

Youth Partnership

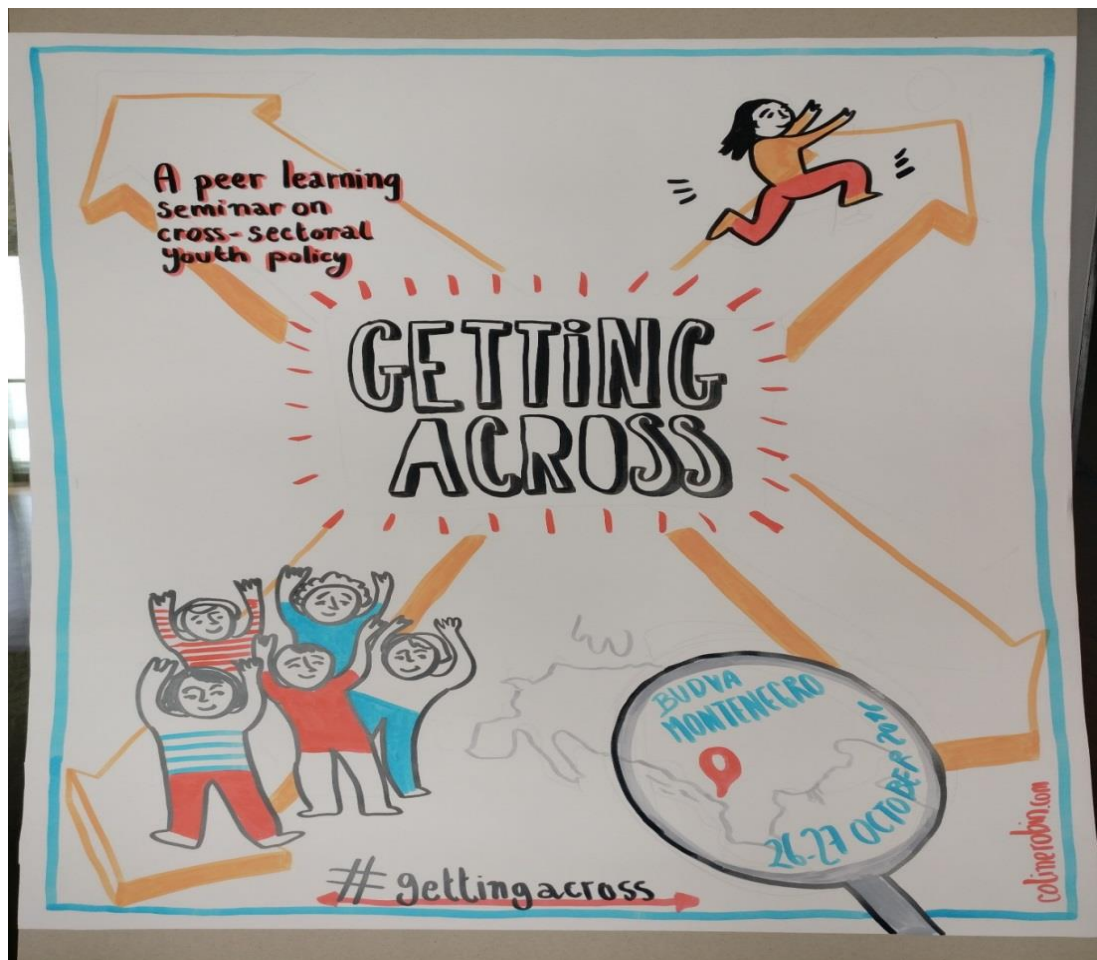
Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of youth



“Getting Across”: peer-learning seminar on cross-sectoral youth policy

Budva, Montenegro, 26-27 October 2016

REPORT



Disclaimer: The content of this document, commissioned by the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership, is the entire responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of either of the partner institutions (the European Union or the Council of Europe).

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction..... | 3 |
| Report purpose..... | 3 |
| Seminar overview | 3 |
| Project history..... | 3 |
| Institutional context | 4 |
| Cross-sectoral co-operation | 8 |
| Seminar objectives..... | 9 |
| The team of organisers..... | 10 |
| Wednesday 26 October | 10 |
| Opening session..... | 10 |
| Background paper presentation..... | 13 |
| Story of cross-sectoral co-operation 1 – From many documents to one strategy..... | 18 |
| Kafana Balkana | 19 |
| Story of cross-sectoral co-operation 2 – CreActive – successful youth activism | 20 |
| Kafana Balkana – mapping | 21 |
| Open Conference Space | 24 |
| Story of cross-sectoral co-operation 3 – Education for youth council members..... | 26 |
| Thursday, October 27 | 27 |
| Summary and introduction..... | 27 |
| Story of cross-sectoral co-operation 4 – Roma youth engaged in education, job, and personal development..... | 29 |
| Story of cross-sectoral co-operation 5 – Long-term (youth) work tackling NEET, urban challenges and employability | 31 |
| Cross-sectoral youth policy development guidelines..... | 33 |
| Story of cross-sectoral co-operation 6 – Tirana Youth Leadership | 35 |
| Developing integrated youth services using cross-sectoral approaches..... | 36 |
| Story of cross-sectoral co-operation 7 – NAPOR for recognition of competences of youth gained through youth work..... | 38 |
| Evaluation and closing | 39 |
| References: | 41 |
| Abbreviations..... | 42 |
| Annexes | 42 |

Introduction

Report purpose

The purpose of the report is to describe the main findings of the “Getting Across” peer-learning seminar on cross-sectoral youth policy. This includes an overview of the history of the project, background research, objectives, key institutions and people involved in its planning and implementation, seminar activities and conclusions from key discussions held during the event, notably the cross-sectoral youth policy-making guidelines.

Seminar overview

The peer-learning seminar “Getting Across” brought together 56 participants, including speakers and facilitators, mostly from the Western Balkans, involved in youth policy making and implementation. The seminar’s main aim was to provide young people in the Western Balkans with more and better opportunities for receiving integrated support of cross-sectoral, integrated youth services, enabling active participation of young people in society and reversing the marginalisation of those more in need for support towards their social inclusion. The seminar was held in Budva, Montenegro from 26 to 27 October 2016.

Project history

The history of this seminar goes back to the seminar “Beyond Barriers: a youth policy seminar on social inclusion of young people in vulnerable situation in South East Europe” (organised by the youth partnership), held in 2015 in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The main conclusion of the event was that in the Western Balkans there is a need to put in place sustainable youth policy implementation cycles and to develop innovative responses to the changing realities young people experience. The report from the Mostar seminar stated that representatives of youth civil society organisations, practitioners, researchers and decision makers agree on the need for cross-sectoral co-operation in tackling youth exclusion.

Moreover, the Mostar seminar participants agreed that there is a need to collect, analyse and disseminate concrete good practice of cross-sectoral approaches and implementation in the region, focusing especially on the local level. The importance of adopting an integrated youth policy approach and cross-sectoral collaboration was also emphasised and considered as crucial as focusing on long-term efforts in order to empower young people to participate fully in society.

However, it was also realised that the capacities of the governmental structures to establish meaningful cross-sectoral and inter-ministerial co-operation are relatively low across the region, which makes youth mainstreaming highly challenging, also considering the administrative limitations for inter-ministerial financial management (e.g. fund allocation).

The recommendations stemming from the 2015 seminar, therefore, pointed to the fact that “successful youth policy implementation in South East Europe requires good cross-sectoral co-ordination, linked with established mechanisms for horizontal and vertical communication and peer-learning among stakeholders”. In addition, “understanding the essence of the cross-sectoral principle is crucial, and should be based on the idea of mutual contribution to the same goal in order to establish the ground for implementation, based on co-operation and mutual commitment”.¹

From what one can observe, moreover, many advisors and donors are active in the Western Balkans, and the respective policy development might become donor-driven and scattered rather than holistic.

Institutional context

The strategic priorities and expected results of the 2016-2017 programme of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, as defined by the Joint Council on Youth (the central co-managed political body of the youth sector within the Council of Europe) are:

- supporting young people and member States in increasing the participation of young people in democratic processes;
- supporting Member States and youth NGOs in the implementation of Committee of Ministers Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights (ENTER recommendation);²
- supporting the promotion of inclusive and peaceful societies, especially through the extended No Hate Speech Movement³ and the Roma Youth Action Plan.⁴

1. Mostar seminar report, 2015, http://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/8894448/Beyond+Barriers_+REPORT_final-april-2016.pdf/e59436d1-d0dd-41ae-9f6d-c381f3c1fb5c.

2. Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3, 2015, [https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?p=&Ref=CM%2FRec\(2015\)3&Language=lanEnglish&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=DBDCF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogged=FDC864&direct=true](https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?p=&Ref=CM%2FRec(2015)3&Language=lanEnglish&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=DBDCF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogged=FDC864&direct=true).

3. No Hate Speech Movement, www.nohatespeechmovement.org/.

4. Roma Youth Action Plan, www.coe.int/en/web/youth-roma/home.

The Getting Across seminar supports the first two priorities of the Youth Sector of the Council of Europe. Furthermore, this activity directly supports the mandate of Resolution CM/Res(2008)23 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe which states, *inter alia*, that priority should be given to:

- promoting young people's active participation in democratic processes and structures;
- promoting equal opportunities for the participation of all young people in all aspects of their everyday lives;
- facilitating the access of all young people to information and counselling services;
- further encouraging the development of sub-regional youth co-operation in Europe and beyond;
- supporting the integration of excluded young people;
- ensuring young people's access to education, training and working life, particularly through the promotion and recognition of non-formal education/learning;
- supporting young people's transition from education to the labour market (...);
- supporting young people's autonomy and well-being, as well as their access to decent living conditions;
- ensuring young people's equal access to cultural, sporting and creative activities.⁵

With regard to the European Union, mainstreaming youth is one of the two main approaches in achieving the objectives of the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018) – the so-called dual approach: cross-sector initiatives that ensure that youth issues are taken into account when formulating, implementing and evaluating policies and actions in other fields with a significant impact on young people, such as education, employment or health and well-being.⁶

The EU Youth Report 2015 strongly emphasises that the principle of cross-sectoral youth policy has special relevance in meeting one of the priorities for the next three years, especially in helping young people undergo an easier transition from education into the labour market. In this regard, no single policy could be efficient in responding to complex issues and young people's challenges in order to create the best possible opportunities for them to grow up in inclusive, open and

5. Resolution CM/Res (2008) 23, 2008,

www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/IG_Coop/Documents/CM_Res_08_youth_policy_en.pdf

6. EU Youth Strategy http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth_strategy/index_en.htm

democratic societies. In their respective areas of competence, the EU and its Member States need to mobilise all policies that can help improve young people's prospects.⁷

Although nearly all EU Member States have institutionalised mechanisms to ensure a cross-sectoral approach to youth policy, such as inter-departmental structures and regular inter-ministerial meetings, candidate countries from the Western Balkans need substantial support in advancing national youth agendas and cross-sectoral co-operation, backed by relevant evidence, inter-governmental co-operation, institutional frameworks and exchanges of experience.

The importance of youth in policy dialogue with and among Western Balkans countries was underlined at the Ministers of Foreign Affairs meeting at Brdo (23 April 2015) with the Joint Statement on the "Positive Agenda for Youth", which stated that "educated young professionals with positive approach towards their personal future and future of their societies could importantly help achieving lasting political, economic and social stability in the region. EU education and experience would also provide the region with experts equipped to assist in EU negotiation process".⁸

During the Western Balkans Summit in Vienna in August 2015, the Prime Ministers of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo,⁹ "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Montenegro and Serbia signed a "Joint Declaration on the establishment of the Regional Youth Co-operation Office of the Western Balkans" (RYCO),¹⁰ in which they agreed to further step up regional co-operation among youth and youth-dedicated institutions and ensure implementation of joint programmes for young people with the focus on the principles of democratic governance, sustainable economic development, education and innovation.

The recent Paris Summit (4 July 2016) resulted in discussing the road map for the regional development of co-operation on youth including the enforcement of a closer regional integration through enhanced inter-regional economic exchange, and the facilitation of mobility of the people

7. Navracics, T. (2015), EU Youth report 2015, Foreword of the European Commission, http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/report_en.htm.

8. Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs at Brdo, 23 April 2015, Joint Statement, www.mzz.gov.si/fileadmin/pageuploads/foto/1504/joint_statement_Brdo_ministers.pdf

9. This designation is in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99 and the International Court of Justice Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence. All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

10. Joint Declaration on the establishment of the Regional Youth Co-operation Office of the Western Balkans (2015), <https://rycowesternbalkans.org/2015/12/14/27-08-15-joint-declaration/>

(including young people). The signature of the RYCO statute was a symbolic highlight of the summit.¹¹

The Paris Summit was preceded by the Western Balkans Youth Conference (also 4 July 2016), which was hosted by the French Government in close co-operation with the European Commission, the European Youth Forum and SALTO South East Europe. In the presence of Commissioner Tibor Navracsics, young people developed recommendations for youth policy makers which were communicated to the heads of state and government and other participants in the Paris Summit, highlighting the focus on young people within the framework of the Berlin Process.¹²

SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre (SALTO SEE) held a follow-up event to the Western Balkans Youth Conference in Ljubljana, Slovenia, entitled “Europe-Western Balkans Youth Meeting Connecting Youth Work and Policy – youth participation, civic engagement, youth mobility” in late September 2016 to develop an action plan for youth co-operation in and with the Western Balkans addressing both policy makers and youth organisations.¹³

As regards the programme level, under the Erasmus+ Programme’s Key Action 2, which fosters co-operation for innovation and the exchange of good practice and, more specifically, capacity building in the field of youth, the Western Balkans Youth Window promotes the sustained development of youth organisations in the region and the practice of youth work using non-formal learning, but also co-operation activities that foster networking between civil society organisations, public authorities and institutions active in the youth field to strengthen their capacities, establish or reinforce their co-operation on a trans-national cross-border basis within the region, and with organisations from Erasmus+ Programme Countries.¹⁴

11. Paris Balkans 2016 Summit, www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/balkans/events/article/balkans-paris-balkans-2016-summit-paris-04-07-16

12. The Berlin Process was launched in 2014 at the Berlin Conference as an inter-governmental initiative with the aim to “demonstrate strong political support for the European perspective of the Western Balkans” and to “create a positive momentum for regional co-operation in the Western Balkans”. Core stakeholders in the Berlin Process are the Governments of the Western Balkans countries, Croatia, Slovenia and the countries also organising the follow-up conferences: Austria (August 2015), France (July 2016) and Italy (2017). Within the Berlin Process, people-to-people dialogue and, more specifically, youth co-operation are elements in a broader political framework covering also e.g. the rule of law and good governance, the fight against extremism and radicalisation, migration, transport and energy connectivity and market integration.

13. SALTO SEE, Connecting Youth Work and Policy, www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/connectingpolicy/

14. Erasmus+ Key Action 2, http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/home/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-2-cooperation-for-innovation-and-exchange-good-practices/capacity_en

Cross-sectoral co-operation

By the beginning of the 21st century, Europe had set out to increase the effectiveness of public policies targeting young people. Essentially, the pursuit of more co-ordination and collaboration in the youth field is perceived as the key to success. Cross-sectoralism is one of the most cherished principles of public policy. Hence, the essence of youth policy is to co-ordinate policy measures developed and carried out in other sectors so that the concerted action would be more efficient in providing support to young people and addressing problem situations they are encountering.

This need arises from real life:

- In young people's lives, "things" happen at the same time, thus youth policies must take the different combinations of overlapping and accumulation of social conditions into account.
- "Things" happen for conjoined reasons, thus youth policies must be multidimensional and dynamic.
- "Things" happen really fast, thus cross-sectoral youth policy must be able to react fast.¹⁵
- Arising from these elements and driven by the need to support young people in their daily lives, cross-sectoral youth policy has rapidly become a standard strategic framework in youth policy.

The European Commission's White Paper on Youth (2001) defined youth policy as an "integrated cross-sectoral policy aiming to improve and develop the living conditions and participation of young people by encompassing the whole range of social, cultural and political issues that affect them as well as other groups in society".¹⁶

In May 2014, the Ministers on Youth of the European Union adopted the first EU Work Plan on Youth (2014-2015) as a tool to develop a strategic vision of European youth policy and as an implementation tool of the EU Youth Strategy. Cross-sectoral youth policy was one of the central topics of this Work Plan.¹⁷ In that framework, the Youth Ministries from Latvia and Luxembourg, in

15. Nico, M. (2014), Life is Cross-Sectoral so Why Wouldn't Youth Policy Be? Overview of existing information on cross-sectoral youth policy in Europe, <http://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/1668203/Life+is+cross+sectoral-Nico-2014.pdf/39468800-2096-4ff0-8138-4db46e6c3f31>

16. European Commission (2001), The White Paper "A new impetus for European youth", p. 73, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3Ac11055>

17. Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 20 May 2014 on a European Union Work Plan for Youth for 2014-2015, [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:42014Y0614\(02\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:42014Y0614(02)).

their role as 2015 Presidencies of the Council of European Youth Ministers, decided to jointly organise and host a peer-learning exercise on this topic, supported by the youth partnership.¹⁸

Moreover, as stated in the final declaration of the 8th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for youth, which took place in Kyiv, Ukraine on 10-11 October 2008: “The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: Agenda 2020” in formulating youth policy measures in the context of this institution it must be considered “the cross-sectoral dimension of this policy and the importance of involving young people in its formulation, implementation and follow up”.¹⁹

Cross-sectoral co-operation was broadly considered on the occasion of the youth policy reviews undergone by expert teams in 2002. In the report summarising the conclusions of the first seven reviews, it was stated that “Governments have placed a lot of faith in the capacity of cross-sectoral and interagency partnerships ... to respond to the joined-up problems caused and experienced by young people”. Once again, it is a difficult argument to rebut, but it is an even more difficult task to put into practice. The rhetoric of partnership is an appealing one, but rarely converts easily into reality. The current reality does not appear to be easier, especially in the Western Balkans.

Seminar objectives

Based on the project history and institutional context as well as a preparatory process including a concept paper and preparatory meeting held in Podgorica, Montenegro in June 2016, the following seminar objectives have been identified:

- analyse the reality of cross-sectoral co-operation in different Western Balkans countries, and thus learn from and share stories of success or challenges, in the regional context;
- listen to and interact with experts and researchers in the field of cross-sectoral (also referred to as “inter-sectoral” or “interagency”) co-operation;
- learn from the results of the desk research on the reality of cross-sectoral youth policy in the Western Balkans commissioned by the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership and its earlier work on the topic;

18. Taru, M. (2015), Peer-learning Exercise on Cross-Sectoral Youth Policy. Two seminars in the frame of the European Union Work Plan for Youth (2014-2015): Luxembourg, 15-18 June 2015, Riga, 11-12 November 2015. Report. <http://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/1668203/Peer+learning+seminar+Luxembourg+report.pdf/e21882e0-4d5f-4f45-aed8-f7215d49fb58>

19. The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020, www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/IG_Coop/Min_Conferences/2008_Kyiv_CEMRY_Declaration_en.pdf

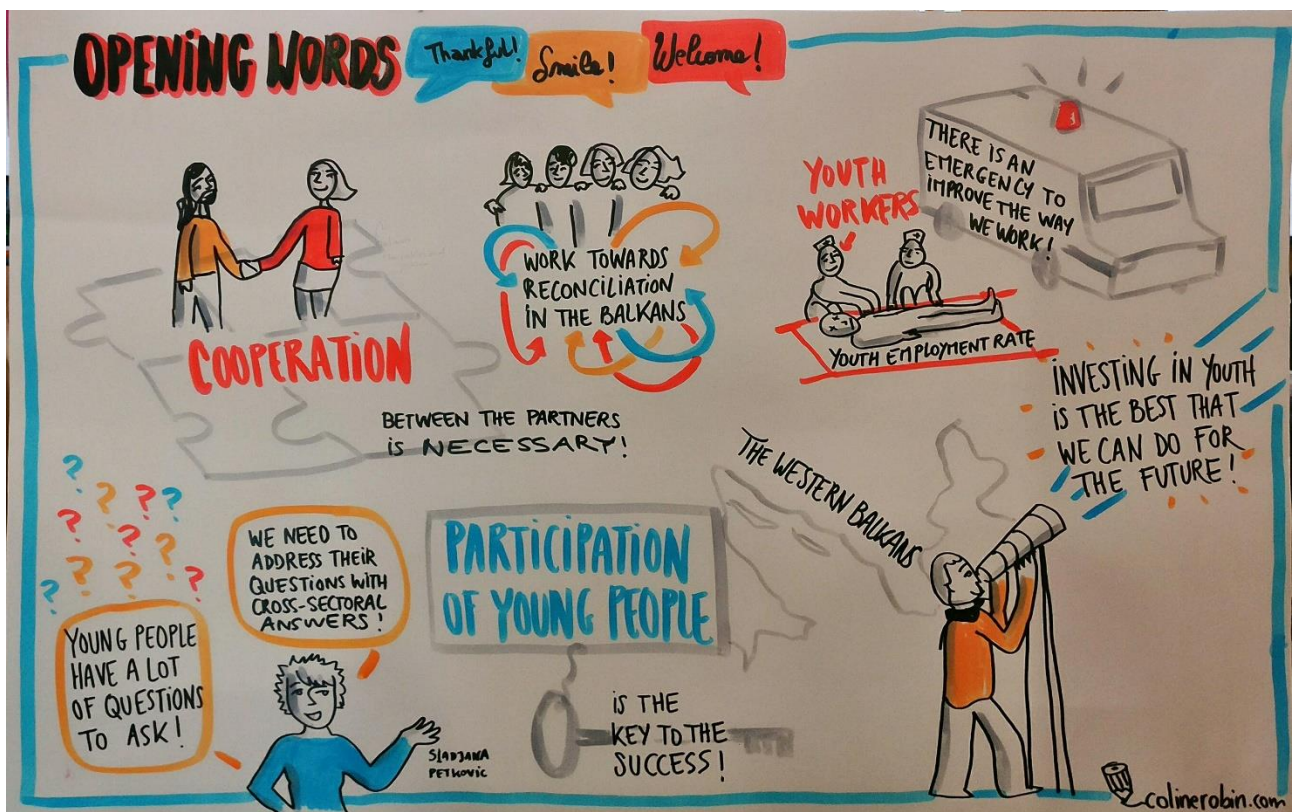
- contribute to the development of cross-sectoral youth policy co-operation at local level, especially by fostering networking of participants with the goal of constructing partnerships or coalitions for better-integrated youth policy design and implementation (especially at local level).

The team of organisers

The project was organised by the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth, represented by Davide Capecchi and Viktoria Karpatska. The seminar was facilitated by Nik Paddison and Ivana Davidovska with graphic facilitation by Coline Robin.²⁰ It was hosted by the Government of Montenegro (Directorate for Youth and Sport).

Wednesday 26 October

Opening session



The opening session consisted of welcoming speeches as well as an introduction by trainers covering the seminar programme and methods.

20. Coline Robin, <http://colinerobin.com/>.

Mr Slobodan Filipovic, Director for Youth and Sport, Government of Montenegro, welcomed seminar participants on behalf of the Directorate for Youth and Sport and expressed his gratitude at the opportunity for co-operation with the youth partnership. Mr Filipovic made a reference to the latest developments in Montenegro youth policy: the recently passed Youth Law (2016) and Youth Strategy 2017-2021 and the signing of the Regional Youth Co-operation Office agreement. Montenegro has taken into consideration the issues and needs of young people, including the need to develop inter-departmental and cross-sectoral co-operation. In order to do that, key stakeholders from the public sector, local authorities and civil society need to be involved. The government is trying to secure a better education and employment for Montenegrin youth, as investing in youth is the best investment for the future of Montenegro.

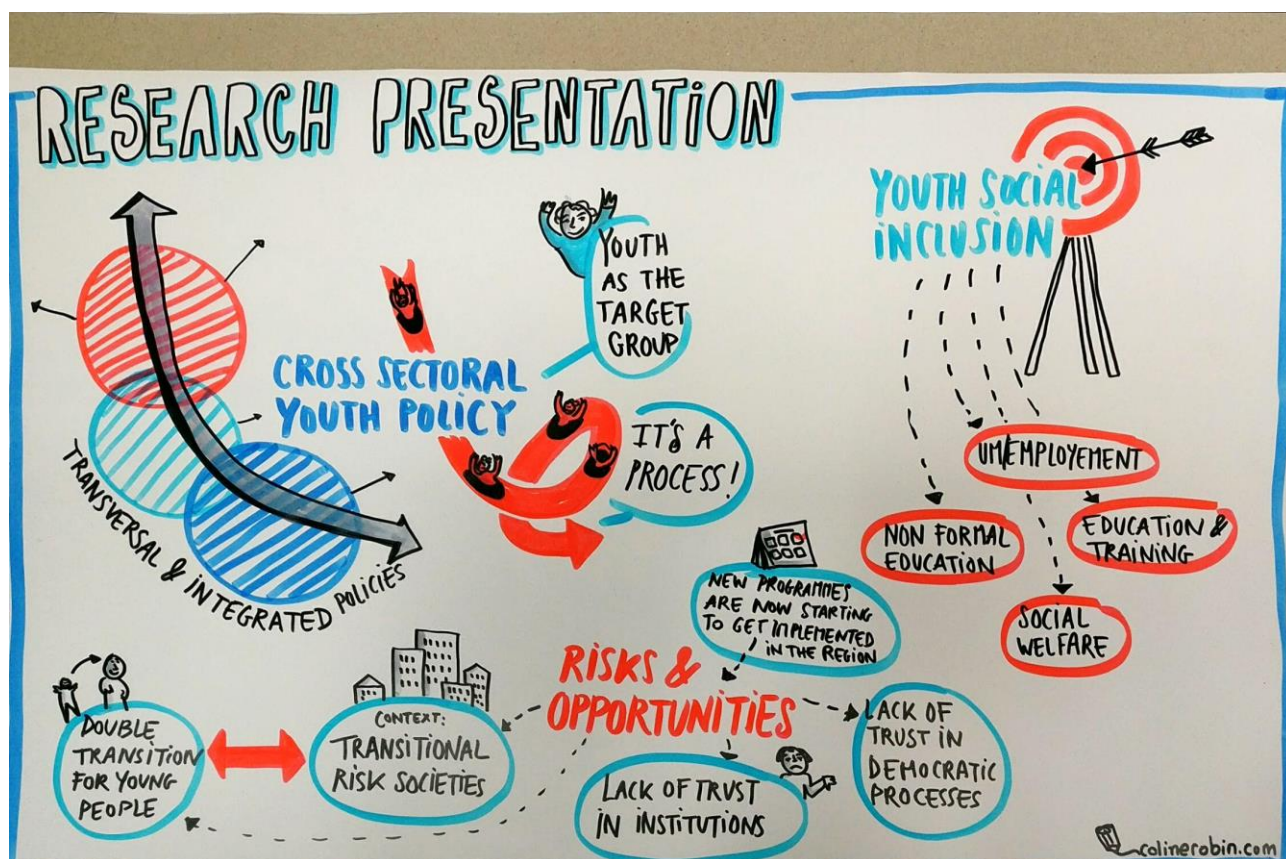
Mr Filipovic stated that he was certain that this seminar would contribute to the improvement of knowledge on cross-sectoral co-operation and allow for experience-sharing in the field of youth policy, and wished everyone successful work and good luck.

Mr Romain Boitard, representing the Co-operation Section at the Delegation of the European Union to Montenegro, thanked the Government of Montenegro, the Council of Europe, the EU and the youth partnership for organising this event, as well as thanking participants, who would be ultimately responsible for making an success of this event. Mr Boitard praised the recent establishment of RYCO and a RYCO Office in Tirana as a good example of the region's willingness to co-operate and work together on solving common problems, as well as a testimony to the EU's support for youth and the youth sector. For instance, he mentioned that in the course of that month of October 2016, five Montenegrin civil servants from Montenegro had departed for Sciences Po in Paris to participate in the EU Scheme for Young Professionals, further strengthening links between the EU and Montenegrin institutions. Cross-sectoral co-operation is essential to policy success, both in the horizontal and the vertical dimension. Establishing policy networks and facilitating network governance, and allowing for the views of all relevant stakeholders, are key to the formulation of effective policies.

Mr Boitard used this opportunity to advertise the Erasmus+ Programme, encouraging everyone to seize the opportunities that the programme presents. According to the EU Delegation, Montenegrin youth is not using all the opportunities the programme presents, and further work is needed on promoting and expanding the programme's outreach. Working with and for youth is an

urgent task. The region faces an unemployment crisis, and we need to work hand in hand to address this problem. Let's work together to improve the situation of young people.

Ms Manana Kavtaradze, Bureau member of the Steering Committee on Youth, Council of Europe, started by thanking the Government of Montenegro for hosting the seminar. This event is directly relevant to Resolution CM/Res(2008)23 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe – the seminar directly supports it. First and foremost, access to services and information is key to quality youth policy. Secondly, cross-sectoral co-operation corresponds with the Council of Europe co-management principle in youth policy making. The Council of Europe involves representatives from youth non-governmental organisations sitting down in committees with government officials who together then work out the priorities for the youth sector and make recommendations for future budgets and programmes. These proposals are then adopted by the Committee of Ministers, the Council of Europe's decision-making body. Cross-sectoral co-operation is essential for effective youth policy and this makes this seminar a very relevant and timely event. Ms Kavtaradze also wished everyone a successful meeting and reiterated the Council of Europe's interest in its outcomes.



Background paper presentation

Ms Sladjana Petkovic and Mr Marti Taru, youth policy researchers, presented the outcomes of their background research on cross-sectoral policy approaches in the Western Balkans (full paper attached as an annex).

The researchers highlighted key conclusions from the desk research in terms of challenges lying ahead and terminological as well as conceptual problems.

The first discussion concerned the differences between cross-sectoral youth policy and public policy with young people's input and participation. Key differences have been summarised below:

| CROSS-SECTORAL YOUTH POLICY | YOUTH AND PUBLIC POLICY |
|---|---|
| YOUTH AS A TARGET GROUP | POLICY-AREA SPECIFIC GOALS |
| CO-ORDINATION OF POLICIES BETWEEN MINISTRIES | INDEPENDENT POLICY AREAS, MINISTRIES AS "SILOS" |
| HORISONTAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN LOCAL AGENCIES AND ORGANISATIONS | VERTICAL, HIERARCHICAL RELATIONS |
| YOUTH SOCIAL INCLUSION | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EDUCATION AND TRAINING• NON-FORMAL LEARNING• YOUTH PARTICIPATION• (UN)EMPLOYMENT, ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SOCIAL WELFARE |

Table 1. Cross-sectoral youth policy vs. Youth and public policy

Furthermore, the researchers outlined four pillars of cross-sectoral youth policy:

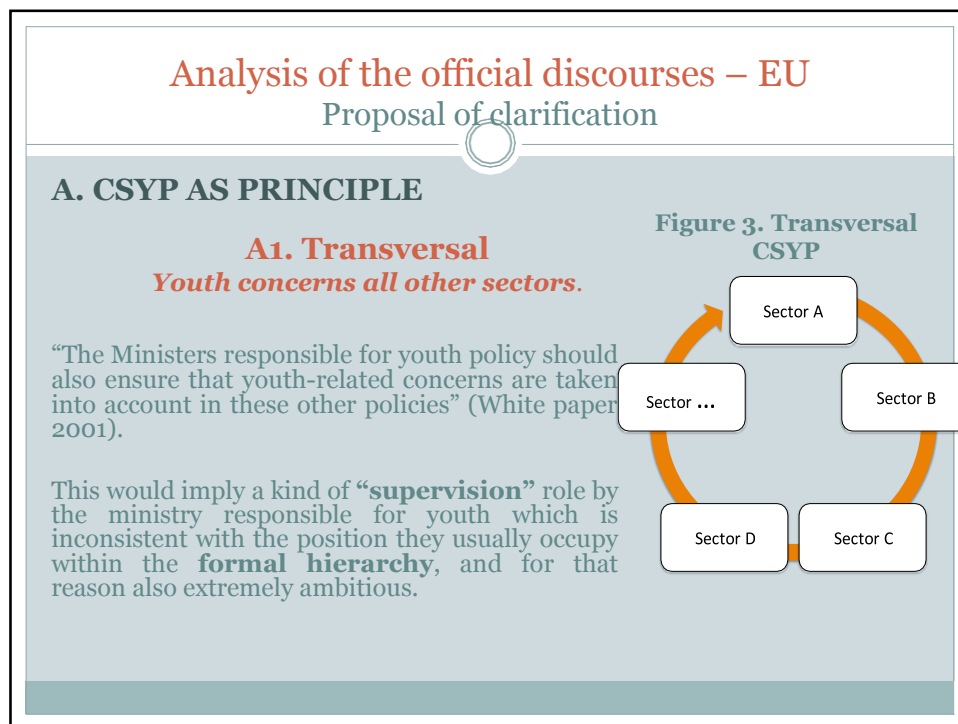
- democratic participation and network governance (including involvement of young people on an equal footing with other groups);
- sound legal framework defining duties and responsibilities;
- common identity and ownership;

- evidence base including monitoring and evaluation and assuring connections within the “golden triangle” of research, policy and practice.

Last but not least, the researchers discussed approaches to cross-sectoral youth policy such as:

- 1) a principle that can be transversal and/or integrated;
- 2) a process with fixed roles, expressed through collaboration/co-operation and/or co-ordination);
- 3) a process with flexible roles, taking the form of cross-cutting issues.

A summary outline of the differences between CSYP as a principle and CSYP as a process can be found on the following slides:



Analysis of the official discourses – EU

Proposal of clarification

A. CSYP AS PRINCIPLE

A2. Integrated

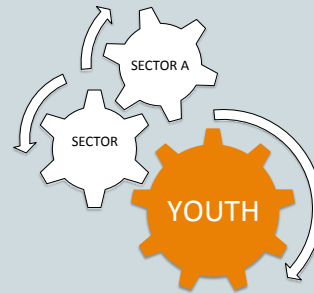
Therefore both youth policy and each one of other policies have to ensure their effective and coherent co-existence.

This would imply a mutual and regular co-consultation to avoid overlapping or disconnected goals.

These consultations would imply that every sector or office is prepared to collect and organise, on a regular basis, relevant information.

Policy based on this principle is extremely dependent on national organisational structures.

Figure 4. Integrated CSYP



Analysis of the official discourses – EU

Proposal of clarification

B. CSYP AS A PROCESS WITH FIXED ROLES

B1. Collaboration/co-operation

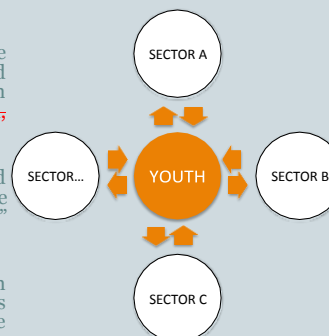
Youth as one of the peer actors and equal partner.

In this version of cross-sectoral youth policy the relations are bilateral. The youth sector would share “information and competences, objectives and goals, and also results” with each one of the other relevant sectors (Behrooz Motamed-Afshari, 2014).

This “inter-sectoral co-operation” implies “recognized relationships formed to take short or long-term actions that are effective, efficient or sustainable that in one sector alone” (Behrooz Motamed-Afshari 2014).

This would mean that the collaboration would be fragmented in pairwise groups, and many potential for conjoint solutions could be wasted. A possible solution to avoid this would be the creation of an “inter-ministerial working group as a part of the structure to develop a national youth” (Denstad 2009).

Figure 5. Collaborative/ Co-operative CSYP



Analysis of the official discourses – EU

Proposal of clarification

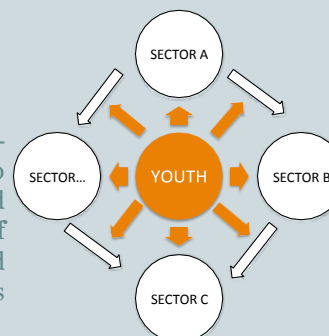
B. CSYP AS A PROCESS WITH FIXED ROLES

B2. Co-ordination

Youth leading the way of youth policy.

The main difference between this kind of cross-sectoral youth policy and the previous one has to do with the role that the youth ministry is able and willing to perform. With the **right amount of means and resources**, bilateral relations would be transformed into multilateral ones, exchanges of information goals and results.

Figure 6. Co-ordinator CSYP



Analysis of the official discourses – EU

Proposal of clarification

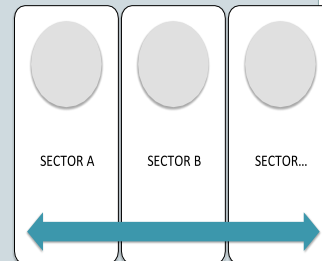
C. CSYP AS A PROCESS WITH FLEXIBLE ROLES

C1. Cross-cutting issues

All youth issues are “cross-cutting” by nature, each one of them has or implies different:

- presence or relevance in each country
- urgency in each country or region
- power relations with other governmental sectors
- dependency on the work with and by NGOs
- associations to prevention, intervention or sustainability needs
- partnership possibilities and constraints.

Figure 7. Cross-cutting youth issues



Analysis of the official discourses – EU

Proposal of clarification

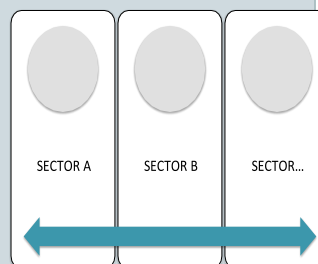
CSYP AS A PROCESS WITH FLEXIBLE ROLES

This would imply a *destandardisation* of the youth policies at a national level, which might be looked at, from a European perspective, as a negative thing.

However, doing that, it is ensured that the following is taken into account:

- organisational structure of each country
- priorities of each country
- the complexity of each cross-cutting issue
- the variety of combinations of barriers to social inclusion experimented individually
- the respect for the main principle mentioned above, that youth policy is by nature (but must be in practice) cross-sectoral.

Figure 7. Cross-cutting youth issues



Multiplied for each cross-cutting issue.

Antonio Danilovski, Centre for Intercultural Dialogue

Gostivar, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”

Who: Non-governmental organisation “Youth educational forum”, Municipality of Gostivar, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, United Nation Development Programme (UNDP), Local Youth Council Gostivar.

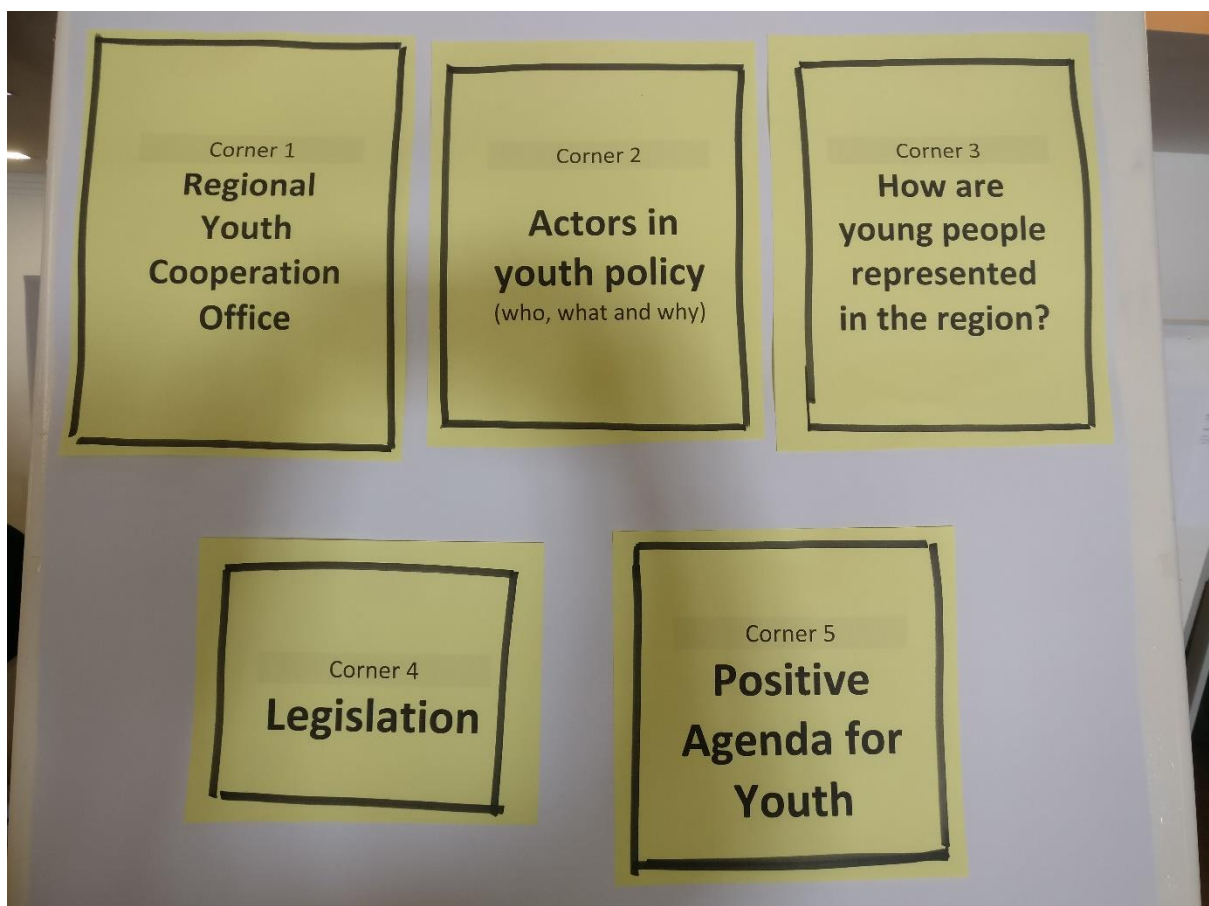
Introduction: in 2014 we worked with the Municipality of Gostivar (a city in the west of the country) on creating a local youth strategy. The initiative for the local youth strategy was brought by the Local Youth Council of Gostivar, and mediated with the support of the UNDP office. For clarification – the local youth strategy is a Public Document, strategy of the Municipality. In this case, we had the municipality accepting an initiative of the Local Youth Council and the UNDP to work together in developing this public document.

As a municipality run as one of the largest in the country, it was necessary to map all stakeholders concerned. The concerned stakeholders identified were: youth, various forms of youth association such as youth NGOs and organisations for youth, high school and student unions/parliaments, environmental and cultural associations, sports associations, youth political wings, youth media, representatives of local government and local units of the central government, representatives of educational, health care, etc.). In co-operation with the municipality all local stakeholders working in the Municipality of Gostivar were mapped.

Outline: The cross-sectoral collaboration was at the highest level. My opinion is that the municipality was willing to collaborate, because of the external factor, also because of the local youth council, which had the plan to make the strategy as soon as possible. The UNDP was the starting point in this case; with their help they found the organisation that can work and find facilitators for the whole process. After six months of constant work, after six months of communication with all the stakeholders from Gostivar and after five different facilitating groups, we were at a point where we could see a draft document. After so many documents we created a strategy that is still in the process of being implemented. After the revision, more than 70% of the topics that were concluded in the strategy.

Conclusion: Everything can be accomplished and cross-sectoral collaboration is possible if young people are concise and have everything planned. In this case cross-sectoral collaboration was easier because of the relation that municipality had it with the local youth council. Also one thing that made the collaboration easier was the UNDP, as an external factor, they had already agreement for collaboration with the municipality, for creating local youth strategy. I can add that the collaboration if we didn't have UNDP and the local youth council, and if it was a group of individuals, that wanted to work on creating local youth strategy, was going to be much harder, maybe impossible in some municipalities in Macedonia.

Kafana Balkana



Participants were divided into five “corners” (groups) tasked with analysing and discussing five aspects and institutions of regional youth policy.

Corner 1: RYCO – overview of the regional co-operation process initiated since 2014 (state of play and what's following);

Corner 2: Actors in youth policy (who, what and why);

Corner 3: How are young people represented in the region (representative and advisory bodies at local and national level);

Corner 4: Legislation (the state of play and trends in youth laws, strategies, etc.);

Corner 5: Positive Agenda for Youth – look through the outcomes of the “Connecting Youth” conference (4 July, Paris) and “Euro-Balkan Youth Express Conference of SALTO” (end of September). Youth policy role in supporting European integration, focusing on the themes of youth participation and civic engagement as well as education and mobility.

[Story of cross-sectoral co-operation 2 – CreActive – successful youth activism](#)

Dejana Dizdar, NGO Civic Creative Centre

Tivat, Montenegro

The Secretariat for Social Policy and Youth, Youth Council of Cetinje on the initiative of the NGO Civic Creative Centre celebrated Youth Day through: presentation of successful youth entrepreneurs, art and music talents, also competition for best story on the theme of youth activism and discussion made for Youth council, youth organisation and citizens on theme “Let's talk about youth”. We also made a short film, “Youth activism in Cetinje”. The Youth club at Kotor made a promotion of youth club together with local office for youth which aim was to empower their activities because they are recently opened. They invited all young people and those who feel young, the media, people from the world of culture, education and sports, as well as representatives of the local community to learn about the work of the club and its associates, the ambition to strengthen the cultural city life and encourage youth activism.

In Cetinje, co-operation with the Secretariat for Social Policy and Youth started because of personal acquaintance. On the other hand, with the Youth Office in Kotor we made co-

operation by sending an official letter for participation in project and they were very interested to be part of our project.

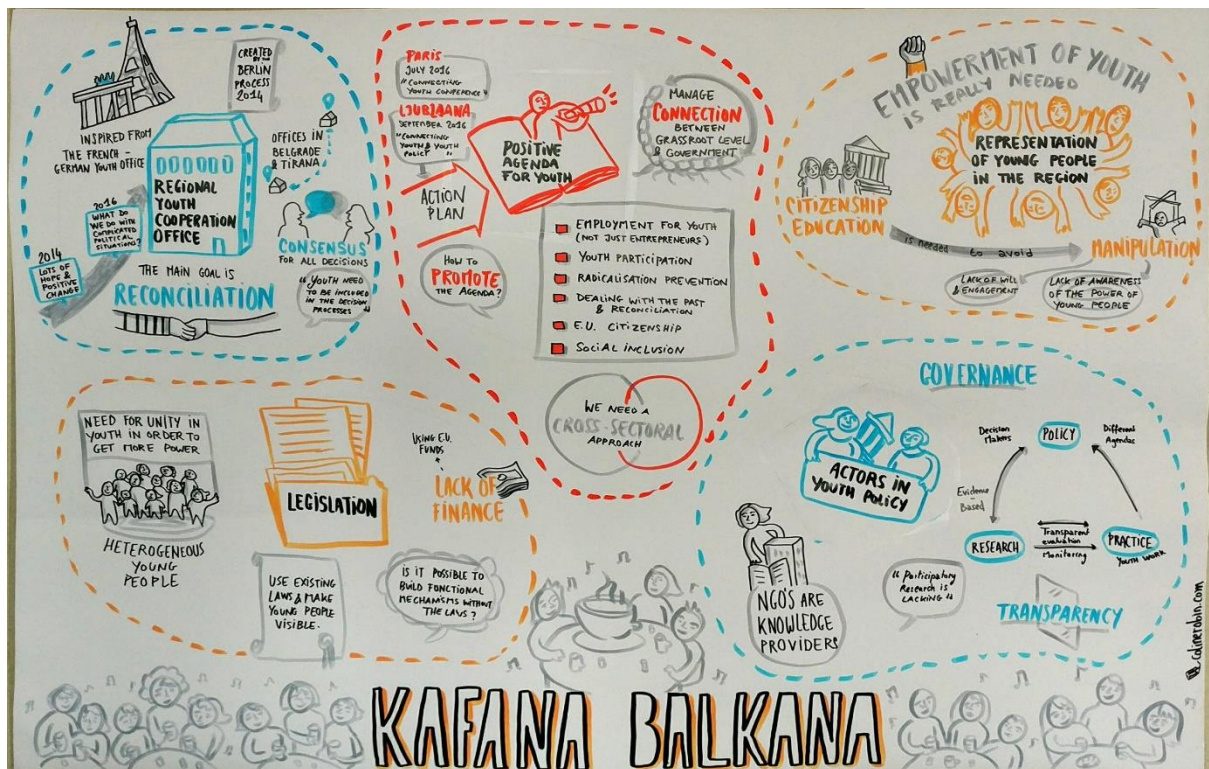
In Tivat co-ordinator of Youth Club was before part of Public body and she involved their Youth Office in the project thanks to her personal acquaintance.

Conclusions

- It is always better if you co-operate with local institutions.
 - They aren't interested in financial support.
 - Local institutions in municipalities aren't much interested in youth problems.
 - Youth must raise their voice and take the initiative.
 - It's always better to associate with other youth organisations if you want to make a point.
- Alone we can do nothing.

- Personal approach is the best way to start your story with local institutions – the best way to achieve co-operation with the institutions is often personal acquaintance.

Kafana Balkana – mapping



After lunch, participants were asked to re-visit their working groups in order to extract the most important issues arising and identify common threads between them. A list of key issues identified can be found below.

Corner 1 – RYCO

- Regional ownership
- High level of political commitment
- Cross-sectoral co-operation, including a place for civil society organisations
- Regular exchange of views and ideas
- A big window of opportunities
- Co-management
- Recognition
- Making RYCO operational (documents to field work)
- Lack of information
- Not all Western Balkans countries involved (Croatia is not a member of RYCO)

Corner 2 – Actors in youth policy

- Centralised transversal CSYP in the region
- Regional differences (planning, standards, implementing, resources)
- Authority of Europe
- Quality standards (top-down, bottom-up)
- Transparency of funding (support): accountability, monitoring and evaluation
- Lack of translators at local level
- Knowledge gap on youth
- Practice
- Youth bank example
- Sharing good/bad practices
- Use “windows of opportunity”
- Research
- Positive stories
- Highly politicised process (values, quality standards, motivation, commitment)

Corner 3 – How are young people represented?

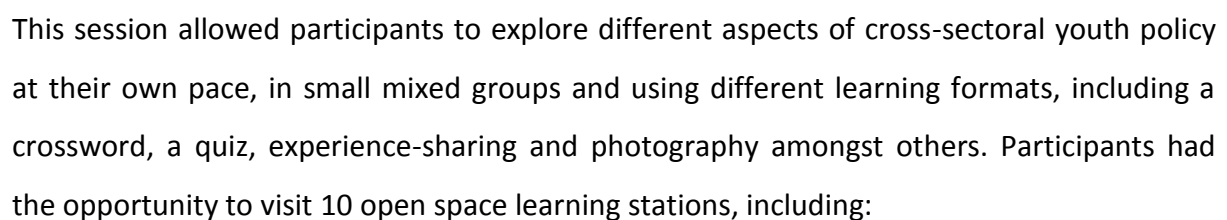
- Lack of recognition (at every level) on behalf of all relevant actors in decision-making processes
- Existing manipulation of youth
- Lack of information (uninformed youth)
- Lack of motivation to participate (young people)
- Lack of political will to ensure transparent process and room for engagement
- Awareness of different social and economic background which have influence on the opportunity to participate
- Long-term and short-term results
- Young people have the right to decide in a specific process
- Citizenship education is a basic platform for active participation
- Clarification of roles and mandate at the beginning of each process
- Actors: line ministry, advisory council on youth, national youth council, youth offices/centres, CSOs, local and regional youth councils, non-formal initiatives, youth alliances, local municipalities, political parties/youth wings

Corner 4 – Legislation

- Youth Law (Serbia, Montenegro)
- Strategies (all)
- Budgeting (youth budget)
- Evidence-based
- Capacity to develop and implement legislation
- Ensuring equity in the process
- Raising awareness among young people about existence of legislation and benefit to youth

Corner 5 – Positive Agenda for Youth

- ## Open Conference Space



24

Share experiences and knowledge of peer learning and cross-sectoral co-operation in the Western Balkans. Choose one or two examples. Each team adds learning points of their experiences onto the map with stickers.

Zone 2: Never will I ever

Participants looked at practice that did not work out in cross-sectoral co-operation based on their experiences.

Zone 3: SALTO SEE

Participants explored the issues of regional recognition of youth work and youth policy developments. SALTO SEE provided an overview on what has happened in the last few years at regional level in youth policy co-operation.

Zone 4: Youth participation tree

Participants reflected on and shared examples of youth participation. They also wrote positive and negative examples about youth participation in their communities and countries.

Zone 5: The not digital quiz

A quiz on cross-sectoral youth policy in the Western Balkans.

Zone 6: Good practice example

Each team had to find out something new about Forum MNE in relation to peer learning, youth policy or cross-sectoral co-operation and write it down on the flip chart.

Zone 7: Photo booth

A number of word clouds on a stick were created (Participation, Youth, Cross-Sectoral; Youth Policy; Co-operation; Communication, etc.). Participant teams formed some sentences or phrases with the words and took pictures. The pictures were then posted via social media with the #gettingacross hashtag.

Zone 8: European Training Foundation

Participants learnt about the ETF's work in general and specific projects in particular. VET and inter-sectoral co-operation: successful stories based on ETF's work, e.g. the GEMM Project.

Zone 9: RYCO (how did cross-sectoral work happen?)

Participants had a chance to learn about cross-sectoral work within RYCO. The aim of this zone was to emphasise the benefits of cross-sectoral co-operation for the establishment of RYCO, in order to understand how those experiences can be transferred to the local context.

Zone 10: Word Puzzle

Participants wrote down key words relating to cross-sectoral youth policy.

Story of cross-sectoral co-operation 3 – Education for youth council members

Mario Zulicek, Association of Cities in the Republic of Croatia

Zagreb, Croatia

Introduction: Education for the members of youth councils is quite an innovative model where we come to the cities all over Croatia and present a Law on the Youth Advisory Boards, exchange experiences, advise about the solutions to specific situations etc. Except the members of the youth councils, education is also designed for the local authorities, city administration, youth organisations and young people in general.

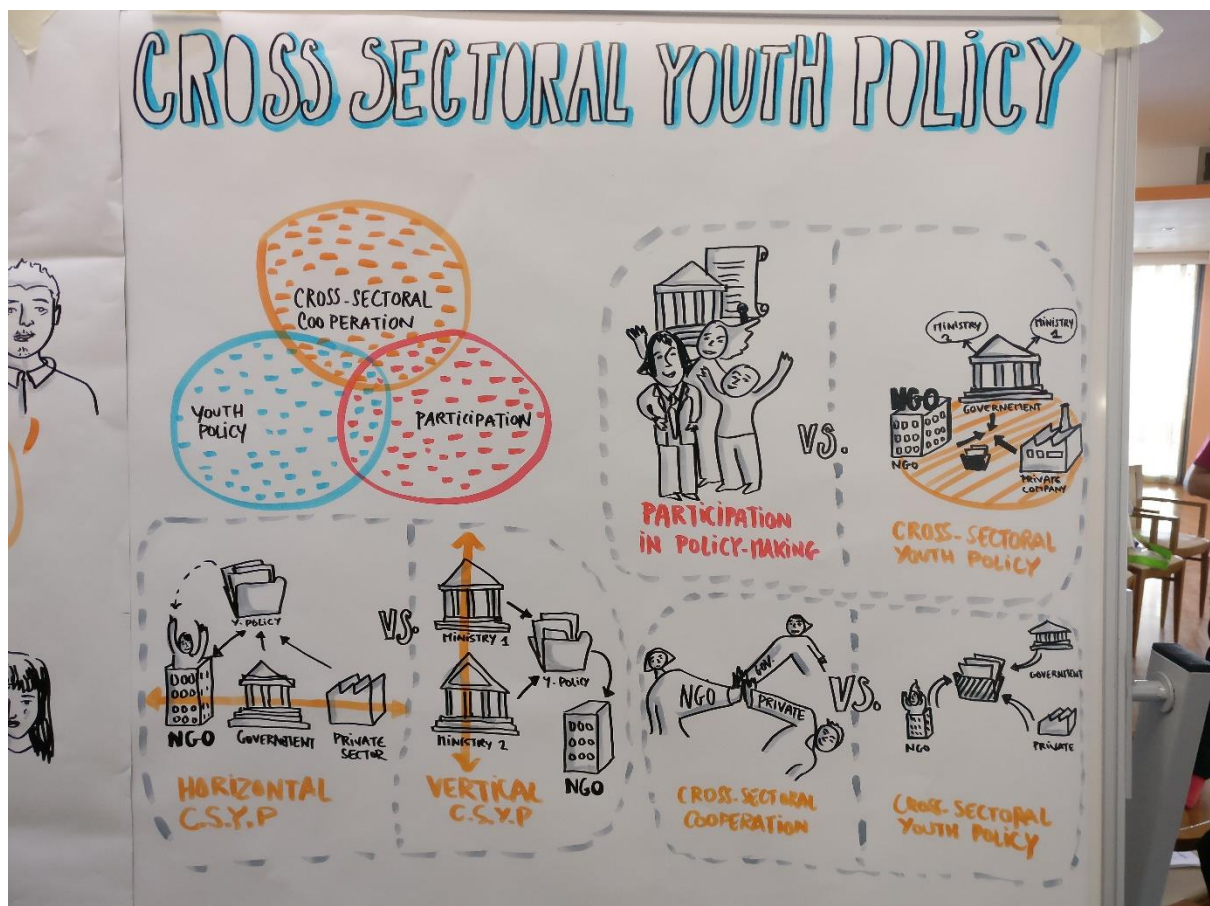
The main cross-sectoral elements: Youth advisory boards (youth councils) in Croatia mainly consist of the representatives of the non-governmental organisations. Their role in the decision-making process is to advocate the interests of young people at local, regional and national level. Based on that, they co-operate with the decision makers (public sector) directly. In order to improve that co-operation and to improve the skills of the members of the advisory boards, we are organising education for all the stakeholders.

Conclusions: Since June 2015, 24 education activities were organised across 17 Croatian counties, with more than 600 participants. By the end of the year all the counties will be part of this project.

Based on the feedback and evaluation from the participants, we are organising a yearly conference in December. Specific issues will be tackled with the representatives of the ministry, the Polish Embassy in Croatia and the Slovenian Institute on Youth Policy, amongst others.

Thursday, October 27

Summary and introduction



The day started with a recap of Tuesday's discussions, presented by both facilitators. Key points and discussion threads, discussed during yesterday's activities, included:

- Youth participation in policy making vs. cross-sectoral youth policy: many policy-making processes are based on participatory approaches and/or youth participation, but this in itself does not make them cross-sectoral; there is an important area of

overlap between youth participation in general and cross-sectoral youth policy, as CSYP needs to be participatory;

- Horizontal vs. vertical cross-sectoral youth policy: CSYP may be conducted across horizontal structures (different ministries or governmental institutions) and vertical ones (national, regional and local authorities); participants discussed both dimensions based on a model developed by M. Nico (2014).

Figure 1: The two main understandings of cross-sectoral youth policy at national level

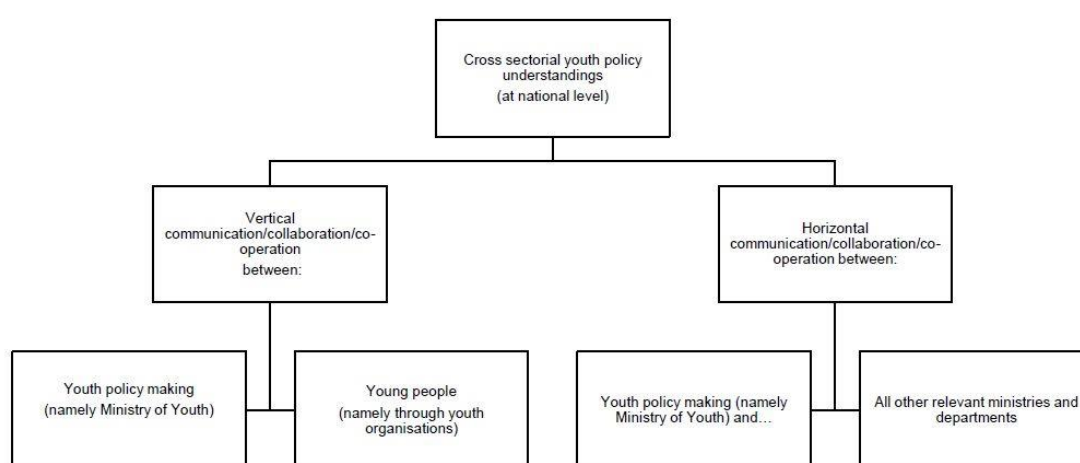


Table 2. Horizontal and vertical cross-sectoral youth policy (Nico 2014, p. 15).

- Cross-sectoral co-operation vs. cross-sectoral youth policy: there are many expressions of cross-sectoral co-operation outside of the youth sector, and not all of those are relevant to youth policy.
- Cross-sectoral co-operation as a process vs. cross-sectoral co-operation as a principle (as indicated in the seminar's background paper).
- Legal frameworks: only two countries in the region have explicit and comprehensive legal frameworks on cross-sectoral youth policy co-operation.

Based on the points above, two key dimensions of regional co-operation have emerged: motivation (of individuals, groups and organisations) and capacity (of organisations and institutions).

After the morning introduction, a recap of the previous day, and a discussion on the key points as outlined above, participants were introduced to the guideline drafting principles.

Story of cross-sectoral co-operation 4 – Roma youth engaged in education, job, and personal development

Mila Gechevska, HESED

Sofia, Bulgaria

Introduction: One of the HESED's main aim-groups are young people of Roma ethnicity. They are often at risk of social isolation, exclusion from the education system and therefore from the labour market. They will also be a work force in the coming years so it's very important for them to be educated, competent and included in the existing social systems of the society. We support them in this process by providing training and facilitating communication between these young people and the community services, social agencies, etc.

Main cross-sectoral elements: During the Project MIR (Model for Integrated Development) we organised 40 individual meetings between 50 potential employers and our clients. We studied how employers perceive our clients, would they hire a Roma youth, etc. A good number of them said that they would hire a Roma youngster without prejudice if the candidate met the professional criteria. Some of the employers, unfortunately, showed discriminatory beliefs and rejected participation in the study. More work between the NGOs and the public sector is needed, and more importantly, with the Employment Agency (EA). We have a practice of sending our clients to the EA but most of them don't meet the criteria to be included in the programmes for career development (like some general knowledge of English, computer skills, etc.), plus these services are too far away from them physically. When working with the Roma community, it's very important that the services are near to them physically (in the neighbourhood). There's also another problem – our clients have to wait to be included in such programmes and sometimes this takes month and their motivation drops ... Working with labour mediators seems to be the answer, but there are challenges too – most of these professionals are flooded with individual cases and in the process their quality of work drops or they give up.

There are also programmes funded by the government that encourage employers to hire a Roma youth, but the administrative process, all the documents needed, etc., are tiring and there's still this challenge with the soft skills of our clients, and the insufficient motivation to

work legally, when there are many options to work for the relatively same money illegally. This includes their mistrust of the majority of the Bulgarian community and the fear of discrimination.

We organised training for 72 young people and 144 parents (we always work with parents too) regarding the young people's school attendance. 50% of the people included in the training started a job and/or course for professional development. 30% of the scholars increased their attendance at an education institution.

Nine out of 30 young adults who participated in life skills training started a job or a practice. The fields of work are the shoe industry, upholstery services, wood yield, the music industry, the film industry, and fruit and vegetable treatment. One youngster started a full-time job in a pizza restaurant. Two youngsters from the neighbourhood "Fakulteta" were accepted to study in university.

Conclusions/lessons learnt: Governmental and non-governmental structures are motivated to work with the Roma people and to include them in education and business, but the measures that they take aren't sufficient or well planned. They don't rely enough on the experience of NGOs and other specialists who are directly working with this group. The current political model where is expected our clients to reach the social and/or health services doesn't work well. It's more effective when the services are easily available to our clients, and are near to them. More field work is needed with people they trust and who are close to them in the Roma ethnic group. Courses oriented in developing soft skills and applied skills are more appropriate (and, more importantly, available to the Roma youth) than professional courses that require English language, computer skills, etc.

The potential employers are positive that they would hire a Roma candidate, but the problem is that many Roma young people lack the soft skills required to last in a workplace, like always being on time, etc. Plus there's a risk that their motivation to work legally isn't very high. For the same money they would work illegally or in another country without paying additional charges, taxes, etc. NGOs and other specialists working with this group should never stop training and working with the young people, investigating their needs, and in the meantime developing their skills.

Tony Geudens, SALTO Inclusion RC
Brussels, Belgium

The SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion Resource Centre (www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/) helps young people with fewer opportunities (socially excluded groups) find their way into international mobility projects. Because such European projects have a positive impact on their future perspectives.

More particularly, we have used international mobility projects to tackle employability (2009-11), urban challenges (2011-2013) and NEET (2013-2016) in a longer-term perspective. Not a one-off course or conference, but a series of co-ordinated activities that accumulate knowledge. How?

We were not the first to do projects in this area, so we started with an inventory of what great youth work has been done before and a researcher analysed what were the underlying success factors. We made this inspiration and practical tips available in research publications:

- Inclusion through Employability: www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionThroughEmployability/
- Urban Solutions: www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UrbanSolutions/
- On Track (NEET): www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/OnTrack/

Youth work is generally convinced of the potential of international activities for young people with fewer opportunities, but it can have a lot more impact if it co-operates with other sectors. So we organised cross-sectoral seminars with youth workers, teachers, police, social workers, self-organised youth, parole officers, civil servants, employment services, etc. to explore how the different actors in contact with youth can co-operate in a holistic way to improve the situation of socially excluded young people.

This led to innovative cross-sectoral projects for youth. In 2017, SALTO Inclusion together with the Romanian NA for the Erasmus+ Youth Programme will organise a seminar collecting

all the good practices and underlying success factors, to guide stakeholders to set up cross-sectoral projects.

Some of the success factors are:

- Start from young persons' strengths – do not see them as a problem.
- Holistic person-centred approach. Involve the young persons in the design of intervention. (Nothing about them without them.)
- Use methods/interventions adapted to the young person's life world. Root the practice in the locality (i.e. non-formal, youth friendly services, flexibility, etc.).
- Set up a project that helps all stakeholders meet their objectives (shared ownership, green light of hierarchy).
- Involve the young person's context: peers, parents, role models (youth is not an island).
- Individual support, coaching (tough love).
- Longer-term interventions, no one-off quick-fixes.
- Authenticity...

Based on this work, we also continue to provide practical support to use international mobility projects as a tool to improve the lives of young people, i.e. raise their chances on the labour market, find renewed orientation in life, deal with urban challenges. We do this in the format of training courses for workers (anyone in contact with young people) working on topics such as employability, NEET or urban issues.

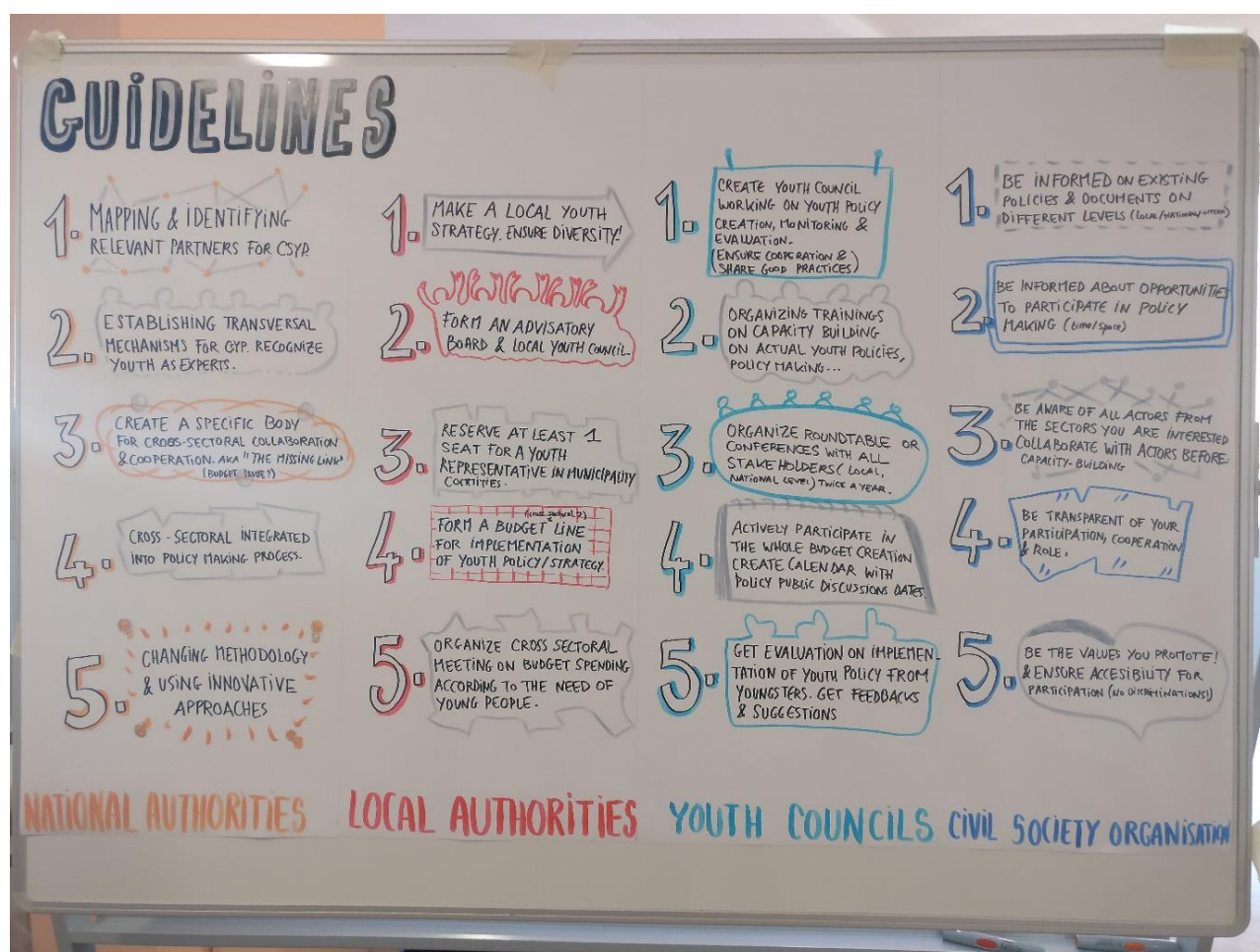
But to reach further than only 25 participants at a course, we also turn the content of the courses into practical youth work manuals that can be used by others in Europe and beyond. This stimulates more workers to use international projects as a tool in their work with young people and raises the quality of such projects.

- Inclusion A to Z: www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionAtoZ/
- Working on Work: www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/WorkingOnWork/
- Youth and the City: www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/YouthAndTheCity/

At the same time we also make sure the Erasmus+ youth programme becomes more accessible and supportive for socially excluded groups. SALTO Inclusion supported the European Commission in developing an Inclusion and Diversity Strategy for this European programme in the field of youth. And we organise a steering group to make sure this strategy is implemented through all national agencies in the field.

- Inclusion and Diversity Strategy: www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionStrategy/
- For more info, feel free to contact tony@salto-youth.net

Cross-sectoral youth policy development guidelines



Participants were asked to develop guidelines for youth policy practitioners or policy makers. They could join one of the four groups:

- youth councils
- youth organisations/CSOs
- local authorities
- national authorities.

Each group was asked to develop specific CSYP guidelines for each of the four stakeholders.

A summary of the guidelines can be found below.

Youth councils

1. Create working group, composed of young people, on youth policy design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation (including ensuring co-operation between youth council working group, NGOs and local authority officials).
2. Organise trainings on capacity building regarding the subjects of the actual youth policy, policy making, and set up a pool of researchers and a pool of trainers.
3. Organise round tables or conferences with all stakeholders (local and national level), minimum twice per year on selected topics.
4. Actively participate in the design of a complete budget; create a calendar with dates of discussions on public policy
5. Get evaluation on implementation of youth policy from young people. Get their feedback and suggestions.

Youth organisations/Civil Society Organisations

1. Be informed about existing policies and documents on different levels (local, national and international).
2. Be informed about opportunities to participate in policy making (time, place).
3. Be aware of all actors from the sector you are interested in; collaborate with actors in all phases of the policy design and implementation.
4. Be transparent in your participation and co-operation role.
5. Be the values you promote; ensure accessibility of participation.

Local authorities

1. Do make a local youth strategy. Do not just pretend to!
2. Do form an advisory board or youth council. Do not use it as a “folklore” group.
3. Do reserve at least one seat for youth representatives in municipal committees. Do not make it a political decision.
4. Do form a budget line for implementation of youth policy/strategy. Do not make it trivial.
5. Do organise cross-sectoral meetings on budgetary spending according to the needs of young people. Do not make it exclusive!

National authorities

1. Recognition of relevant partner for cross-sectoral co-operation (including capacity building for all).

2. Establishing transversal mechanisms for cross-sectoral youth policy.
3. Create cross-sectoral co-ordination and co-operation body (a.k.a. “the missing link”).
4. Cross-sectorality integrated into the policy-making process.
5. Change the methodology and use innovative approaches.

Story of cross-sectoral co-operation 6 – Tirana Youth Leadership

Ervjola Osmanaj, General Secretary of Tirana’s Youth Leadership

Tirana’s Youth Leadership

Tirana’s Youth Leadership is the only active youth network in Albania which is composed of representatives of youth organisations of civil society and youth political forums. In the framework of some years my contribution in leadership, together with the network we have built a series of strategic documents at local and central level, as follows:

- Albanian Youth Manifesto “Youth is the solution, NOT the problem”;
- the local youth action plan “The Youth-Service Provider”;
- the national action plan for youth 2015-2020, in which leadership is the process facilitator, led by the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, supported by UNFPA and the Olof Palme Centre;
- Social Contract for Youth in 2015.

Through with leadership work I have given my contribution in lobbying and advocacy for a series of youth issues and problems both in Tirana and the rest of Albania. Among the most important may be cited as follows: At local level:

- Increased representation of young people in political and decision making.
- Return to functionality of the Multifunctional Youth Centre TEN, which for years functioned as a place for artistic and cultural activities.
- Increased youth budget in the Municipality of Tirana for year 2016.
- Supported young entrepreneurs through facilitation and removal of local taxes.

At central level:

- Increased budget for promoting the employment of young people after graduation, during high school, heads mothers and community.

- Opened the Tirana Youth Centre two years ago, as a result of lobbying and advocacy of leadership.

- Free vocational training for all young people, recognised by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Youth and Sports.

During all this time I have learned that if you really want to do good things for your country, then you have to work hard and never give up, and in this way you will always achieve positive results.

Developing integrated youth services using cross-sectoral approaches

Building on the conclusions from the guideline drafting session, as well as the background research and discussions held at the seminar, participants have been asked to reflect, in national groups, on what services for young people can be developed at local level, using a cross-sectoral approach. Key questions to answer included:

- What is it about?
- What will it achieve?
- Who will be involved?
- How will it be done?

Six country groups have transformed their peer learning from the seminar and previous experience into concrete, integrated youth service ideas.

Croatia (with expert inputs from Slovenia)

Youth Centre ensuring various services and activities for and with young people in one place, including a popularisation of youth week.

Cross-sectorality is to be assured by wide co-operation between NGOs, the ministry in charge of youth, local municipalities, public services and institutions, youth advisory boards, informal initiatives and young people.

The steps to achieve this include: setting up youth centres inside the national youth programme, drafting criteria, holding public consultations, tendering, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and multiplication.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Youth Support Centre focusing on youth participation and youth employment. Key principles to be observed: peer-to-peer sharing, raising awareness of working and the

impact of unemployment, thus raising general social awareness. Cross-sectoral interaction will include educational institutions, young people and local authorities (municipalities), so that needs and problems can be turned into solutions.

Montenegro

Youth Centre Podgorica – a youth information and counselling centre, also providing education services and leisure time activities and a youth innovation lab, linked to the Regional Youth Co-operation Office. Additionally, the centre would act as a mentor and provide guidance for existing youth clubs in Montenegro.

The centre will contribute to capacity-building, participation and participatory approaches, better involvement of young people, free service provision, opportunities for cross-sectoral co-operation and fundraising support and guidance.

The stakeholders involved include: the Directorate for Youth and Sports, the Municipality of Podgorica, NGOs, UNICEF, other public institutions and youth clubs.

Serbia

A mobile unit providing services for young people in rural areas, including: personal development guidance, iCity competences, VET training, sports, civic education, ICT competence development, health education, networking and youth information services. It would include representatives from different sectors, including NGOs and local and national authorities.

Macedonia

Youth Information Platform – an integrated centre tasked with mapping the needs and possibilities for cross-sectoral work, strategic planning and implementation. It would help to facilitate access to employment and the labour market by disseminating information on the existing employment policies for young people. Stakeholders involved: youth, youth organisations, Agency for Employment (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy).

Albania

Student Card – giving low-cost facilities and other benefits to all students in Albania. It could contribute to lower transport costs, discounted books, shopping discounts, free access to cultural centres and related services (cinemas, theatres) as well as health care services. Stakeholders involved: Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, Ministry of Education, municipalities, businesses, civil society organisations, regional directorates of education.

Story of cross-sectoral co-operation 7 – [NAPOR](#) for recognition of competences of youth gained through youth work

I would like to introduce our programme through which we have a positive example of cross-sectoral co-operation – partnership, which the Serbian National Association of Youth Work (NAPOR) established in the middle of 2015, and which we strive to keep. As our name says, we are a network bringing together 68 organisations who implement youth work in Serbia, which means that our member organisations are working with their young people directly and constantly on a planned programme. NAPOR have been providing evidence through research in 2013 showing that through youth work young people gain transferable competences that employers value the most. NAPOR decided to start the process of creation of a tool that would facilitate recognition of these competences through cross-sectoral co-operation. In partnership with our Ministry of Youth and Sport we established an inter-sectoral consortium group comprising relevant actors from the public, private and civil sectors. Together we are working on this programme.

The main proposed elements of this tool are: recognition of transferable competences that young people gain through youth work programmes by employers, in order to foster youth employability; more efficient planning of professional and personal improvement of young people and recognition of impact effect of youth work on development of young people.

A passport of competence implies self-assessment of competences through an online platform, as well as assessment by a youth worker.

During 2015/2016 we ran a pilot test of the passport, implemented by 200 young people who went through the process of experimental interviews with employers. Following recommendations by young people, youth workers and employers who participated in the pilot testing, further improvement of the passport is planned.

Evaluation and closing

The final session of the seminar consisted of closing remarks and speeches and an evaluation of the seminar.

Mr Davide Capecchi from the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth thanked all participants, our Montenegrin hosts, team members, and supporting institutions and outlined the next steps: publication of the seminar report, publication of a Youth Knowledge book on cross-sectoral youth policy and inclusion of the event's conclusions into the curricula of the training course on youth policy as well as in the Massive Online Open Course that would be developed. He also reiterated the youth partnership's continuous commitment to improving the quality of youth policy and youth work in the region, and again thanked all parties for contributing to this.

Mr Marko Boko from the Council of Europe's Advisory Council on Youth also thanked all parties involved and expressed his praise for the seminar concept and contents, reminding all participants that cross-sectorality lies at the heart of the Council of Europe's youth policy structures and activities and that the Advisory Council is always happy to hear feedback from experts and policy makers as well as grass-roots organisations.

Ms Karin Lopatta-Loibl from the European Commission thanked everyone involved and highlighted the recent Council of the European Union meeting conclusions (May 2015) stating that certain core elements of the youth sector such as youth work and non-formal learning could be integrated into other sectors such as education, employment, social policy and health and could play a crucial role in addressing the main socio-economic problems of young people in the EU. She also encouraged a timely publication of the final report and wished everyone good luck in implementing the projects developed at the seminar and turning guidelines into practice.

A final evaluation session followed the closing speeches. Participants were asked to provide feedback on the following points: highlights and lowlights of the seminar, useful and not so useful inputs, suggestions and quotes summarising their experience. They were also provided with space for other comments. Selected participant quotes:

"At this point, our steps might be small, but in future they can make greater good!"

“I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve the world and desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day.” (E.B. White)

“Together we can. Young people are the present! Not the future.”

“Treat young people as the experts for their lives”

“Co-operation should be win-win-win! Two wins for co-operating institutions/sectors. The third is for youth.”

“Tailored approach – we do need it! One solution does not fit all. We shall keep on working on our flexibility.”

References:

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Abbreviations

CSO – civil society organisation

CSYP – Cross-sectoral youth policy

EU – European Union

NAPOR – Nacionalna asocijacija praktičara/ki omladinskog rada (Serbian National Association of Youth Work)

NEET – not in education, employment or training

NGO – non-governmental organisation

RYCO – Regional Youth Co-operation Office of the Western Balkans

SALTO – Support for Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities

Annexes:

- Background research paper
- Seminar programme
- List of participants