of foreign students and the occurrence of violence and youth delinquency incidents.

The number of students in each class in such schools is decreased in order to allow for the implementation of child-centred academic methods, which take into consideration the local and individual traits and needs. Moreover, during the afternoon creative lessons and reinforcement courses are offered.

4.2 Have young people and civil society organizations been given political and financial support to be involved in the policy making process on social inclusion?

Please describe how young people in your country take part in policy-making on social inclusion at all levels: local, national and international (e.g. via participation in international meetings, virtual platforms/ fora, existing youth networks and tools, capacity building, training, networking initiatives).

Structured Dialogue

General Advisory/Consulting Body of the Youth Board of Cyprus

By virtue of the Youth Board of Cyprus 33(1)/94 Law, the Board has 4 Advisory Bodies where youth organizations and youth departments of other organizations participate. These are: the Political Committee, where the Youth Political Organizations of parties that have a Parliamentary Group participate, the Students’ Committee, where Student Organizations and the Pancyprian Coordinating Students’ Committee participate, the Trade Union Committee where the youth departments of the Trade Union and Agricultural Organizations participate and finally the General Advisory Body where 44 youth organizations participate, including the above, two affiliated members and one non-member affiliated organization.

During the year the Youth Board arranges several meetings with the G.C.B whereby they discuss their actions and programs and co-decide on their further enhancement or the introduction of new ones. Moreover, the YBC discuss with the aforementioned bodies any policy issue concerning youth and due to its advisory role, the Youth Board submits to the Council of Ministers through the Minister of Education and Culture, proposals and suggestions on youth related issues that will enhance the further promotion of these objectives.

Municipal Youth Councils (MYC)

The MYC's act as a link between the youth organisations and the Municipalities. Through this institution young people are encouraged to take part in the life of their communities and again promote the inclusion of their opinions in actions undertaken at the local level. It also helps the local authorities to find out the interests and the concerns of the youth, understand them and promote them.

Parliament of Teenagers

The Parliament of teenagers (<http://pccpwc.org/gr/Children%20Parliament.html>) is another institution which gives the chance to young people to voice their worries and speak their own mind regarding issues that concern them. The Parliament of teenagers also contributes to the implementation of Children's rights in Cyprus. Its primary goal is to give the chance to children and teenagers to contribute actively to the decision-making process.

The Pancyprian Coordinating Committee for the Protection and Welfare of Children (PCCPWC)

The PCCPWC established the Annual Pancyprian Conference on the Protection and Welfare of Children, established, regulated and funds the Cyprus Children's Parliament, comprising 56 elected children, issued Position Papers on different serious issues concerning child protection and welfare, has become an active member of Eurochildaisbl, of the International Forum for Child Welfare and of the European Anti-Poverty Network Participated in different EU and national programs investigating and tackling serious children's issues and problems.

Commissioner for Children's Rights of the Republic of Cyprus

The institution of the **Commissioner for Children's Rights of the Republic of Cyprus** has been established by the Commissioner for the Protection of Children's Rights Law, 2007 [Law 74(I)/2007] of the Republic of Cyprus, which came into force on 22/6/2007. The Commissioner is an independent institution and deals exclusively with the rights of the child and whose competences and obligations are prescribed by law and its mission is to protect and promote the rights of the child. The Cyprus Commissioner participates in the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC) which is a non-profit association of independent children's rights institutions. Its mandate is to facilitate the promotion and protection of the rights of children, as formulated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child".

Cyprus Youth Council (CYC)

The CYC is the Youth Council of Cyprus. It was founded in 1996 and is a full active member of the European Youth Forum. It currently hosts 51 Member Organizations, political and non-political NGYO from both communities of Cyprus, all religious minorities, and foreign students living in

Cyprus. The CYC was formed to promote co-operation between youth organizations in Cyprus and youth organizations in Europe and the world. It is described as a voluntary, non-profit association open to youth organizations in Cyprus, guided in its actions by the principles described in the UN Constitution and the European Convention on Human Rights. The CYC of Cyprus was established in 1997 when the need came up for Cyprus youth civil society to participate in the European Youth Forum, as it is stated in the Conclusions of the Council of Europe international review¹³. The CyCIC has 40 youth NGOs as members, including 3 Turkish Cypriot and 2 bi-communal NGOs.

4.3 Have youth organisations and other civil society organisations been involved in the development of the policies related to social inclusion of young people

According to the Youth Board of Cyprus Law No. 33(1)94, the Board consists of 4 Advisory Bodies in which youth organizations and youth sections of other organizations participate. These are: the Political Committee, the Students' Committee, the Trade-Union Committee and the General Advisory Body that comprises of 44 youth organizations. The Youth Board's semi-governmental status ensures participation of youth NGOs in the decision-making process through these 4 advisory bodies.

As far as the drafting of the National Action Plan for Youth Employment is concerned, youth organisations were invited and took part at every consultation the Youth Board or the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance organized during 2013 and 2014.