Youth Partnership

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



MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSE ON ESSENTIALS OF YOUTH POLICY

2nd edition, 8 October - 18 November 2018 COURSE REPORT



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

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From 8 October to 18 November 2018, the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe organised the second edition of its massive open online course (MOOC) on youth policy. The course aimed to develop learners' basic competences to engage in youth policy, focusing on the essential elements of youth policy, its steps and impact, and its current trends.

This MOOC was open and free for anyone interested, the only requirement being intermediate English skills. Organisers encouraged youth policy makers, youth workers, youth leaders, youth NGOs and youth researchers to join the course. Anyone whose voluntary or professional work involved engaging with young people could benefit from this course.

2251 people from 99 countries enrolled in the course. Out of them, 774 learners started the course, and 274 completed all the course module. In terms of countries where participants came from, it was quite a global course. Based on the welcome survey, in terms of participants' age, the majority of the group were aged between 19 and 34 (77%) and 18% between 35 and 50 years old.

In terms of expectations, 36% of the respondents indicated that they needed this course for their work, 25% just wanted to get some basic knowledge about youth policy and 25% of the respondents took the course because they wanted to start developing youth policy.

The learners who requested a course certificate and completed the entire course identified themselves in the following profiles: about 55% young person, 45% youth worker, 36% student, 28% researcher, 14% civil servants, 8% elected representatives (n.b. learners could identify themselves in several categories).

In comparison to the first edition of the course organised in 2017, the number of learners engaged in the course and the number of course certificates delivered increased significantly.

The six course modules were divided in several sessions that offered a variety of learning content, such as: educational texts, animated videos, pre-recorded video interviews with experts, webinars, forum discussions, group work, and youth policy examples. Most participants found the course length and methodology suitable and evaluated the course as very useful for their learning.

The course modules provided information about the basic elements of youth policy, as well as its overarching themes (inclusion, participation). One course module tackled the questions of building a youth policy strategy, so going deeper in the process of youth policy making, and one module looked deeper into youth policy implementation and evaluation. The last module allowed participants to reflect on current and future trends in youth policy, position themselves in the context of youth policy and to identify relevant themes for the future of youth policy.

The course included the following learning activities: 15 forum discussions facilitated by the course team, 3 webinars, 4 surveys, 1 group discussion, 6 quizzes, an activity for building a timeline for youth policy, brainstorming and adding ideas to an online board, and a debating activity.

In relation to learning progress, we were able to compare the degree of understanding of youth policy and the beginning and at the end of the course, despite the fact that not all those who started the course also completed it. A comparison between the initial self-assessment and the final one illustrates a significant learning progress in all the related areas of understanding of youth policy.

In terms of follow up, learners indicated that the course increased their motivation to be more involved in youth policy, for some, and to use more of the approaches and know-how they got from the course in the work they are already doing. Several participants also indicated the course as a good example of learning in order to start advocating for more youth-friendly and youth-focused public policies.

In the course evaluation, learners agreed that the course was useful for them, for their youth policy activities, provided general an overwhelming positive feedback and expressed the hope that the course will be repeated in the future.

This report offers an overview of the course, its contents and results.

2. THE COURSE IN BRIEF

From 8 October to 18 November 2018, the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe organised the second edition of a massive open online course on youth policy. The online course aimed to develop learners' basic competences to engage in youth policy. It focused on the essential elements of youth policy, the steps of youth policy (development, delivery, evaluation), its impact in the lives of young people, and participants' future steps in youth policy. The course included basic information, so it could be of particular interest to those starting off in the field of youth. The course did not aim to provide exhaustive information on youth policy.

The course was developed for participants to:

- understand the "basics" of youth policy (concepts and definitions, scope, objectives, actors, European and national levels)
- become aware of the relevance of the key elements for youth policy (cross-sectoral, knowledge-based, participation, inclusion)
- understand how to build a framework for youth policy (identifying key issues, priority areas and themes)
- understand the major steps for youth policy development, implementation and delivery, and evaluation and services included in youth policy
- reflect on the future of youth policy and their own future engagement in youth policy
- gain motivation and information about different ways of getting involved in youth policy.

The course was based on the know-how and accumulated experience in youth policy development of the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth. Most of the examples used in the course were based on the European context.

The course content was organised and activities were facilitated by one contracted consultants and one staff member of the EU-CoE youth partnership. Two consultants provided input on the course preparation and modules. Three experts were involved in the course webinars. A graphic facilitator supported the webinars and provided graphic recording for this report. More information about the course team is available in Appendix 2.

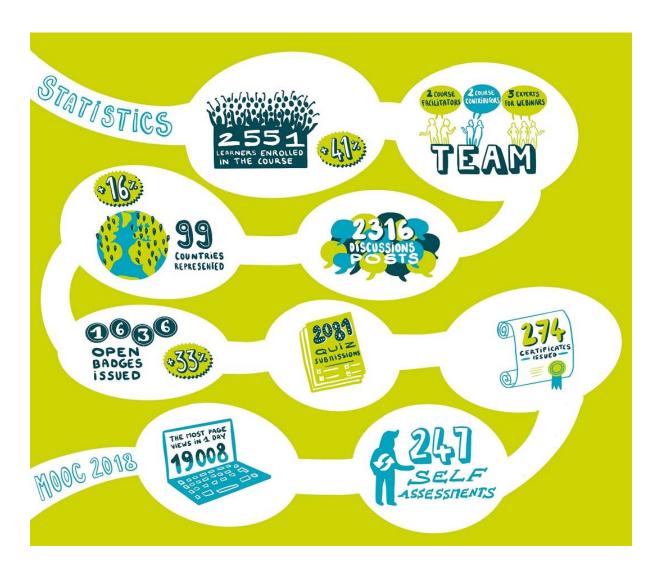
For the second year, the course was organised on the learning platform Canvas.net.

Trends from the first to the second edition of the MOOC

The first edition of this MOOC was organised in 2017. The trends in terms of interest and participation in the course that we identified from the course data available are overall very positive.

	2017	2018
Enrolled participants	1805	2551
Countries represented	85	99
Discussion posts*	2545	2316*
Quiz submissions	1685	2081
The most page views in 1 day	11398	19008
Open badges issued	1233	1636
Certificates issued	221	274

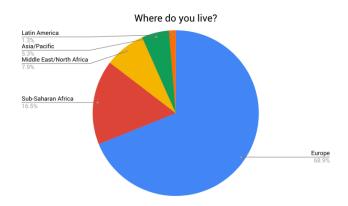
* In the 2018 edition, there were fewer discussions than in the previous edition. One forum discussion was transformed into a debating exercise using Padlet boards and another one was split into smaller group discussions.



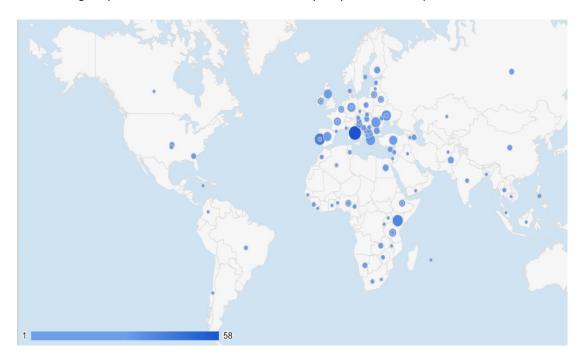
3. THE GROUP OF LEARNERS

As all massive open online courses, this course was open and free for anyone interested. The course did not have specific requirements, except for intermediate skills in English. Organisers encouraged youth policy makers, youth workers and youth leaders, youth NGOs and youth researchers to join the course. Anyone whose voluntary or professional work involved engaging with young people could and did benefit from this course.

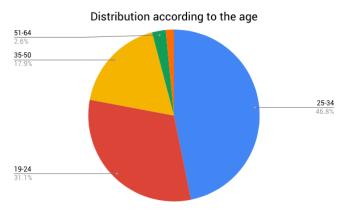
Out of the 2551 learners who enrolled in the course, 778 took the welcome survey and provided information about their profile. An analysis of the profiles of those who compiled the welcome surveyed is included below. 274 completed all the course modules. In terms of countries where participants came from, it was quite a global course. Based on the welcome survey, participants came from 99 countries, with 69% coming from Europe (countries who signed the European Cultural Convention).



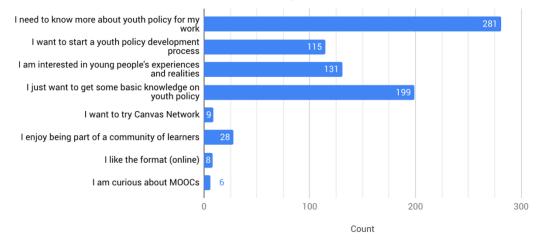
In the following map, the countries of the initial survey respondents are presented.



In terms of gender, almost two thirds of the group identified themselves as female (63.1%) and one third (35.8%) as male. In terms of participants' age, the majority of learners were aged between 19 and 34 (77.8%) and 17.9% between 35 and 50 years old, where younger than 18 (1.5%) and older than 51 (2.6%) were a minority age group.



MOOCs usually attract a rather educated target group and this course was not an exception to this trend. 84.5% of respondents had university degrees and 9.7% had secondary school education. In terms of expectations, one third (36.2%) of respondents needed this course for their work, 25.6% just wanted to get some basic knowledge about youth policy and 16.9% of respondents took the course because they were interested in the realities of young people.



Reasons for taking the course

Almost half (44.7%) of the survey respondents were willing to take an active participant role in the course, while 36.9% were planning to learn without engaging too much with other participants. 10.7% of respondents planned to take an observer role and 7.7% wanted to join only for parts of the course.

19.7% of respondents never took an online course before. The majority of respondents already had online learning experiences either on the same Canvas (17.8%) or other platforms. Only 5% of respondents had had online learning experiences with the Council of Europe or the European Commission. This is an important indicator, in terms of the MOOC reaching an audience which goes beyond those already involved in the activities of the two partner institutions.

4. COURSE MODULES

The MOOC was structured in 6 modules of which the first one was an introductory module and the other 5 were content modules:

Module 1: Your Learning Starts Here

- basic user orientation on the Canvas platform
- introduction to the structure, objectives, methodology of the course
- self-assessment questionnaire to assess learners' prior knowledge on youth policy.

Module 2: Essentials of youth policy

- information about the basic aspects of youth policy, legal frameworks for youth policy, traditions and approaches in youth policy, target groups, objectives and youth policy areas, and actors responsible or involved in youth policy and their roles
- explanation about the different levels working on youth policy, from the transnational to the local.

Module 3: Key elements of youth policy

- information about the principles of youth policy
- exploration of the role of knowledge in relation to youth policy
- exploration of the role of youth participation and the role of young people in youth policy
- exploration of the relation between social inclusion and youth policy
- exploration of the rights-based approach in relation to youth policy.

Module 4: Building a youth policy strategy

- information and reflection on the main elements of a youth policy strategy, notably about the stakeholder involvement and ways to develop a strategy
- information about examples of youth policy strategies from across Europe.

Module 5: Youth policy in action

- information and exploration of service delivery in relation to youth policy implementation
- information about the cycle of implementation of youth policy, including monitoring and evaluation and cross-sectoral co-operation
- exploration of different youth policy measures, and specifically youth work.

Module 6: The future of youth policy

- exploration of challenges affecting young people today and changes in today's world
- information about current resource, policy tools and trends, mostly on the European continent.

Each module was divided in several sessions that offered a variety of learning content, such as: educational texts, animated videos, pre-recorded video interviews with experts, webinars, quizzes, and youth policy examples. When evaluating the course, most participants found its length and methodology suitable.

For each module, certain pre-requisites were defined for the obtaining a content-related Open Badge.

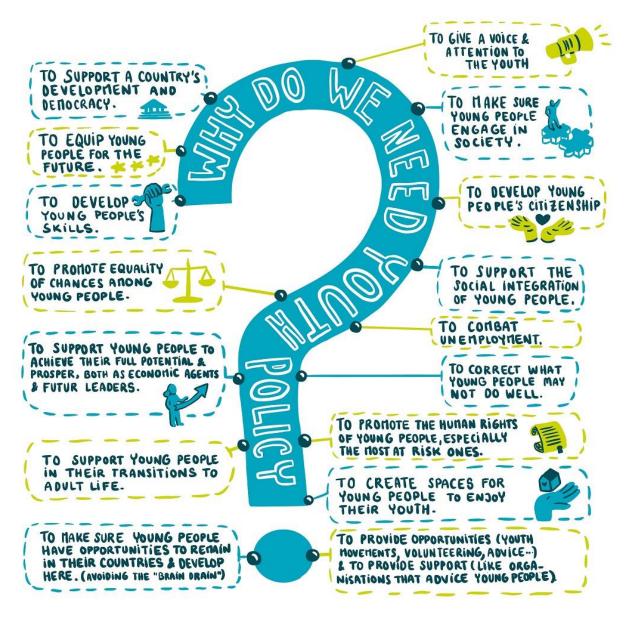


After completing all the modules, learners could receive a course certificate. 291 learners obtained the course certificate.

5. MAIN COURSE FINDINGS ON YOUTH POLICY

Module 2: why do we need youth policy?

Many learners regretted that, while in theory there are solid arguments for youth policy to be at the core of a country's policy agenda, youth policy is given little attention in many parts of the world, with very few exceptions. Interestingly, many arguments were given for youth policy to be more central, including the economic argument (if youth policy is well developed, then young people will become active economic agents). Here are some of the answers:



Learners also shared information about youth policies in their countries.

Debates on youth policy

In Module 2, learners engaged in a debate about approaches in youth policy. What follows is the summary of the main arguments learners gave in relation to one of the statements.

Statement 1: All approaches towards youth policy are good in theory, but in practice youth policy is still a very messy field with different approaches mixed up.

I agree because	I disagree because			
 there are different traditions of youth policy in different countries, so this leads to a complex picture there is a lack of information of how youth policy functions, at all levels the field is too big, and it is not clear what is in the realm of youth policy and what is not there is a gap between youth policy measures and the needs of young people approaches and measures change very often youth policy is not a priority in many countries there is a lack of co-operation of different fields and levels this happens because young people are not consulted enough on policy developments as the youth policy field is quite new in some countries, we are still in the "trial and error" period there is a lack of knowledge about youth and the youth field of the lack of accountability of the use of resources. 	 youth policy is not messy, the problem is about the access young people can have to policy measures or programmes in fact you need different approaches to tackle the variety of challenges young people face youth policy needs flexibility in practice not all approaches of youth policy are good the results of youth policy so far are positive for young people, when approaches are mixed and flexible. 			

Important elements for youth policy in learners' countries

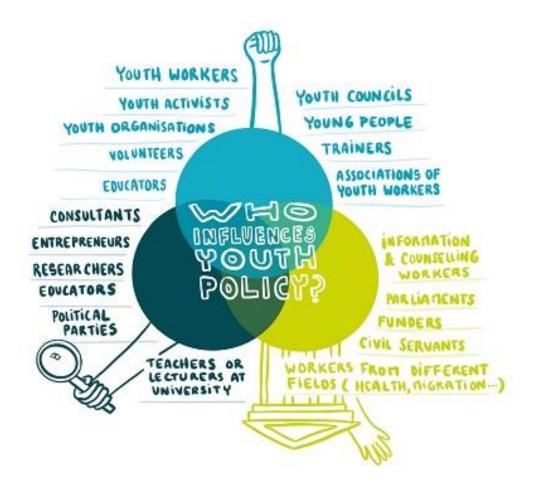
In Module 3, learners considered several important elements for youth policy in their countries, as follows:

- consistency with international practice
- being strongly linked with young people's needs
- budget (often cited as a problematic element)
- links from the national to the local level and among ministries
- from words to actions (good on paper, insufficient implementation, an important need in many countries)
- research and knowledge on youth
- having spaces for young people and youth organisations
- youth participation
- innovation and creativity in the responses proposed by youth policy
- information about youth policy at all levels and especially towards young people
- legal frameworks
- sustainability of youth policy

- the vision of youth as a resource
- having an identified public authority in charge of youth policy.

Who influences youth policy?

Learners shared about their roles in influencing youth policy, as follows:



Youth services examples from learners' contexts

Learners shared examples of youth services from their contexts, as follows:

- the youth card as a tool for young people to access, for example, training or cultural activities
- youth centres and youth work
- support services for accessing education, housing, health etc.
- entrepreneurship advice programmes
- information and counselling services
- sexual and reproductive health information and advice services
- educational programmes for young people, on a wide range of topics, from citizenship to health, etc.
- internship schemes

- various youth work programmes
- cultural services
- services for specific target groups, for example young refugees or young people not in employment, education or training
- the national voluntary service
- leisure services
- job orientation services
- integrated youth services.

Future topics for youth policy to consider

In Module 6 of the MOOC, learners raised the topics that youth policy should address in the future, as follows:



6. LEARNING ACHIEVEMENTS AND FOLLOW-UP

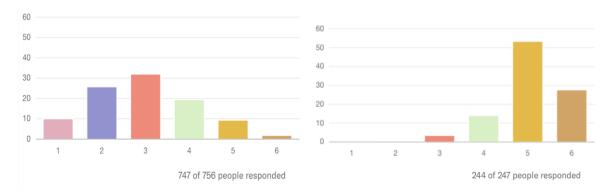
LEARNING ACHIEVEMENTS

At the beginning of the course learners were asked to do a self-assessment of their understanding of youth policy. At the end of the course they received the same questions assessing their competences after taking the course. Below the comparative graphs for each question are presented, showing on the left the pre-assessment and then the final evaluation on the right.

In all questions, participants rated their level of understanding from 1 – low level, to 6 – high level of understanding or awareness.

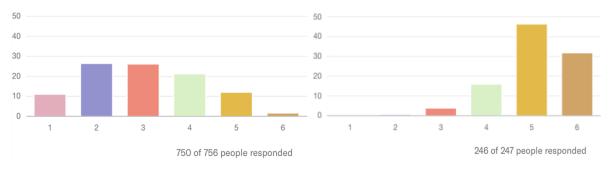
Level of understanding of the "basics" of youth policy

The survey shows that only 11.7% perceived their understanding of youth policy as very good (5) or excellent (6) before the course. After the course it increased to 81.6%.



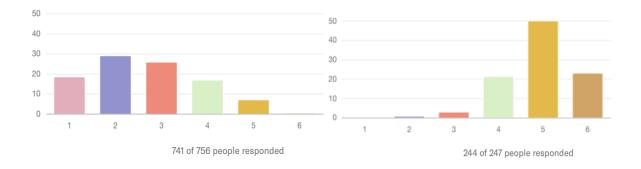
Awareness of key elements and principles of youth policy

14.2% of learners perceived their level as quite high (5) or very high (6) before the course. This increased to 78.8% after the course.



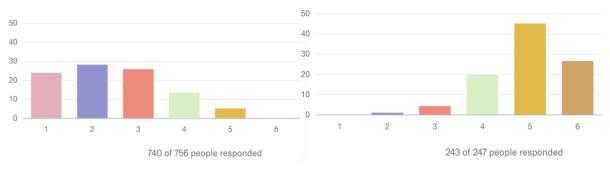
Understanding of the ways to develop a strategy for youth policy

Only 8.2% of respondents felt their level of understanding was quite high (5) or very high (6). This increased to 73.8% after the course.



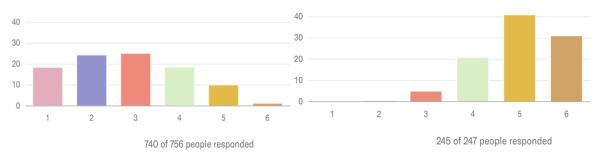
Understanding of the major steps for youth policy implementation and outcome evaluation

When starting the course, only 6,4% of respondents felt their level of was quite high (5) or very high (6). This increased to 72.9% after the course.

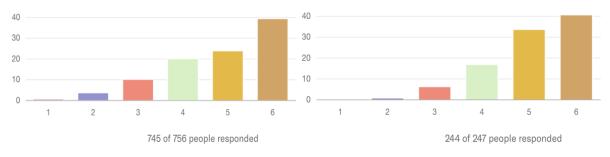


Awareness of emerging needs, discussions and trends of youth policy

12% of respondents felt aware about the trends before the course, while at the end of the course this increased to 72.6% of respondents.



The self-assessment comparison shows a substantial positive shift in terms of knowledge, understanding and awareness on youth policy among learners in the MOOC. In terms of readiness to engage with youth policy, the assessment shows an increase from 63.9% feeling quite or totally ready to contribute to youth policy in their context, to 75% of respondents feeling this way after the course.



7. COURSE EVALUATION

Many participants shared their comments about the course. When asked about what they found **most useful** about the course, the most often mentioned aspects were:

- Many learners said they learnt a lot about young people in different parts of the world
- Many learners appreciated really understanding how youth policy comes alive and becomes a process that can bring positive change in young people's lives
- Many learners became aware of how youth participation can influence policies
- Many learners also gained a wider understanding of who is involved in youth policy, and how different stakeholders could be involved in youth policy processes
- Many learners appreciated the width and depth of the knowledge that was included in an organized way in the course
- Many learners appreciated the practical examples, tips and case studies in the course
- Many learners mentioned the exercises relating to sharing about youth policies from different countries and building a youth policy strategy as very useful for their learning
- Many learners appreciated that complex information was presented in an accessible way that they could really understand
- Videos and webinars were seen as very useful learning sources
- Learning from peers was seen very positively
- Learners also appreciated that the course presented different approaches to youth policy and different ways in which young people's needs can be responded to
- Learners also mentioned that the structure of course was well developed with a step-by-step approach which was easy to follow
- The participants enjoyed the diversity of methods and the overall methodology that was followed
- Many learners found the content relevant for their reality and indicated their motivation to put what they learnt into practice in the near future.

The participants could also comment on what **they were missing** in the course. Most participants had nothing to add to this question or were satisfied. Some of the comments that were shared were:

- Having more videos in the course
- Having more time for the course to complete assignments and activities
- Having examples also from other regions in the world and from the local level
- More real-life situation exercises, such as developing a policy brief, working on real case studies, etc.
- Organising the webinars at different times of the day, and also in the evenings to allow more people to attend.

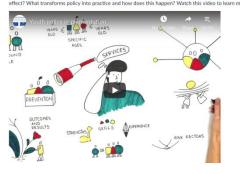


8. THE COURSE "LOOKS"

Animation style video

5.1 From youth policy to practice

How can a youth policy intention, vision, aspirations or plans of a central administration be "cascaded" to operational effect? What transforms policy into practice and how does this happen? Watch this video to learn more.



Interview with an expert

Watch the following video featuring Bojana Perovic from Serbia, who explains the role of knowledge and youth research for policy development:



B Video transcript available here.

Reflect in your own context what kind of knowledge informs youth policy and who produces this knowledge.

Questionnaires (using Typeform)

6→ How ready are you to start/continue to contribute to youth policy development in your own context after this MOOC?



Webinars



Debating youth policy approaches (using

Padlet)

STATEMENT 1: All approaches towards youth policy are good in theory, but in practice youth policy is still a very messy field with different approaches mixed up.

YES, I AGREE	NO, I DISAGREE.			
Anonymous 2mo of course in practice is a very messy field becuase it is not that easy to encourage people to achieve their dreams.	Anonymous 2mo There is no messy in approaches - the mess is in knowledge of people about the youth field and in understanding of people of			
16 🐠 0	different approaches.			
comment for an and a set of the set	1 comment			

Discussion forums



2.2.1 Webinar discussion - why investing in youth policy

8 Oct at 13:00

What do you think? Why do you think we need youth policy? We had webinar on the 11 October 2018 featuring Mr. Lasse Siurala as guest speaker and more than 70 people who joined live that day Watch the recorded webinar here and leave your comments, discuss points highlighted during the webinar or just share your view on reasons for youth policy.



Quizzes

Answer the following questions to review the main points in Module 6. You can repeat the quiz as many times as you wish.

Question 1 10 pts True or false? From the evidence quoted, national youth councils seem to be the most common way in which young people can have a role in the monitoring or evaluation of youth policy. True False

ANNEX 1. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS' COUNTRIES

*based on the welcome survey respondents data. It shows who started the course.

Afghanistan	1	Greece		Peru	1
Albania	9	Hungary	8	Philippines	3
Algeria	4	India	3	Poland	9
Andorra	2	Indonesia	1	Portugal	42
Armenia	2	Iraq	1	Romania	28
Austria	4	Ireland	11	Russian Federation	7
Azerbaijan	7	Israel	1	Rwanda	2
Bangladesh	2	Italy	58	Saba	1
Belarus	13	Jamaica	2	Sao Tome and Principe	1
Belgium	14	Jordan	4	Serbia	3
Benin	2	Kazakhstan	2	Sierra Leone	4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	7	Kenya	39	Slovakia	3
Brazil	4	Kosovo*	7	Slovenia	6
Bulgaria	10	Latvia	1	South Africa	4
Cambodia	1	Lebanon	5	South Sudan	1
Cameroon	3	Lesotho	2	Spain	21
Canada	1	Liberia	1	Sudan	1
Chile	1	Lithuania	13	Sweden	3
China	7	"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"	9	Tanzania	16
Colombia	1	Malawi	1	Thailand	3
Croatia	11	Malaysia	1	Тодо	1
Cyprus	7	Mauritius	1	Trinidad and Tobago	1
Czech Republic	2	Republic of Moldova	3	Tunisia	4
Denmark	4	Monaco	1	Turkey	27
Egypt	11	Montenegro	8	Uganda	2
Estonia	5	Могоссо	4	Ukraine	32
Ethiopia	13	Myanmar	1	United Kingdom	22
Finland	15	Namibia	8	United States of America	8
France	19	Nepal	1	Uruguay	1
Gambia	1	The Netherlands	1	Uzbekistan	1
Georgia	7	Nigeria	14	Yemen	2
Germany	22	Pakistan	10	Zambia	6
Ghana	3	Palestine	1	Zimbabwe	3

*All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nation's Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

ANNEX 2. COURSE TEAM AND CONTRIBUTORS

Main course facilitators

Mara Georgescu works as at the EU – CoE youth partnership. She has worked in the field of youth in different capacities: as a local youth worker and human rights educator, as project officer and trainer in civil society organisations and in the Youth Department of the Council of Europe as educational advisor. Her main areas of interest are youth work, social inclusion, intercultural learning and dialogue, human rights education and participation.

Laimonas Ragauskas lives in Vilnius, Lithuania, and works as a facilitator, supervisor and coach mainly in the area of non-formal learning and training for various youth work organisations, as well as local and European institutions. He has been involved in EU programmes for youth since 1999 as a youth worker and consultant. Since 2002, he has developed a large number of training courses on quality of projects implemented within these programmes.

Course contributors

Ron Salaj is a transdisciplinary activist working at the intersection of communications, human rights, technology and critical theory. Ron currently coordinates a Master programme on "ICT for Development and Social Good" launched in partnership between ONG 2.0, University of Turin, and Consoft. Ron has also co-founded "Science for Change Kosovo Movement", a radical grassroots youth-led environmental movement, investigating environmental pollution through citizen science in Kosovo*.

Sandra Roe is an Independent Social Researcher who specialises in research involving children and young people. Sandra is a member of a number of national and international research panels. She has been the National Researcher for Ireland for the last five cycles of the 'Structured Dialogue' process, an instrument to ensure that the opinion of young people is taken into account in defining youth-related policies of the European Union.

Webinar speakers

Dr. Lasse Siurala is an Associate Professor and former Director of Youth Affairs at the City of Helsinki. Siurala has also served as Assistant, Lecturer and Associate Professor of Economic Sociology at the Helsinki School of Economics in 1974 - 1994. He was Director of Youth Affairs between 1995 and 2012. Between 1998 and 2001, he served as Director of the Youth and Sports Department of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

Olive McGovern is the Head of the Youth Reform, Strategy and Participation Unit in the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in Ireland. She is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in decision making (2015-2020) and participation initiatives with children and young people. She also holds responsibility for designing and implementing reform measures of the youth funding programmes and for managing development of the National LGBTI & Youth Strategy.

Prof. Gary Pollock is the Head of the Department of Sociology at Manchester Metropolitan University. He was coordinator of the FP7 MYWEB project which established the feasibility of a Europe wide longitudinal survey of child and young people's well-being (<u>https://fp7-myweb.eu</u>). Gary was also co-initiator of the FP7 MYPLACE project (<u>https://myplaceresearch.wordpress.com</u>) which was a multi method project exploring young people and politics across Europe. He directly managed three work packages, including a representative sample survey in each of the 14 partner countries. Gary led the survey element of the INTAS funded project (Youth transitions and their family household contexts in the South Caucasus), coordinating complex retrospective longitudinal quantitative surveys in six locations across Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia (<u>https://pip-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/youth-employment-and-the-future-of-work</u>).

Graphic facilitator

Coline Robin is a freelance graphic facilitator and illustrator. As an illustrator, she creates visuals to communicate ideas in an effective and playful way. As a graphic facilitator, she captures live the messages of groups in workshop or conference settings and synthesizes them using drawings and texts. Since 2014, she has been working for different actors: NGOs, European institutions, companies or public institutions in various fields such as youth work, cultural heritage or digital rights. You can find more of her work here: www.coline.graphics.