

Youth Partnership

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



Strengthening the potential of youth work in Eastern Europe and Caucasus

Peer learning event on support to youth work development in the region

Tbilisi, Georgia

27-28 November 2019

Concept Note and Draft Programme

Rationale

In 2018 the EU-CoE youth partnership organised the annual meetings of PEYR and of EKCYP correspondents in Chisinau, Moldova, with the aim to [better understand and stimulate youth research in the region and its links to youth policy](#). Contributions of EKCYP to knowledge gathering on topics related to the EU Youth Wiki platform from countries in the region have also covered youth policy governance (2017), volunteering (2018) and youth participation (2019). Moreover, since 2017, the EU-CoE youth partnership has carried out [research on the educational paths of youth workers](#), as a contribution to the quality development of youth work. Finally, a seminar on strengthening youth work in Southeast Europe, organised by the EU-CoE youth partnership in 2018 has highlighted tools and systems of national and regional cooperation that might be relevant to developing youth work in Eastern Europe and Caucasus.

The European Union youth strategy has carried out thematic expert reflections on quality development in youth work, on digital youth work, youth work against violent radicalisation as well as youth work with young refugees. The new EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 features youth work among its key priorities with an expectation of developing a European Agenda on youth work. The Finnish presidency of the EU has chosen to highlight youth work related topics (digital youth work and education of youth workers) and Germany is preparing to host the 3rd European Youth Work Convention under its EU Presidency and the Council of Europe CM Chairmanship in December 2020. Finally, large-scale projects and initiatives are being supported through Erasmus+ programme focusing on youth work (ex: Europe Goes Local – youth work at municipal level or European Academy on Youth Work looking at trends and innovation).

The Council of Europe CM Recommendation on youth work (CM/Rec(2017)4 calls for a number of initiatives such as developing evidence-based quality youth work, safeguarded and pro-actively supported within local, regional or national youth policies, as appropriate'. The Recommendation has been translated into 13 languages and more are under preparation. Furthermore, several member States are initiating or revising national policies that focus on strengthening youth work also under the impetus of this recommendation. The outcomes of the consultative meeting exploring challenges and solutions concerning the shrinking space for civil society and youth organisations, held in 2018 by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe looked at how this situation impacts youth work.

Purpose and expected outcomes

This activity will reflect on the diverse realities of youth work in EEAC and on how to foster a better matching of its needs and those of the young people, with the reality of youth policy, on a regional level and with consideration for European institutional developments. Thus, it will inform the work of the High Level Task Force on the implementation of the CM Recommendation on youth work and the statutory bodies on Youth. The event will refer to the research on educational pathways of youth workers and on youth work professions and vocations, and facilitate cooperation on developing offers for education and training of youth workers. It will take the form of a peer-learning event and be an opportunity to promote relevant European and national tools.

The preparatory meeting held in Tbilisi on 9 July identified national policy priorities related to youth work development and regional trends or common topics. The country realities shared during the preparatory meeting have identified the following trends in youth work development across the region with a strong emphasis on quality development of youth work, including

- Strong infrastructure and youth work services at local and regional level (youth clubs and youth centres with a strong non-formal education component)
- Recognition of the contribution of youth work for young people's skills and employability
- Need to develop formal education offers and promotion of recognition of youth work profession as well as its impact in society
- Need to connect to European initiatives on youth work.

Expected outcomes

- Better knowledge on the reality and the needs of youth work providers in the region and on the existing youth policy support measures and structures for youth work at local and regional level across EEAC
- Reflecting on education and training needs of volunteer and paid youth workers in the countries and support measures that can strengthen the quality of education and training offers but also of the quality of youth work delivery
- Increased awareness of the support and specific tools available at European and regional level for youth work and for youth work policy as well as closing the gap on knowledge, where possible
- Deeper reflections on the role of youth work in relation to youth centres and outreach youth work, social inclusion, youth participation and active citizenship, skills and educational development, as well as employability of young people as well as to quality learning mobility and sharing knowledge and examples of good practice initiatives through bilateral and multilateral cooperation including, Quality Label of Youth Centres, Europe Goes Local, Youth Capitals, Education of Youth Workers, MOOC on youth work and other relevant initiatives
- Better connections among the youth work relevant stakeholders within the region and within individual countries and development of youth work networks to strengthen.
- Good practices initiated in the region related to youth work being picked up/developed by other countries in the region and across Europe.

Expected output

Background study on the reality of youth work development in Eastern Europe and Caucasus countries with particular focus on case studies and examples of projects related to development of youth work policy, services and infrastructure as well as development of educational offers for youth workers. The study will form the basis for a handbook on youth work development in Eastern Europe and Caucasus to be finalized in 2020 which could include a state of play, a compendium of initiatives and practices and advice on how to develop such systems).

Target group, timeline and place, if relevant

The seminar will bring together up to 50 participants with different profiles: youth work practitioners, youth work managers, trainers and related profiles, youth workers' organisations, youth organisations, policy makers especially from EEAC and from other European countries interested in co-operation in EEAC, working at different levels, researchers, representatives of diverse entities involved in regional co-operation, in particular the SALTO EECA Resource Centre.

The preparatory group has decided to invite participants in country delegations (nominated by the preparatory group and statutory bodies of CoE) with the following profile:

- One representative of youth work practitioners (trainers, managers in youth work centres or clubs or NGOs)
- One representative of regional or local authorities supporting youth work development
- One researcher and/or representative of formal education sector involved in education of youth workers who can help translate the results of the peer learning event into national curriculum or support the educational policy context
- One policy-maker who can influence the national policy-making processes in relation to youth work

Contributors from other European countries who can share good practices and develop cooperation.

Timeline:

- March – May – exchange with Georgian representatives in CDEJ and AC
- July 9 – preparatory meeting
- July-November – background research, selection of participants, preparation of seminar
- 27-28 November – peer learning event in Tbilisi, in the framework of Georgia's Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

Draft Programme

| Strengthening the potential of youth work in Eastern Europe and Caucasus | | | | |
|---|--------------|--|---|--------------|
| | DAY 0 | DAY 1 | DAY 2 | DAY 3 |
| | arrival | | | departure |
| 9:00 - 11:00 | | INTRO and WELCOME | Potential of youth work in EECA: from recognition to delivery Youth Work triangle - Panel debate | |
| | | What are we talking about Youth Work in the EEC Region | | |
| 11:00-11:30 | | Coffee Break | Coffee break | |
| 11:30-13:00 | | Knowledge Based Youth Work in EEC countries Research and Q&A | Cooperation and commitment to ensuring quality in youth work -standards setting -budget planning -monitoring and evaluation of youth quality | |
| 13:00-14:30 | | Lunch | Lunch | |
| 14:30-16:00 | | Quality in youth work: inspiring practices 3-4 simultaneous groups | Cooperation and commitment to ensuring quality in youth work -investing in youth workers (education, learning and competences) - infrastructure for youth -methods/types of youth work (outreach, digital youth work, open youth work for skills development) | |
| 16:00-16:30 | | Coffee Break | Coffee break | |
| 16:30-18:00 | | Quality in youth work: inspiring practices 3-4 simultaneous groups | Next steps in Youth Work development in the region Conclusions and wrap-up | |
| 18:00-18:30 | | Harvesting in national groups | Closing of the event | |
| | | 19:00 Dinner | 20:00 Dinner hosted by Georgian Government | |