

Youth Partnership

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



COUNTRY SHEET ON YOUTH WORK IN SLOVAKIA



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1. CONTEXT OF YOUTH WORK

- What are the historic origins and traditions of youth work in your country and if it is rooted in other realms (for example, educational, social or social pedagogy) how are boundaries of youth work defined?

The historic origins and traditions of youth work

The Communist putsch in 1948 had a very negative impact on youth work in Czechoslovakia. Youth and children organisations that were not set up under the patronage of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (for instance Junák, Sokol, Orel and others, for example church organisations), were gradually broken up, and members who resisted the ban or wished to continue their activities illegally were often sentenced to prison. The Czechoslovak Communist Party promoted as the main organisation the Czechoslovak Youth Union (Československý svaz mládeže – ČSM), the main aim of which was to exert an ideological influence on young people and promote the policies of the Communist Party. In 1949 a single children's Pioneer organisation was set up on the model of the Soviet Union within the ČSM. The banned groups, which had previously united thousands of children and young people, looked for a way to function under the aegis of organisations that were still allowed – for example, within Svazarm (Union for Co-operation with the Army). Organised free-time activities in this period were more or less standardised and were linked to schools or factories which guaranteed their ideological collaboration with the Communist Party. The Communist regime, well aware of the potential inherent in influencing the youngest generation, supported these organisations both financially and materially. From 1953 Houses of Pioneers and Young People (Domy pionierov a mládeže) began to spring up in Czechoslovakia. Pursuant to a resolution of the Communist authorities of the late 1960s, they had to be set up in all municipalities with a population of over 5 000. The task of these institutions was to organise free time for children and young people but obviously everything had to be done in accordance with the prevailing Communist ideology. Under the influence of social changes and as a result of attempts to democratise the regime of the time, in 1968 the traditional associations of children and young people (for example Junák, Sokol, Orel) were restored, or there was a fundamental transformation of them (in the Pioneers, for example), or new types of such associations came into existence. There were, for example, young technicians' centres, young naturalists' centres and young rambblers' centres. The new model for children and young people was meant to be closer and more attractive to them with the aim of meeting

their needs in a more flexible way. This trend was forcibly interrupted by the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact troops led by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1968. With the onset of normalisation, the Czechoslovak Youth Union was replaced by the Union of Socialist Youth (Socialistický svaz mládeže – SZM) which was set up by the Communist Party. Its target group were young people aged between 15 and 35. Within it, young people could do things their way, for example in art groups, but checks were made to ensure that the activity was in line with the Communist ideology. Although a number of such groupings managed to carry on their own activities for a certain time regardless of whether official Communist ideals were sustained, for most of them these activities were banned under threat of sanctions, which extended from police harassment to the risk of being removed from studies or work, and going as far as the threat of imprisonment. The change of regime in November 1989 – ushered in by the “Velvet Revolution” – signified a complete change in the field of non-formal education and informal learning as well as in the functioning of social organisations, including those working with children and young people. With the transition to democracy, organisations that had been banned during the normalisation period were reconstituted. This especially concerned organisations run on a scouting or woodcraft basis, or organisations originating from a Christian environment. The Union of Socialist Youth split into a number of independent entities, and its fission was accompanied by conflicts as the organisation’s property was privatised. With the logic of democratic development, following 1989 hundreds of new non-governmental non-profit-making organisations (NNOs) and private entities appeared, whose alternative programmes began to fill the space in the field of leisure time of children and young people. With decentralisation of political power, there was also a gradual transformation of the houses of pioneers and youth.

After 1989 and the current situation

The period after 1989 in Slovakia can be characterised by strong political changes and changes in society, which also affected youth work. We can describe this period by the following features:

- decentralisation
- deinstitutionalisation
- democratisation

- humanisation.

Youth work after 1989¹

People in Slovakia found motivation and support for creating new non-governmental organisations and being active in volunteering, which caused the development of civil society and also the formation of new youth organisations. For example, the National Youth Council of Slovakia started its activity in 1990.

As a result, the Pioneer organisation of SZM (PO SZM) as well as Pioneer groups were abolished in schools. On the other hand, Houses of Pioneers and Youth remained as part of schools and school facilities (later, they were renamed and transferred to Houses of Children and Youth and after that as Centres for Leisure Time Activities). The Central House of Pioneers and Youth of Klement Gottwald served as a methodological centre for the preparation of youth workers and for the support of the development of the educational system. It is currently known as IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute, which implements state policy towards children and youth in Slovakia.

The situation was also affected by the founding of the Democratic Slovak Republic as a new independent sovereign state.² This was also a significant and logical reason to create new separate documents and a specific youth policy.

In 1992, the first post-revolution document “Principles of state policy towards children and youth” was created, which has dealt with the approach of Slovakia towards children and youth. The document was created by the Ministry of Education. Also, the Programmes of Protection and Support of Children and Youth were created and operated from 1993 to 2007 thanks to the finances transferred from the SZM and PO SZM.

1. Information used in this part is based on the article “Youth work and social work in the Slovak Republic: connections and disconnections” written by Alžbeta Brozmanová Gregorová, Peter Lenčo and Jana Miháliková, available at: www.ymca.sk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/History-of-Youth-Work-6_ymca_slovakia.pdf

2. “Following the adoption of the Declaration of Sovereignty of the Slovak Republic by the Slovak National Council in July 1992 and the Constitution of the Slovak Republic on 1 September 1992 in Bratislava, the leaders of the political parties in the Czech lands and Slovakia in charge of the parliaments agreed on a timetable for the peaceful division of the common state. On 1 January 1993, two new independent sovereign states were founded in the centre of Europe: the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic.”

Available at: www.mzv.sk/web/en/slovakia/slovaks-through-the-century/1993-founding-of-democratic-slovak-republic

After this period, other documents were adopted to define state policy towards children and youth:

- Concept paper of the state policy in relation to children and youth until 2007

(www.iuventa.sk/files/documents/legislativa/koncepcia%20do%20r.%202007.pdf – this concept paper was aimed at children and youth up to 26 years of age)

- Key areas and action plans of the state policy towards children and youth in the Slovak Republic for 2008-2013

(www.iuventa.sk/files/documents/legislativa/2008_klucove%20oblasti%20a%20akcne%20plany%20statnej%20politiky_do_2013.pdf)

- Act No. 282/2008 Coll. on youth work support
- Action plan for youth policy for 2008-2009

(www.iuventa.sk/files/documents/legislativa/2008_2009_akcny_plan_statnej_politiky_voci_mladezi.pdf)

- Action plan for youth policy for 2010-2011 resulting from the key areas and action plans of the state policy toward children and youth

(www.iuventa.sk/files/documents/legislativa/2010_2011_akcny_plan_statnej_politiky_voci_mladezi.pdf)

- Action plan for youth policy for 2012-2013 resulting from the key areas and action plans of the state policy toward children and youth

(www.iuventa.sk/files/documents/legislativa/ap_2012_2013_schvaleny.pdf)

- The Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Youth for 2014-2020
- Concept paper on Youth Work Development 2016-2020
- Action plan for 2017-2018
- Action plan for 2019-2020

The last-mentioned documents are valid until 2020 and we provide all the details considering it in Chapter 2.

The Youth Department of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport became the relevant department towards youth policy in Slovakia. Since 2000, IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute has been co-operating on various tasks assigned to them by the ministry and started to actively participate in the realisation of youth policy in Slovakia. IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute still works as the directly managed organisation of the ministry.

- For example, has there been any research on the tradition and development of youth work (many have been published in the History series part of the Youth Knowledge Books)?

The history of youth policy is not comprehensively processed in Slovakia and we do not have any information about comprehensive research in this field. However, we assume that partial research was carried out by certain researchers.

- What is the context in which youth work happens in your country today; what is on the public policy agenda in general that may affect young people and youth policy?

All details about the context on youth work in Slovakia are provided in following chapters.

2. STRATEGIC AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK OF YOUTH WORK

- Are there one or more policy and/or legislative frameworks guiding youth work in your country?
- If yes, please reference the documents and feel free to quote relevant provisions. How does it define the purpose and value of youth work? In the absence of such formal acts, how does the state define the purpose and value of youth work?
- Who is youth work meant for (all young people or specific groups)?
- How is youth work defined by law (in legislation, in policy or programmes)?
- How do youth workers themselves define youth work in your country/what do they understand by it?

The Slovak Republic is one of the few countries that have a specific law regulating youth work.

ACT No. 282/2008 COLL. ON YOUTH WORK SUPPORT

The Slovak Republic is one of the countries that have a specific law on youth work. Youth work in Slovakia is therefore based on the Act No. 282/2008 Coll. on youth work support, that came into force on 1 September 2008. This act defines:

- the basic concepts used in youth work and sets the highest age limit for young people in accordance with European documents for up to 30 years;
- the environment of youth work and specialised youth work, including entities working with youth at the national, regional and local levels;
- areas of youth work.

The act also regulates:

- the accreditation of educational bodies and programmes in the field of non-formal education for youth;
- the financing of youth work;
- the creation of youth work systems in municipalities and at the level of self-governing regions;
- voluntary youth work in accordance with EU law.

According to this act, youth work in Slovakia is defined as: “mainly an educational activity, a societal activity, an informational activity and an advisory activity for youth, young leaders, youth leaders and youth workers.”

The full version is available at:

www.iuventa.sk/files/documents/legislativa/2008_youth_work_act_2822008_en.pdf.

STRATEGY OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC FOR YOUTH FOR 2014-2020

The Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Youth for 2014-2020 was adopted on 23 April 2014 and defines the strategic objectives of the youth policy while reflecting youth’s needs, particularly in the field of young people’s education, employment, creativity and entrepreneurship, their participation, health, well-being and relation to nature, social inclusion and volunteering. It also tackles global themes and defines strategic objectives within youth work. The strategy aims to contribute to increasing the quality of young people’s lives, particularly through development of their personalities, by preparing them to work in a constantly changing democratic environment and use their creative potential in practice as well as in their active participation in the society. The strategy is a result of an active dialogue between youth and the representatives of the state administration, regional and local self-governments and the non-governmental sector.

The strategy’s main pillars are aimed at investing and empowering young people.

The strategy’s areas for 2014-2020 are:

- education
- employability
- creativity and entrepreneurship
- participation
- youth and the world
- health and healthy life-style
- social inclusion
- volunteering
- youth work

The cross-sectoral Working Group for the state policy in the field of youth is involved in ensuring and achieving the goals of the strategy through concrete measures.

The full version of strategy is available at:

www.minedu.sk/data/files/3890_strategy_sr_for_youth-2014-2020_final-en.pdf.

Mid-term evaluation of the strategy is represented by **The Youth Report 2018**. The Youth Report maps the current lives of young people in Slovakia based on analyses, surveys and the findings of numerous Slovak experts. It follows on from the Youth Report of 2014 and has allowed us to compare the development of the circumstances and life conditions of youth in different areas, and one of the most important parts of the population in each advanced society as well.

The full version of the Youth Report 2018 is available at:

www.iuventa.sk/files/yr2018_anj_print_05122018.pdf.

A CONCEPT PAPER ON YOUTH WORK DEVELOPMENT 2016-2020

A Concept Paper on Youth Work Development 2016-2020 was adopted by the government and aims at five main areas:

- the needs of young people as a basis for youth work
- quality youth work
- stakeholders in youth work
- financing of youth work
- raising the profile of youth work and its recognition.

This concept paper is implemented by two action plans, prepared with the main stakeholders in a participatory way. The first action plan was prepared for the period 2017-2018 and the second plan is currently being prepared for the period 2019-2020.

The full version of the concept paper is available at:

English version: www.minedu.sk/data/files/8467_concept-of-work-development-with-youth-for-the-years-2016-2020.pdf.

Slovak version: www.minedu.sk/data/files/5762_koncepcia_prace_s_mladezou.pdf.

The full version of the action plan for 2017-2018 is available at:

www.iuventa.sk/files/documents/legislativa/2017/akcny_plan_ku%20koncepcii_2017_2018_482017.pdf.

Support for youth work was also strengthened by the approval of the Concept Paper on Youth Work on the level of the self-governing regions Košice, Trenčín, Prešov, Banská Bystrica and on the level of some Slovak cities, for example city district Bratislava-Petržalka, Prievidza and Martin.

A successful step was also the addition of the position of “Youth Worker” to the National Qualifications Framework.

HOW DO YOUNG PEOPLE IN SLOVAKIA PERCEIVE YOUTH WORK?

According to information gathered in the Youth Report 2018, young people perceive youth work as follows:

“I’m convinced that youth work is very important. This is the reason why I would recommend higher levels of public interest in this field, especially financial support of youth groups. I work with youth actively in Banská Bystrica, and every day we carry out different activities.”

Matej, 19, volunteer

“Youth work is a mission. I work with disabled youth and I try to teach them at least basic skills and to make their lives nicer. I like this work and, in many cases, I’m replacing a biological family. It makes me very happy when we reach success. I am very glad if I can facilitate for my client’s meetings with the community as part of the integration process. This profession is only for people who want to help and have empathy towards clients.”

Slávka, 25, employed

“I perceive youth work as a space where it is important to combine education and entertainment, to develop youth in all areas. To offer them space for personal and professional development and I do hope that they are doing well in it. Currently I work as an animator of free-time activities. I train new animators and I devote my free time to scouting.”

Timo, 23, youth worker

“I consider youth work with youth, especially aged between 11 and 18, as very difficult from with regards to motivation. Youth very often don’t know what to expect in many different activities. They are ashamed to be proactive. They are frightened to get out of the shelter and this makes it very difficult to work with them.”

Martina, 17, high-school student

Except for the specific law on youth work, youth work can be partially found, for example, in the following legislation and regulations:

- Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on education and training (School Act) and amendments to certain acts;
- Act No. 596/2003 Coll. on State Administration in Education and School Self-government;
- Act No. 36/2005 Coll. on the family and on amendments to certain acts as amended;
- Act No. 279/1993 Coll. on school facilities;
- Act No. 305/2005 Coll. on socio-legal protection of children and on social custody and on amendments to certain acts;
- Act. No. 131/2002 Coll. on universities and on the amendment of certain acts;
- Act. No. 448/2008 Coll. on Social Services;
- etc.

3. RECOGNITION

- *According to the definition of recognition there is self, social, formal and political recognition of youth work and of youth workers (professionals or volunteers).*
- *What is the situation in your country on these different dimensions of recognition of youth work?*
- *Is there any formal validation system of non-formal education and learning in youth work contexts implemented in your country?*
- *If there is a legal framework for the profession of youth work per se or embedded in other fields, please explain briefly and reference it.*
- *Is your country involved in any European or applying any national initiatives to support youth work (for example, Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio, Council of Europe quality label for youth centres, Erasmus+ Youthpass, European Youth Capitals, Youth Friendly Cities, others)?*

In Slovakia there is a lack of social, formal and political recognition of youth work and youth workers. Youth work in Slovakia does not have the status of “professional work”. Underestimation of youth work, the low status of youth workers and the deficiency in funding in the youth sector does not help the situation.

The professions of **youth worker** and **young volunteer** are defined in the Act No. 282 of youth work support (as of 2 July 2008). One of the important steps towards recognition of the status of “youth worker” was the addition of the following working positions to the National Qualifications Framework/National System of Professions (hereafter “NSP”).

“Youth worker”, available at: www.sustavapovolani.sk/karta_zamestnania-496242;

“Methodologist of youth work”, available at:
www.sustavapovolani.sk/karta_zamestnania-496243;

“Lecturer in youth work”, available at:
www.sustavapovolani.sk/karta_zamestnania-496244.

NSP as a united informative system describes standard requirements for the labour market for recognised professional qualifications. The NSP defines the requirements for professional and practical skills which are needed for the work activity in the labour market. Its main aim is to

create a united national reference register of national job standards. Information is available at www.sustavapovolani.sk.

Despite the legislative definition and definition of “youth worker”, “methodologist of youth work” and “lecturer in youth work” in the NSP, there are no universities where it is possible to study the field of “youth worker” and become a professionally certified youth worker. (It is possible to study, for example, social pedagogy, pedagogy for leisure-time activities, specialised didactics, animation of free time activities, andragogy, etc.)

The National Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Youth for 2014-2020, a Concept paper on youth work development 2016-2020 and the Action plan for implementation of the Concept paper on youth work development 2016-2020 for 2017-2018, adopted by the Government of the Slovak Republic, helped to strengthen the position of youth work. Systematic implementation of adopted measures to practice helped to perceive the needs for youth work as well.

An important step for recognition of youth work was the creation of **the Cross-sectoral Working Group for the state policy in the field of youth**, which highlighted the importance of cross-sectoral co-operation.

Recognition of quality for youth work and results of youth work is also achieved by the **accreditation of specialised activities in youth work**. Accreditation of specialised activities in youth work is realised by the accreditation committee, according to Act No. 282/2008 Coll. on youth work support, which enables organisations to become accredited educational facilities and to have their educational programmes accredited. The accreditation committee is an advisory body of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and its role is to make the decision whether to recommend an educational programme for accreditation or not.

The committee started to operate in September 2009. Currently (31.12.2018) there are 74 accredited non-formal education programmes. In total we registered 171 accredited programmes during the period 2010-2018. Civic associations represent the most common form of applicant. After successful completion of the programme, the participants receive the certificate about the specialised skills gained either by study or praxis in the particular educational institution. The results of the content analysis of accredited programmes of non-formal learning shows that the programmes are more or less oriented on the methods and

principles of non-formal learning in youth work, project management, co-ordination of volunteering; communication skills, establishment and leading the non-governmental institutions, organisation of children's camps, the development of lecturer skills, social entrepreneurship in youth work and others.³ The role of the IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute is to verify new educational programmes in practice. The successful ones may be submitted for accreditation under their own brand or offered to other organisations. IUVENTA also provides consultations on the organisations' own educational programmes, organises meetings of the accreditation committee and monitoring of accredited educational programmes.

Information is available at:

- www.minedu.sk/akreditacie-v-oblasti-prace-s-detmi-a-mladzou/

- www.minedu.sk/akreditacie-v-oblasti-prace-s-detmi-a-mladzou/

One of the main actors in the field of youth work IUVENTA, together with other partners including the third sector itself, promotes the importance of non-formal education and youth work. On 21 June 2013 IUVENTA organised the signing of the **Declaration on the recognition of contribution of non-formal education in youth work** (hereafter “the declaration”). The declaration was signed by representatives of central bodies of the state administration, regional and local self-governments, public sector organisations, non-governmental organisations and employers. The aim of the declaration was to express support for non-formal education in youth work, to recognise its contribution for young people and encourage the creation of new partnerships among various key players within the respective field. The declaration was an output of the National project financed through ESF KOMPRAX – Competencies for practice, which was implemented by IUVENTA (2011-2015). The aim of the project was to support the quality of youth work in non-formal education. Apart from building the partnerships among various institutions which led to the declaration, the project consisted of at least two weekend trainings and the preparation, realisation and evaluation of small projects of youth in order to gain and testify their competencies in practice in the field of communication, presentation, team work, financial literacy, project thinking and others. IUVENTA continues to work towards ensuring the

3. See more in “Validácia výsledkov neformálneho vzdelávania a informálneho učenia sa v SR”. Available at: www.erasmusplus.sk/uploads/publikacie/analyza_validacia_vysledkov_neformalneho_vzdelavania_a_informalneho_ucenia_4377.pdf

sustainability of two national projects in the field of youth work and non-formal education: KomPrax and Praktik – practical skills through non-formal education in youth work.

There are also other national initiatives supporting the validation and recognition of youth workers. They are usually connected with issuing the certificates which formally approve and recognise the competencies acquired through volunteering and youth work.

Since 2015, there has been available an online validation tool for competencies and skills gained during volunteering called **VSkills for Employment – “D-zručnosti pre zamestnanie”**. The tool enables volunteers to get their competencies officially certified by a special committee at the University of Matej Bel in Banská Bystrica. An online tool was developed as one of the outcomes of the project VOLWEM – Volunteering as a Way to Employment, and is supported by the European Commission. More information⁴ is available at:

<http://dzrucnosti.dobrovolnickecentra.sk/> and www.civcil.eu/slovensko/.

There are some initiatives expressing the appreciation of youth work, youth projects, youth workers, and youth volunteers by **awarding them special price**, for example:

- Heart on Your Palm (Srdce na dlani) → www.srdcenadlani.sk/;
- The Bridge (Most) → <http://most.mladez.sk/>;
- Volunteer of the Year (Dobrovoľník roka) → www.dobrovolnictvo.sk/menu/1/22/ocenovanie-dobrovolnik-roka
- The prize for active citizenship and humanity in Žilina region (Cena za aktívne občianstvo a ľudskosť v Žilinskom kraji) → <https://ocenovanie.rmzk.sk/statut/>.

The National Agency for the ERASMUS+ Programme for the Field of Youth and Sport and the European Solidarity Corps Programme in Slovakia is using Youthpass certification for recognition of non-formal and informal learning in youth projects involved in Erasmus+, Youth Exchanges, Erasmus+ Volunteering, Mobility of Youth Workers, Transnational Co-operation Activities (TCA) and Structured Dialogue meetings. There were **3 227 Youthpass certificates** issued in Slovakia during 2018.

4. For the description of the project results in English see also this report from Brozmanová Gregorová, A. et al. (2014): Volunteering as a Way to Employment. http://volwem.dobrovolnickecentra.sk/subory/Produkty_projektu/WOLVEM_vystupy_EN_web.pdf

We believe that not only the state should create the conditions for sustainable support of youth work, but also municipalities, cities and regions individually. Also, young people themselves as well as youth organisations should co-operate and create activities for better understanding of the results of youth work. In the following years, the ministry would like to support open and friendly communication not only with civic youth organisations and youth workers, but also with local and regional authorities.

4. FUNDING YOUTH WORK

- If you are able to include numbers, what is the national or local budgetary allocation for youth work in your country? If there are specific national programmes supporting youth work, what is their main aim and budget (please indicate proportionality)?
- In other words, how is funding for youth work organised in your country?
- What are the funding opportunities, who are the main funders and what are the guiding principles in allocating that funding?
- How important are international funding sources for youth work activities in your country (Erasmus+, European Youth Foundation, UN System or other sources)?

The youth work financial resources in Slovakia according to Act No. 282/2008 Coll. on youth work support are:

- subsidies from the state budget
- resources from the municipalities' budgets
- resources from the higher territorial units' budgets
- donations and contributions from legal entities as well as individuals
- revenues from advertisements
- revenues from businesses
- resources from the European Union
- other resources by a special regulation.

Financing of Youth Work is provided from the state budget on the basis of Act No. 282/2008 Coll. on youth work support and from grant schemes. Funding from state resources is based on the original competencies through shared taxes for individual calendar years. These financial resources are not bound for a specific purpose and their use is controlled by the self-government, which sometimes retains part of these resources as its original competence. The advantage of this type of financing is a greater stability of contribution to functioning and professional qualifications of employees. On the other hand, the disadvantage is a one-sided focus on children from 6 to 15, which causes a disadvantage for other young people who require other forms, methods and systems of youth work. On the other hand, youth work within the age group 15 to 18 is funded by the higher territorial units.

Financing of civic associations, informal youth groups and other activities of youth work dealing with non-formal education is based on the grant schemes of the ministries, funds and foundations.

As mentioned above, support for youth work is implemented mainly through the grant programme PROGRAMMES FOR YOUTH 2014-2020, established by the Department of Youth, Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport in the Slovak Republic and implemented by IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute. This grant scheme operates within the following six sub-programmes:

- SUPPORT of youth organisations
- PRIORITIES of youth policy
- VOICE of youth
- SERVICES for youth
- COMMUNITIES of youth
- EVIDENCE on youth.

The grant scheme PROGRAMMES FOR YOUTH 2014-2020 aims to:

- **provide** quality youth work
- **support** priorities in the Strategy for Youth 2014-2020
- **ensure** the representation of young people in the processes of youth policies at local, regional and national level
- **provide** services for young people
- **create** youth-friendly policies at the local, regional and national level
- **provide** evidence-based policy.

The general objectives of this grant scheme are:

- to increase the competences of young people for their social and professional life,
- to strengthen the position of young people in society,
- contribute to the objectives of the current national youth strategy,
- to contribute to the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy by supporting the young generation as the basis of a modern, knowledge-based society,

- to contribute to the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy, in particular in the thematic areas of education, employment, social inclusion, participation and volunteering,
- to contribute to the implementation of the Council recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee, particularly in the area of further education,
- to contribute to the objectives of the document “The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020”, especially through the development of youth policy, youth work and youth research.

The financial sources of the Programmes for Youth 2014-2020 provide funding to various stakeholders, but mainly to the youth NGOs. The eligibility criteria, as well as the quality indicators, have been identified by the Youth Department in a very active communication and co-operation with the representatives of the youth NGOs and other stakeholders. External experts are invited to provide written assessments on submitted projects and grant requests. Their views are being considered by the members of the selection committee, which produces final proposals for funding to the Minister of Education, Science, Youth and Sport of the Slovak Republic.

Table 1 represents the financial resources allocated annually for the grant scheme.

Table 1

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
SERVICES for youth (SLUŽBY)	€275 315.00	€159 755.00	€270 000.00	€254 853.00	€313 050.20
VOICE of youth (HLAS)	€145 000.00	€209 700.00	€167 000.00	€146 760.00	€151 552.50
PRIORITIES of youth policy (PRIORITY)	€117 808.00	€198 874.00	€234 925.00	€180 448.00	€152 632.30
SUPPORT of youth organisations (PODPORA)	€1 781 542.00	€1 738 008.00	€1 627 393.00	€1 656 416.00	€2 137 322.00
COMMUNITIES for youth (KOMUNITA)	€0.00	€0.00	€41 818.00	€58 999.00	€0.00
EVIDENCE on youth (DÔKAZY)	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00	€38 060.00	€16 126.00
TOTAL	€2 320 665.00	€2 306 337.00	€2 341 136.00	€2 335 536.00	€2 770 683.00

Youth work may also be supported by the various grant schemes announced at the regional or local level or by the grant schemes announced by the organisations of the private sector or the third sector (non-governmental sector).

The Erasmus+ Programme is another significant and effective part of financing youth work in Slovakia. Erasmus+ supports activities in the field of education, training, youth and sport. Priorities of this programme in the field of youth are support for non-formal education, but mostly support for the projects in the area of creating strategic partnerships, co-operation, and improving awareness of youth work at international, national and local level. Financial support is growing.

As stated above, the annual state contribution to youth work was in previous years approximately €2.3 million (€2.7 million in 2018) and from the European Union it was €3.1 million for the Erasmus+ programme. From 2019 the European Union is increasing its contribution up to €4.4 million for the Erasmus+ programme and approx. €1.1 million for the European Solidarity Corps. Despite the financial support, youth work is both undervalued and underestimated and needs much higher support, not only from the state, but also from the local and regional level, and should not necessarily consist only of financial support.

5. STRUCTURES, ACTORS AND LEVELS IN YOUTH WORK PROVISION

5.1 State structures/public authorities deciding on or providing youth work

- Which government levels are involved in planning, supporting and delivering youth work? If there are separate agencies, please mention them here. Please include numbers of people or entities where data is available.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND SPORT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (the ministry) is the central body of the state administration of the Slovak Republic, which ensures the implementation of state policy in relation to children and youth. Responsibilities toward the non-formal education of children and youth are covered by the Department of Youth, particularly in the following areas:

- preparation of strategic and standard-setting materials in this area;
- awarding of certificates of professional qualification for specialised activities in the field of youth work;
- provision of methodological guidance for youth clubs (centres for leisure-time activities and interest-based facilities);
- international co-operation in the field of youth;
- financial support for youth work.

Currently, there are five people working at the Department of Youth of the ministry, including the director of department, who is **Ivan Hromada, PhD.**

Other ministries directly involved in youth policies:

Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic → www.culture.gov.sk

Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic → www.minv.sk

Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic → www.enviro.gov.sk

Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic → www.employment.gov.sk

Ministry of the Economy of the Slovak Republic → www.economy.gov.sk

Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic → www.telecom.gov.sk

Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic → www.health.gov.sk

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development → www.mpsr.sk

Representatives of above-mentioned ministries are also members of the Cross-sectoral Working Group for the state policy in the field of youth.

Other relevant actors with nationwide scope, regional scope or other umbrella organisations involved partially in youth issues

The following actors are members of the Cross-sectoral Working Group for state policy in the field of youth as well:

the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities;

the Committee for Children and Youth of the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality;

the Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia;

the Union of Towns and Cities of Slovakia;

the Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic;

the Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information;

the National Youth Council of Slovakia;

Bratislava Self-Governing Region;

Trnava Self-Governing Region;

Nitra Self-Governing Region;

Banská Bystrica Self-Governing Region;

Žilina Self-Governing Region;

Trenčín Self-Governing Region;

Prešov Self-Governing Region;

Košice Self-Governing Region;

the Association of Centres of leisure-time activities;

the Association of Information and Counselling Youth Centres in the Slovak Republic;

the Student Council for Higher Education of the Slovak Republic;

the National Youth Parliament;

the Association of Regional Youth Councils;

Junior Achievement Slovakia;

the Slovak Business Agency;

the Federation of Employers' Associations of the Slovak Republic;

the Association of Adult Education Institutions in the Slovak Republic;

the National Union of Employers;

the Platform of Volunteer Centres and Organisations;

the Young Entrepreneurs Association of Slovakia;

the Parliamentary committee in charge of youth issues;

the Education, Youth, Science and Sports Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic.

IUVENTA SLOVAK YOUTH INSTITUTE

IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute is a state organisation directly managed by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic. The main focus of its activities is youth work and implementation of the state policy towards children and youth,

resulting from the STRATEGY OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC FOR YOUTH FOR 2014-2020 in nine key areas: education, employment, creativity and entrepreneurship, participation of youth in policy and decision making, health, well-being and relation to nature, social inclusion and volunteering. IUVENTA also tackles global topics, Agenda 2030, youth participation on the life of municipality, school, region, inclusion of young people with lack of opportunities into society, gender topics.

IUVENTA is the hosting body of the **National Agency ERASMUS+ Programme for the Field of Youth and Sport**, responsible for implementing grant programmes, international educational activities, European information network for youth and youth workers **Eurodesk**, and the **European Solidarity Corps**.

The scope of activities of Iuventa includes:

- non-formal education;
- methodical and informational activities in the field of youth work;
- provision of administrative support and consultations on the grant scheme of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic Youth Programmes 2014-2020;
- tasks related to the accreditation of specialised activities in youth work activities of the Accreditation committee;
- activities to support the recognition and improvement of the quality of youth work, international co-operation.

IUVENTA offers various educational activities/training activities for youth and youth leaders, volunteers, youth workers and the general public. The offer of educational activities includes: Soft skills, Romani leaders in youth work, Project management in youth work, Prevention of socio-pathological phenomena, Outdoor activities and their use in youth work, Induction programme for youth leaders, Supporting young people in their career choices, Education of leaders of international youth activities, Education reflecting the needs of young people with disabilities, Kompas – the manual for human rights education with young people, The project focusing on participation through the following dimensions: Education about school parliaments – for pupils, students and co-ordinators of schools, parliaments at primary and secondary schools, Thematic trainings for advanced learners that aim to teach the process of creating experiential programmes for young people – Talent in action, EnviroExperience and Global education, Agenda 2030. Human Libraries – one of the main priorities of Iuventa is to

challenge stereotypes, prejudice, social inclusion and equity among youth. One of the methods we use is The Human Library.

Iuventa, specifically the Department of Olympiads and Competitions, offers administrative support of talented children through 17 nationwide Competitions and Olympiads in Slovakia. Competitions are voluntary, based on the interest of pupils and youth. They are an integral part of the Slovak formal education system and are supporting implementation of the long-term educational concept of the ministry in the field of supporting gifted and talented children and youth. Olympiads and Competitions are based on several qualifying rounds at the level of school, municipality and the state. The Olympiads and Competitions are designed for gifted and talented pupils and their role is not to test the knowledge that students received at school. Its tested content and competencies exceed the content of the State Curriculum – the goal is to support development of talented youth and gradually prepare them for more demanding challenges.

5.2 National or local youth councils

NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL OF SLOVAKIA

Rada mládeže Slovenska (the National Youth Council of Slovakia) (RmS) is an umbrella organisation of children and youth organisations in Slovakia. It was created in 1990 as a civic association. It works on behalf of youth organisations without regard to their political and religious views, nationality or ethnic origin. At the moment it consists of 25 registered civic associations and non-profit organisations that represent over 60 000 children and young people all around the country. RmS represents and co-ordinates the needs of its members in communication with state and public administration. It participates in creating an environment that enables children and youth organisations to carry out their activities effectively and smoothly. RmS also creates a network of organisations and associations active in the youth area, supports their exchange of information and experiences, organises lectures, seminars and conferences, often with international partners. RmS besides organising support events for member organisations also organises a number of its own projects. It organises annually the award of voluntary youth work and systematic youth work called Most in the following categories: “Young leader”, “Long-term benefits for youth work and volunteering” and “Best project”. Since 2016 it has started to develop its own research programme focusing mainly on youth and youth work research. Besides other activities, RmS is also a co-ordinator of the National Working Group for Structured Dialogue with Youth in Slovakia and together with its

member organisations is dealing with the Structured Dialogue. RmS is a member of the European Youth Forum (European Youth Portal 2018).

Website: <https://mladez.sk/>

REGIONAL YOUTH COUNCILS

Regional Youth Council of Žilina Region – www.rmzk.sk/

Regional Youth Council of Bratislava Region – <http://rmbbrk.sk/>

Regional Youth Council of Trnava Region – www.rmtk.sk/index.php/en/

Regional Youth Council of Nitra Region – www.rmknk.sk/

Regional Youth Council of Prešov Region – www.rmpk.sk/index.php

Regional Youth Council of Košice Region – <https://rmkk.sk/>

Regional Youth Council of Banská Bystrica Region – <https://rmbbk.wordpress.com/>

These Regional Youth Councils are not part of the National Youth Council of Slovakia, but they have their own umbrella organisation – the National Youth Parliament of Slovakia.

NATIONAL YOUTH PARLIAMENT OF SLOVAKIA

The National Youth Parliament is a nationwide organisation that unites the local youth parliaments in Slovakia. The organisation tries to support young people who are trying to make a positive change in their community. It is the main partner of the youth parliaments and acts on their behalf. It currently has 23 member organisations (meaning 23 Slovak towns with an established youth parliament) and represents their interests at the national level. The National Youth Parliament also co-operates with various national or international stakeholders in the field of youth.

The number of local youth parliaments may be higher, but we have evidence only of those who are members of the National Youth Parliament.

YOUTH PARLIAMENTS

Youth parliaments are local organisations that represent young people in municipalities all over Slovakia. They help young people in promoting their interests, identify their needs and

try to fulfil them. In addition, they organise cultural, environmental and educational activities, youth clubs, information and counselling activities and other interest-based activities. Youth parliaments are working closely together, exchanging experiences with other youth parliaments or youth organisations. The youth parliaments are working together to strengthen the position of the National Youth Parliament in the youth sector in Slovakia.

5.3 Youth and youth work NGOs

MERS have detailed information about the activities of those organisations which are supported by the state grant scheme. Therefore, we can ensure a certain level of quality of these organisations which results from reports of evaluators who review each project in detail. Table 2 shows all the organisations that were successful with their applications during 2017 and 2018 and got financial support from the ministry:

Table 2

1.	A Centrum
2.	Asociácia CVČ SR
3.	Asociácia krajských rád mládeže
4.	Asociácia pre mládež, vedu a techniku
5.	Bratislavské dobrovoľnícke centrum
6.	Centrum dobrovoľníctva
7.	Centrum komunitného organizovania
8.	Centrum pre podporu neformálneho vzdelávania
9.	Centrum voľného času Stará Ľubovňa
10.	Centrum voľného času Košice
11.	Dedinská únia heľpianskych aktivistov
12.	Detská organizácia FÉNIX
13.	Dobrovoľnícke centrum Košického kraja
14.	DOMKA – Združenie saleziánskej mládeže
15.	eRko – Hnutie kresťanských spoločenstiev detí
16.	Expression o. z.

17.	Ideálna Mládežnícka Aktivita
18.	INEX Slovakia- občianske združenie
19.	Informačné centrum mladých Banská Bystrica
20.	Informačné centrum mladých Partizánske
21.	Informačné centrum mladých Prievidza
22.	Informačné centrum mladých Topoľčany
23.	Informačné centrum mladých v Hanušovciach nad Topľou
24.	Inštitút neformálneho vzdelávania
25.	Ipčko
26.	KASPIAN
27.	Klub Prieskumník – Pathfinder
28.	Laura, združenie mladých
29.	Mesto Nové Zámky
30.	Mládež ulice
31.	Mladiinfo Slovensko
32.	Nadácia otvorenej spoločnosti Bratislava/NOS-OSF
33.	Nadácia Pontis
34.	Nadácia pre deti Slovenska
35.	NODAM – Združenie detí a mládeže
36.	Platforma dobrovoľníckych centier a organizácií
37.	Prešovské dobrovoľnícke centrum
38.	Rada mládeže Banskobystrického kraja
39.	Rada mládeže Košického kraja
40.	Rada mládeže Prešovského kraja
41.	Rada mládeže Slovenska
42.	Rada mládeže Trenčianskeho kraja
43.	Rada mládeže Žilinského kraja

44.	Slovenská debatná asociácia
45.	Slovenský skauting
46.	Spoločenstvo evanjelickej mládeže
47.	Spoločnosť priateľov detí - Li(e)nka
48.	Spoločnosť priateľov detí z detských domovov Úsmev ako dar
49.	Stredoškolská študentská únia Slovenska
50.	Strom života
51.	SYTEV
52.	Szlovákiai Magyar Cserkészszövetség - Zväz skautov maďarskej národnosti
53.	TeCeMko- trenčianske centrum mládeže
54.	V.I.A.C. - Inštitút pre podporu a rozvoj mládeže
55.	YMCA na Slovensku
56.	Youth Watch
57.	Záhorácky Fénix
58.	Združenie Informačných a poradenských centier mladých v Slovenskej republike
59.	Združenie kresťanských spoločenstiev mládeže
60.	Združenie mariánskej mládeže

Source: Department of Youth, Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic

Some of them are also umbrella youth NGOs and represent their member organisations, promote their activities and protect their interests in relation to other stakeholders.

Table 3 mentions various civic organisations working with youth in Slovakia according to the data published by the Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information in “Children and Youth in numbers”. This publication brings an overview about the activities of organisations working with children and youth. These data are collected at the end of each year, mainly

from the ministry. In 2017, it was possible to collect information about 37 organisations and some of them are the same as stated above among the supported organisations.⁵

Table 3

1.	AIESEC Slovensko
2.	Asociácia krajských rád mládeže
3.	Asociácia pre mládež, vedu a techniku
4.	ART&SPORT, o.z.
5.	Detská misia
6.	Detská organizácia Fénix
7.	Detská organizácia YETI
8.	Združenie saleziánskej mládeže
9.	Stredisko sv. Františka Saleského
10.	Hnutie kresťanských spoločenstiev detí
11.	Ideálna mládežnícka aktivita
12.	INEX Slovakia - občianske združenie
13.	KERIC
14.	Združenie mladých Laura
15.	Mladí sociálni demokrati
16.	Mládež ulice
17.	Združenie detí a mládeže NODAM
18.	Klub Prieskumník Pathfinder
19.	Občianske združenie Podhoranček
20.	Priateľ
21.	Občianske združenie Ivánska 21
22.	Rada mládeže Košického kraja

5. Available at: [www.cvtisr.sk/buxus/docs//OddMladezASport/Mladez/Rocenka/2017 deti-a-mladez-v-cislach.pdf](http://www.cvtisr.sk/buxus/docs//OddMladezASport/Mladez/Rocenka/2017%20deti-a-mladez-v-cislach.pdf).

23.	Rada mládeže Prešovského kraja
24.	Rada mládeže Slovenska
25.	Rada mládeže Trenčianskeho kraja
26.	Rada mládeže Trnavského kraja
27.	Rada mládeže Žilinského kraja
28.	Slovenská asociácia športu na školách
29.	Spoločenstvo evanjelickej mládeže
30.	Slovenský skauting
31.	Sme takí akí sme
32.	Občianske združenie Usmej sa na mňa
33.	SPDDD Úsmev ako dar
34.	Združenie kresťanských spoločenstiev mládeže
35.	Združenie mariánskej mládeže
36.	Zväz skautov maďarskej národnosti
37.	YMCA na Slovensku

Source: www.cvtisr.sk/buxus/docs//OddMladezASport/Mladez/Rocenka/2017_deti-a-mladez-v-cislach.pdf

5.4 Other relevant actors

We could also include other actors relating to the youth policy. We have chosen a few of them as examples:

- Asociácia nepočujúcich Slovenska (Slovak Association of the Deaf) → www.aneps.wbl.sk/
- Spoločnosť na pomoc osobám s autizmom Bratislava (Community for Help to People with Autism) → www.sposa.sk/
- IPčko (Online counselling for Youth) → www.ipcko.sk/
- Strom života (Tree of Life) → <https://stromzivota.sk/>

- Úrad podpredsedu vlády SR pre investície a informatizáciu (Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatisation of the Slovak Republic) → www.vicepremier.gov.sk/
- Úrad splnomocnenca vlády SR pre rozvoj občianskej spoločnosti (Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government for the Development of the Civil Society) → www.minv.sk/?ros
- Medzinárodná cena vojvodu z Edinburghu (The Duke of Edinburgh's Award) → www.dofe.sk/en/
- ADRA Slovensko (The Adventist Development and Relief Agency) → www.adra.sk/o-nas/
- Nadácia otvorenej spoločnosti (Open Society Foundation) → <http://osf.sk/en/>
- Človek v ohrození (People in Need Slovakia) → <https://clovekvohrozeni.sk/>
- Inštitút pre verejné otázky (Institute for Public Affairs) → www.ivo.sk
- EDUMA (Emotional learning and storytelling) → <http://eduma.sk/>
- LEAF → www.leaf.sk/
- Agentúra Rozvoja Tradície, Kultúry, Remesla, Umenia a Harmónie (Agency for the Development of Tradition, Culture, Craft, Art and Harmony) → <http://artkruh.org/>
- Nadácia Krajina harmónie (The Harmony Landscape Foundation) → <http://nkh.sk/>
- TANDEM → www.tandemno.sk/en/about-us
- ŠPIRÁLA – Spoločnosť environmentálne-výchovných organizácií (Community of environmental education organisations) → www.spirala.sk/o-nas/
- etc.

We consider it important to state that there are many more civic organisations and non-governmental organisations working with youth in Slovakia that directly contribute to development of youth work and deserve appreciation. They can be found at the Evidence of Civil Associations (<http://ives.minv.sk/rez/registre/pages/start.aspx?type=oz>) or at the Register of Non-profit Organisations (<http://ives.minv.sk/rez/registre/filter/filterucel.aspx?type=rno>) according to the field of activities or objectives.

6. FORMS AND EXAMPLES OF YOUTH WORK IN YOUR COUNTRY

- How is youth work happening in your country, for example, is it youth centre-based, online youth work, detached or outreach youth work, open youth work, are NGOs or local authorities the main providers, etc.?
- Are there specific forms the state encourages or supports more and why?

Youth work consists of many diverse activities, which should make transition to adulthood for young people easier. Youth work is perceived as an educational, a social, an informational and a consulting activity for youth, young leaders and youth leaders. It is based on meaningful activities which are happening outside the process of formal education and which react to the needs of young people. It is based on the voluntary participation of youth, a partnership approach and mutual respect. It is mostly organised in youth clubs (centres for leisure-time activities, interest-based facilities), non-governmental organisations and non-formal groups. Local authorities in some areas (cities and municipalities) do not take any initiatives and don't offer any extra services to support youth work. In the upcoming period, it is necessary to strengthen the support of non-organised youth via legislation as well, because the numbers of organised youth are very low. It would also be good to accept measures supporting youth work by creating financial support for youth workers in institutions, organisations, and municipalities which have the capacity to develop youth work. In addition to state institutions and non-governmental organisations, municipalities play an important role in the field of youth work which should create appropriate material, financial and personnel conditions for sustainable support of youth work available to all young people (Youth report, 2018, pp 9-10, www.iuventask/files/yr2018_anj_print_05122018.pdf).

There are also some initiatives and projects aimed at young people trying to connect formal education and non-formal education or non-formal education happening in schools. For example, two of them are the accredited project “Lifeology/Životológia” (www.zivotologia.sk/) and the project “Mini-Erasmus” organised by the civic organisation Future Generation Europe (<http://futuregenerationeurope.eu/en/mini-erasmus-2/>). Both of these projects were awarded The National Career Guidance Award 2016 by the Euroguidance centre for their work with secondary school students became an examples of good practice also promoted abroad.

- Is there support for youth work targeting specifically young people with fewer opportunities? If yes, who supports it and who carries it out?

The ministry constantly supports social inclusion and organisations targeting specifically young people with fewer opportunities, mostly through the grant scheme “Programmes for Youth”, more specifically the “PRIORITIES of youth policy” programme. The need for social inclusion is highlighted also in the Strategy of the Slovak Republic for youth for 2014-2020. IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute organises educational activities aimed at social inclusion as well, whether it is for youth workers or especially for young people from disadvantaged conditions. Among the above-mentioned civic organisations, there are some supporting specific groups, for example young Roma, young deaf people, etc.

Currently Slovakia has no standards in the field of social inclusion at youth work level. In this field there are only varied publications with examples of good practice. The most complex definition of social exclusion is defined in the National Strategic Framework for combating social exclusion and poverty. The context of problematic inclusion and social inclusion of youth was divided into two groups, the socially excluded youth group and the youth group at risk of social exclusion. Youth living in segregated Roma settlements in the eastern part of Slovakia have been widely considered over the past five years as the most vulnerable and excluded. An emerging strong communication and isolation barrier towards this group is a direct consequence of absent contact with the majority population. This creates a definitively strong obstacle in the adaptation of youth in the educational process and their access for using leisure-time activities. Consequently, the secondary factor is low interest in self-development, self-identification, exploration of their own identity and needs. Some of the most endangered youth groups at high risk of poverty are youth in crisis situations caused by the breakdown of their family, youth in foster care and professional families, street youth, youth from incomplete families, youth with educational barriers, youth from geographically remote areas, youth from other cultures, religions, ethnicities, teenaged parents and young people with disabilities. Each year more than 1 000 youth leave orphanage care as and enter adulthood. Termination of care by reason of reaching adulthood and starting their independent life accounts for more than one third of all terminations of care. Leaving the orphanage as soon as possible is one of the risk factors which cause youth to be unsuccessful in life. The basis for inclusion is to have a place to live, to have a job, to be employed and to have inspirational social contacts. Extension of stay, gradual transition, and placement in groups for young adults decreases the risk of being unsuccessful in the labour market and increases integration in life. There are no official statistics in Slovakia about the number of people with hearing impairments. According to some qualified estimates, every year 200 children are born

with a serious hearing impairment. Up to 90% of children with hearing loss are born to parents with normal hearing. Heavily impaired hearing has an impact on the complex development of a person. As a consequence of poor hearing they are not able to understand the spoken word. From hearing impairment difficulties a child faces difficulties in understanding the complexities of the world around them from the view of society and their own family. In the context of the terms “street youth” or “door-key child” we understand young people who are growing in a restricted living environment, with a cluttered housing environment formed by concrete apartment buildings from the communist era. This environment mainly determines their free-time activities. Youth and children search for self-realisation opportunities and interaction with new people by meeting in playgrounds or benches, or just spending time in online space. Based on our experience and observation we could state that young people from these types of settlement are being endangered by social exclusion especially in cases where they do not have a support network outside of school which is able to offer support at crucial times. The consequences are pathological phenomena: truancy, drug abuse, engaging in racist and extremist groups, and suicidal thoughts. Currently the situation in Slovakia shows progress only in two areas – Roma youth and youth with a low level of education. On the level of state policy, national procedures are absent in the areas of inclusion of youth with sensory disabilities, communication barriers, learning disabilities, physical and health disabilities and youth growing out of biological families and living in situational crisis (Youth report 2018, pp 6-7, www.iuventu.sk/files/yr2018_anj_print_05122018.pdf).

Appropriate measures in this area should be:

- implementation of surveys and research about status of disadvantaged youth groups;
- increasing promotion, availability and awareness about special tools which make learning easier. To engage disadvantaged youth to leisure-time activities by adjusting space, providing physical devices and software programs, etc.;
- supporting establishment of social enterprises helping with employment of youth and employability of disadvantaged youth (mentoring practice or internship, first job offers, training centre workshops);

- support of greater sensitivity to the needs and expectations of multiple socially excluded youths from government, municipality and the third sector (Youth report 2018, pp 6-7, www.iuventa.sk/files/yr2018_anj_print_05122018.pdf).

- Please give three examples of successful youth work practices representative of youth work in your country?

Živé knižnice (Human libraries)

This project of the IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute aims to tackle stereotypes and prejudice, and strengthen tolerance through stories of people who faced different prejudice and exclusion. The project is based on personal meetings of youth with disadvantaged people in our society. Students and young people have the opportunity to hear and discuss their personal stories and ask questions in a private atmosphere.

There were also two national projects supported by IUVENTA:

KOMPRAKX (Competencies for practice)

The project was co-financed from the European Social Fund. The objective of the project was to support the quality of work with young people in Slovakia and help to develop competences of the young generation for their future practice.

Through non-formal education, the national project enabled young people to actively acquire competencies relevant to their future employer as well as their life in society. It allowed them to take responsibility for their environment, respond to the needs in their area, organise a small project and thus test their competencies in practice. Thanks to this positive experience, young people felt motivated to continue to develop particular socio-personal skills (that is, soft skills). The project also included building partnerships with employers and institutions of formal education to create a platform for co-operation between organisations and institutions and contribute to the recognition of the contribution of non-formal learning in youth work.

More than 12 000 participants took part in the project's educational activities directly, but the project has affected more than 24 000 people via small community-based projects implemented by the project participants.

PRAKTIK (Practical skills through non-formal education in youth work)

The project was co-financed by the European Social Fund. The objective of the project was to create an effective system of further education for the staff working with young people and youth leaders and to ensure the implementation and spread of the innovative experience programmes.

The project also aimed to enhance the quality of interest-based activities in youth work and thus ensure the development of practical skills; to create the space for youth leaders to participate actively in the preparation of activities and to guarantee the transfer of know-how from youth workers to youth leaders. About 250 youth workers and 250 youth leaders took part in the project's educational activities and consequently prepared educational activities for more than 2 400 children and young people. New methodologies for interest-based education in youth work were elaborated in the form of videos and distributed to youth workers.

Škola bez nenávisti (No Hate School)

The No Hate School programme is designed for primary and secondary schools that want to strengthen their preventive measures in the area of hate speech and bullying. In the pilot year there were seven schools involved (three elementary schools, three grammar schools and one secondary vocational school). The aim of the "No Hate School" programme is to support schools in the prevention of hate speech, bullying and in developing values of tolerance and mutual respect in communication.

During the programme, they undertake an on-line audit via online questionnaires for students, parents and school employees, then develop an action plan based on audit results, and once the activities are implemented, the improvement of the situation in key areas is re-evaluated. Answers to the questionnaires are evaluated and interpreted by an expert team which also cooperates with the school to develop an action plan, receive methodological and educational materials, and participate in training and activities under the programme. In the pilot year, participating schools are involved in verifying the questionnaires and setting up the programme and its compliance with the real conditions at elementary and secondary schools.

The participating schools have the opportunity to obtain a certificate (basic, intermediate and top level) demonstrating compliance with the quality standard in eight areas important for building a culture of tolerance in schools, preventing bullying and hate speech in communication.

- Do you have examples of digital/online youth work developing?

IPčko – Internetová poradňa pre mladých (Internet youth counselling)

The organisation provides online, free and anonymous psychological and social help for young people. During 2018, representatives of IPčko spoke with 13 000 young people via online chat or e-mail and advised them on various topics and problems.

Moreover, IPčko has created a project called “Dobrá Linka” (“Good line”). Dobrá Linka is a psychological internet counselling project for young people with health disabilities. It creates a safe space for young people with disabilities to share their problems and thoughts with professional psychologists.

<https://dobralinka.sk/>

www.ipcko.sk/

OKO – Objav kompetencie online (Discover competencies online)

This project was created by the organisation “Kaspian” in co-operation with the organisations “Skauting” and “Inex”. The aim of the project is to illustrate youth work and volunteering in the form of an online game and help to share the information about youth work. This online game shows players what youth work can look like, what can be taught by youth work and what competencies can be developed.

www.objavkompetencieonline.sk/hra/koordinator

7. QUALITY STANDARDS

- Are there any competence frameworks or quality standards guiding youth workers and youth work activities in your country?

There is no National Youth Work Competency Framework or standard-setting instrument and no examples of good practice for youth policy guiding youth workers in Slovakia.

There is a definition of knowledge and skills requirements of youth workers in the National Qualifications Framework/National System of Professions. As mentioned in the previous section on recognition, within the National System of Professions there are three competency profiles of workers in the field of youth work: Youth worker, Methodologist of youth work, and Lecturer in youth work. The National System of Professions defines general abilities, professional knowledge and professional skills for each profile.

There is a need for establishing a systematic approach which will help to increase the quality standards in youth on a national level.

Act No. 282/2008 Coll. on youth work support also establishes “accreditation of an educational facility”, meaning state approval of an educational facility’s competency to carry out a specialised activity within the area of youth work. The act maintains a list of accredited educational facilities with specialised activities in youth work and which is able to issue a certificate of acquired professional competence.

The 2014 Youth Strategy of the Slovak Republic for 2014-2020 suggests “the adoption of a set of legislative measures to validate the pedagogical skills and qualifications in formal and non-formal education” and “to promote the recognition of skills acquired through youth volunteering by systems of formal and non-formal education and the labour market side”.

The organisations which are approved to register and apply for the grant from the ministry have to meet defined standards for the quality of youth organisation and youth work. Applications submitted for the grant scheme are assessed by external professionals. The quality aspects are defined in the Grant Programme Guide. IUVENTA, as a responsible institution for administrative support of the programme, organises information seminars, provides consultations, receives and evaluates applications and monitors supported projects to ensure the quality of the supported organisations and projects.

The organisation applying for a grant also has the opportunity to increase the quality of the organisation and its activities by meeting the higher standards (specified for each programme differently) and following the Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Youth 2014-2020.

Besides the quality standards which must be followed in the funding scheme Programmes for youth, the Platform of volunteer centres and organisations has developed quality standards for volunteer management and recommendations for youth work in the voluntary field. The Platform of volunteer centres and organisations has defined the following areas of work with volunteers, which quality standards focus on:

- volunteer management
- legal and ethical frame
- financial and material sources for volunteering
- becoming a member of the team
- work responsibilities and a profile of volunteers
- process of recruitment of volunteers
- preparation and training of volunteers
- communication with volunteers and support of volunteers
- evaluation and appreciation
- registration, documentation and evaluation of the volunteer programme.

More information is available at: www.dobrovolnickecentra.sk/en/activities/quality-standards-in-volunteers-management.

We can also mention the consultations and regular information seminars organised by the National Agency ERASMUS+ Programme for the Field of Youth and Sport, which aims to increase the quality of applications and their projects.

- Is there any structure involved in overseeing their implementation? If not, what guides the quality aspects of youth work?

In addition to the above-mentioned information, youth clubs (centres for leisure-time activities and interest-based facilities) are guided by legislative Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on education and training (the School Act) and on the amendment and supplementation of some laws as amended (§146) with effect from 1 September 2008). Only those youth clubs which meet the specified criteria and conditions can join the network of school facilities eligible to carry out educational and training activities according the above-mentioned law.

- What evaluation references are used to assess the quality of youth work?

N/A

8. KNOWLEDGE AND DATA ON YOUTH WORK

- Is there any research or a system of continuous documentation and study of youth work in your country? If there are national research structures researching youth work, please include their name and a link to their page.

Only a small group of researchers and experts in Slovakia dedicate their expertise to youth issues in Slovakia. In general there is an absence of research-based evidence about youth. But there are some qualitative and quantitative data gathered each year by experts from universities, NGOs or youth organisations. Some of the surveys and research are mostly financed by the ministry and IUVENTA, through the grant programme PROGRAMMES FOR YOUTH 2014-2020 from the programme “Evidence on youth”. The topics of studies are participation, voluntary activities, non-formal education, health care and healthy life style of youth and so on. IUVENTA regularly collects information about research, surveys and analysis in the field of youth and adds it to its data archive. Data are available at: www.iuventa.sk/sk/Vyskum-mladeze/Home.alej.

In 2018 two studies were published based on qualitative research studying the causes of radicalisation of youth in Slovakia: “The causes of radicalisation of youth aged 14 to 17”, IUVENTA, and “Youth and radicalism and paramilitary groups”, STRATPOL – Strategic Policy Institute. Data are available at: www.iuventa.sk/sk/Vyskum-mladeze/Vyskumy-katalog-dat.alej. Surveys are available at: www.iuventa.sk/sk/Vyskum-mladeze/Prieskumy-katalog-dat.alej.

Some studies were dedicated to young people’s attitudes and opinions on current social affairs, such as the study “How much do you know about the young?”, by the Institute for Active Citizenship, and “Effectiveness of educational vouchers in achieving objectives of the youth strategy”, by the Association of Regional Youth Councils.

NA E+ is part of the Research based analyses network (RAY network) of National Agencies and every year participates in gathering quantitative data about the benefits of mobilities and outcomes of the EU programme and of the activities supported through the programme E+ for the field of youth. Data are available at: www.researchyouth.eu.

The National Youth Council plays quite an important role in gathering qualitative and quantitative data about youth in Slovakia. In 2018 it published the following studies:

“Effectiveness of educational vouchers”; a quantitative study about “Structural dialogue; Trends in Youth Leisure-time activities”.

The Institute of Social Medicine and Medical Ethics annually takes part in the international comparative study “Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children” (HBSC study).

In the previous years, these studies have been carried out:

- “Quality in Youth work and work with children” (2016), National Youth Council.
- “Municipality and Youth” (2015), by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic.
- “Inclusive approach in educational programmes and practice in free-time activities” (2015), by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic.
- “Volunteering – the Way to Develop Talent and Potential of Young People” (2015), by the Bratislava Volunteer Centre with the co-operation of Banska Bystrica and Nitra Volunteer Centre and Department of Social Work, Faculty of Education University of Matej Bel.
- “European Voluntary Service – Competences for Employment” (2014), by Özgehan Senyuva, PhD.

Important statistical data about youth are annually gathered by the Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information (hereafter “CVTI SR”). Statistical data are about the participation of youth in different types of activity (regular, participation in camps, informational activities, trainings for youth), but also about demographical information about youth and children, criminal offences of youth, unemployment of youth, publications from the field of youth).

- If data is available, how many young people benefit from youth work in your country on an annual basis (in proportion to the total youth population)?

According to the latest figures based on data from the latest census published by the Slovak Statistics Office, as of 31 December 2017 population stood at 5 443 120 inhabitants, of which **1 931 633** people were at the age of 30 or below; this accounted for **35.5%**.

According to statistics of the CVTI SR as of 31 December 2017, there were in Slovakia:

- **34** non-governmental organisations and non-formal groups working with youth, with **264 291** members.*¹

- **445** leisure-time activity centres, with **174 891** members.*¹
 - **7** Youth Information Centres (ICM), with **13 006** members.*¹
 - **452 188** youth in the age group 15-30 benefited from youth work in Slovakia.
- If data are available, how many youth workers are employed and how many are volunteering in your country?
- Leisure-time activity centres: **445** volunteers, **5 886** internal employees.
 - Non-governmental organisations and non-formal groups – **7 576** volunteers, **172** internal employees, **51** external employees.
 - Youth Information Centres – **116** volunteers, **55** employees.

Number of youth workers in Slovakia (in 2017) according to data of CVTI was: **8 137** volunteers, **6 164** employees (external and internal).⁶

- Please include any available sources of information on youth work in your country.

Sources of information on youth work – annual statistical data: Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information (CVTI SR), Department of Methodologies and creation of information from the field of education. Data are available at: www.cvtisr.sk/buxus/docs//OddMladezASport/Mladez/Rocenska/2017_deti-a-mladez-v-cislach.pdf

Information on youth work in English can be also found at “YOUTH WIKI”, including some sources on publications, analysis, studies and reports: <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/references-slovakia#124>

6. Numbers stated in Chapter 8 on data on youth work may vary. Stated data are evidence-based according to collected information, but do not explicitly exclude higher numbers of existing organisations, youth workers, or young people participating in these activities.

9. EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION OF YOUTH WORK IN THE COUNTRY

- Is there an international dimension to youth work policy in your country (for example, is your country implementing the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on youth work, or relevant EU Council Conclusions)?

Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 or similar documents serve as a general source of inspiration for our national youth policy.

- What international youth work opportunities are present in your country for young people and for youth workers? What programmes are promoted? What opportunities for exchange of experiences among youth work practitioners are included?

International dimension of youth work is realised as a co-operation within the EU, Council of Europe, V4 and international agreements.

Co-operation in the field of youth in the Council of Europe is co-ordinated by the ministry. Representatives of the ministry participate in regular Conferences of European Ministers responsible for youth and in meetings of the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ). Co-operation is also manifested by the active participation in the activities and events organised by the Council of Europe in support of youth.

In 2018, the Director of Department of Youth of the ministry, **Ivan Hromada, PhD**, was elected as a Vice-chair of the above-mentioned European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ).

BILATERAL CO-OPERATION

The Slovak Republic has bilateral co-operation in the field of youth with Serbia, the Czech Republic, the Republic of Korea, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro.

Montenegro

A co-operation programme was signed in June 2017 in the field of education for 2017-2021. This document includes direct co-operation and exchanges between youth councils, children and youth associations, as well as institutions working with children and young people.

Republic of Korea

A memorandum of understanding was signed in November 2017 with the Ministry of Gender Equality and the Family of the Republic of Korea on youth co-operation. The aim is to encourage and strengthen co-operation between countries in the youth field through youth exchanges, exchange of information and experience and participation in events.

Serbia

The agreement between the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Sport and Youth of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2012-2016 in the field of youth work was signed in Bratislava on 31 January 2012.

Co-operation was mainly done through study visits at various levels (ministerial, institutions, non-governmental sector) and co-ordination of attitudes towards youth policy at European level.

The co-operation involved the relevant institutions working in the youth field in both countries and the non-governmental sector.

Czech Republic

Youth co-operation between the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic is set based on the "Protocols on Co-operation", which take the form of a record of the meeting of the Czech-Slovak Joint Commission for Youth. The last negotiations took place in Slovakia in 2018 and another meeting will take place in Prague in 2019.

The field of Czech-Slovak co-operation in the youth policy is set at several levels: the level of ministries and its directly managed organisations, the level of national youth councils and the level of information centres for youth.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The memorandum of co-operation was signed between the ministry of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina in April 2018. The aim of the memorandum is to support and develop co-operation between youth organisations and institutions, to exchange knowledge or to encourage the exchange of youth and youth work experts.

During the co-operation, the countries also focus on understanding the socio-political context, comparing the systems of both countries and sharing best practice in the field of youth work.

UNESCO

There is a co-operation between the ministry and UNESCO in three main areas as part of sustainable goal 4.7 of the UN Agenda 2030: “By 2030, ensure all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.”

- Education for global citizenship
- Preventing violent extremism
- Education on sustainable development

At the 39th session of UNESCO General Conference, the strategic design of a new architecture of youth involvement in the agenda of UNESCO was also discussed, in which there is a link between UNESCO’s strategic objectives and the priorities of the Department of Youth.

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN VISEGRAD GROUP AND EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES IN THE YOUTH FIELD

The Memorandum of Co-operation between the Ministries of Countries of the Visegrad Group Responsible for Youth and the Ministries of Countries of Eastern Partnership to European Union Responsible for Youth was signed in Bratislava on 22 June 2015.

Visegrad Group (V4 – Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovak Republic) and Eastern Partnership countries (EaP – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine) have a productive and steadily developing relationship with substantial dialogue across a wide range of youth issues, working seminars and annual V4 presidential meetings supported by the active participation of representatives of the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth, and SALTO Eastern Europe and Caucasus Resource Centre.

In April 2019, the Slovak Republic will host members of this partnership at the V4 conference “Discover Youth Talents” in connection with the Presidency of Slovakia of the V4. The main

aim of the conference is to discuss the positive influence and enable full development of the potential, the systematic support of gifted youth and the issue of their identification in informal and non-formal education, sharing examples of good practice and highlighting the role of talent support and development in various fields. Focus on current challenges such as increasing the capacity of youth workers to use innovative approaches, discovering potential, highlighting co-operation between sectors or working with young people at risk of marginalisation.

The European dimension of youth work in Slovakia is ensured mostly by the ERASMUS+ programme, EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS, EURODESK NETWORK, EUROPE GOES LOCAL, ERYICA, etc.

NATIONAL AGENCY ERASMUS + FOR YOUTH AND SPORT (NA E+)

NA E+ is responsible for the management and implementation of the European Union programme Erasmus + for youth and sport in Slovakia as well as for the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps. The role of NA Erasmus + involves: providing information on Erasmus+ grant programmes, selecting projects to be funded, monitoring and evaluating Erasmus+, supporting applicants and participants, working with other national agencies and the EU, promoting Erasmus+, sharing successful stories and best practices.

EURODESK NETWORK

Eurodesk as a support organisation for Erasmus + offers youth and youth workers information in 35 European countries. Eurodesk is responsible for communication of information about non-formal and informal learning opportunities in the youth field, training and learning mobility opportunities. Eurodesk raises awareness on European policies and encourages young people to become active citizens as well. Eurodesk updates and manages content on the European Youth Portal, available at: <https://eurodesk.eu/about/today/>.

EUROPE GOES LOCAL

The project supports youth work on the municipal level. It is a project of a strategic partnership of more than 30 national and international organisations from 22 European countries, including Slovakia, that addresses the exchange of good practice in youth work support at the level of local administrations.

ERYICA

Since 1 January 2019 IUVENTA has been a member of the **European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA)**. ERYICA is an independent European organisation, composed of national and regional youth information co-ordination bodies and networks. It works to intensify European and international co-operation in the field of youth information work and services. It **develops, supports** and **promotes** quality generalist youth information policy and practice at all levels in order to meet the information needs of young people and to apply the principles of the **European Youth Information Charter**.

YOUTH WIKI

The Youth Wiki is Europe's online encyclopaedia in the area of national youth policies. The platform is a comprehensive database of national structures, policies and actions supporting young people. It covers the eight main fields of action identified in the 2010-2018 EU Youth Strategy: education and training, employment and entrepreneurship, health and well-being, participation, voluntary activities, social inclusion, youth and the world, and creativity and culture (European Commission, <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/youthwiki>).

The role of the National Correspondent for Youth Wiki was assigned to Association of the Centres for Leisure Time Activities of the Slovak Republic by the Department of Youth, Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic.

In co-operation with external experts, information on education, employment, participation, social inclusion, global education, health and other topics in Slovakia were collected and published at: <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-slovakia>.

EKCYP

The European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCYP) is an online database intended to provide the youth sector with a single access point to reliable knowledge and information about the situation of young people across Europe. EKCYP aims to enhance knowledge transfers between the fields of research, policy and practice through the collection and dissemination of information about youth policy, research and practice in Europe and beyond. Linked to EKCYP is a network of national correspondents, who are youth policy specialists

responsible for collecting national data (EU-Council of Europe youth partnership, <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/knowledge/-/ekcyp>).

The function of national correspondent representing the Slovak Republic was assigned to **Mgr. Miroslava Dujičová, PhD**, who works at the Department of Youth, Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic.⁷

COUNCIL OF EUROPE (NO HATE SPEECH MOVEMENT, AGENDA 2020)

The Slovak Republic took part in and joined the campaign “No hate speech movement”. In Slovakia, the campaign was under the official auspices of the Department of Youth of the ministry, which also established the “National Campaign Committee of the Council of Europe – No Hate Speech Movement” in order to maintain campaign and activity co-ordination. Various state institutions, organisations and representatives of the non-governmental sector were members of this committee.

The No Hate Speech Movement is a youth campaign led by the Council of Europe Youth Department seeking to mobilise young people to combat hate speech and promote human rights online (Council of Europe 2018). Read more about the campaign at: www.coe.int/en/web/no-hate-campaign.

The Department of Youth of the ministry is also actively trying to support the fulfilment of objectives of Agenda 2020. As stated in Chapter 4 regarding the financing of youth work in Slovakia, one of the main goals of the grant scheme “Programmes for youth” is to contribute to the objectives of the document “The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020”, especially through the development of youth.

7. Information current at February 2019.

10. CURRENT DEBATES AND OPEN QUESTIONS/POLICIES ON YOUTH WORK

- What are the open questions, debates and priorities around youth work development in your country?
- Is there any cross-sectoral co-operation with other fields? What is the role and what are the strengths of youth work in that co-operation?

Trying to systematically and permanently ensure the development of youth work, the following measures were defined in the Youth Report 2018:

Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport SR should:

- start an expert discussion on the validation of professional, pedagogical skills and qualifications in formal and non-formal education in the field of youth work;
- create more support for unorganised youth;
- increase the financial support of youth organisations at local, regional and national level;
- strengthen the partnership approach between the state, municipalities, public and non-governmental providers of youth activities;
- etc.

Local and regional self-governments should:

- create conditions (material and financial) to support youth work through relevant institutions and organisations so as to be able to carry out long-term sustainable youth work that is meaningful and accessible to all young people.

Non-governmental organisations should:

- collaborate on defining and analysing the needs of youth work (Youth Report, p 82).⁸

The ministry is actively trying to strengthen the sufficient recognition of youth work, as well as the outcomes of youth work, to find ways and possibilities how to support cross-sectoral co-operation, mainly with non-governmental organisations and self-government, and also

8. Available in Slovak at:

[www.iuventa.sk/files/som/som-sprava%20o%20mladezi%202018%20\(kompletn%C3%A1%20verzia\).pdf](http://www.iuventa.sk/files/som/som-sprava%20o%20mladezi%202018%20(kompletn%C3%A1%20verzia).pdf).

strengthen the youth work at the local level or to aim to involve social inclusion into youth work.

The new draft of the law on youth work in Slovakia is currently under discussion with various stakeholders in youth work. The current draft targets the deficiencies and suggests potential changes. These are related to:

- application of the law in practice;
- key partners and stakeholders in youth work;
- the need for a definition of other youth worker positions (co-ordinator, methodologist and lecturer);
- creation of regional youth centres;
- centres for leisure-time activities;
- definition of competencies of individual stakeholders;
- transparent multi-source financing;
- extension of accreditation;
- etc.

Other current priorities in youth work can be found in the “Action plan for the implementation of the concept paper on youth work development 2016-2020 for 2019-2020”. This document targets nine areas. Each area consists of the main goal for the upcoming period of 2019-2020 and also from the various measures that can be used to reach the set goals.

According to the following areas and main goals that were defined, we can describe as “open priorities”:

The needs of young people as a basis for youth work.

- Systematically identify and analyse the needs of young people at all levels – national, regional and local, to publish the findings and to accept appropriate measures.
- 1) Quality youth work.
 - Influence the quality of the environment in youth work focusing not only on quality of individual organisations, as actors in youth work, but also on quality of youth workers and available information.
 - 2) Actors in youth work.
 - Support the education of various actors in the field of youth work and their mutual co-operation responding to the current state and needs of the youth.

- 3) Financing of youth work.
 - To prepare the framework for the next generation of the grant scheme for youth work.
- 4) Raising of the profile of youth work and recognition of youth work.
 - Ensure regular information to the public, youth workers, young people and other actors working with youth on the social credibility of youth work. At the same time initiate partnerships with individual actors in youth work and other actors with the aim of strengthening the social and formal recognition of the results of youth work.
- 5) Participation.
 - To support the open dialogue between young people and individual actors in society and motivate them to participate in public affairs. At the same time, educate young people as well as youth workers and other actors in the field.
- 6) Creativity, entrepreneurship and employment.
 - Support young people's readiness to enter the labour market while motivating them to their own business activity.
- 7) Social inclusion.
 - Strengthen awareness of social inclusion and its components and implement activities promoting the acceptance of disadvantaged young people.
- 8) Health and healthy life style.
 - Participate in improving the health status (physical and mental) of youth through better awareness of this issue and through implementation and funding of healthy lifestyle activities.

The full version of the action plan is available in Slovak at:

www.minedu.sk/data/files/8378_akcny-plan-2019-2020_final_verzia.pdf.

As some of the current strategic documents are valid till the end of 2020, there will be a need to open discussion about preparation of new documents (Strategy of the Slovak Republic for youth, Concept paper on youth work development). At the same time, the current grant scheme is also designed till the end of 2020 and the ministry will actively work on the preparation of the new grant scheme, which should be more easily accessible for more organisations. The ministry will actively involve various stakeholders from the field of youth policy into the discussions and co-operation.

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