

Perspective on Youth Work Developments

ESTONIA FACT SHEET

The 3rd European Youth Work Convention (EYWC) plays a key role in launching the implementation of the European Youth Work Agenda (EYWA) as a strategic framework for further developing and strengthening youth work practice and policies in Europe. The goal of this fact sheet is to provide basic information about the perspective on youth work developments in a specific country. All information has been gathered from national contact points, reports or country sheets and profiles available online. The purpose of this fact sheet is to stimulate discussion before, at and after the 3rd EYWC among the members of the national delegations. This information is a suggestion only and a starting point for further development by the delegation when planning actions for implementation of the EYWA.

FACTS

Youth work as a recognised occupation: YES

Legislative framework for youth work: YES

Main youth work actors: local municipalities, voluntary sector (youth and youth work organisations), state

Highlights with regard to youth work development:

- Even though the history of Estonian youth work can be traced back to over 100 years, modern youth work in Estonia was created as an independent sector (different from social work or education) during the last 15-20 years. Most of the modern infrastructure has been developed during that time.
- Development of smart youth work.

STRENGTHS & SUCCESSES	CHALLENGES
<p>Strong recognition and advocacy of youth work in order to help to maintain sustainability of youth work, maintain continuing development and recognise it as strategically important. It becomes more and more relevant especially in the context of (possible) economic regressions due to corona pandemic.</p> <p>Evidence-based research, analysis on the influence/ impact of youth work on young people at national level and EU level.</p> <p>Cross-sectoral youth policy which recognises the impact of youth work</p> <p>Financial measures, programs.</p> <p>Youth work can be studied in three universities in Estonia.</p> <p>Development of smart youth work.</p>	<p>Quality youth work and availability for young people is one of those challenges that has been and will be relevant in Estonia. Especially availability for young people in need, young people living in difficult economic situations, youth in rural areas etc.</p> <p>A challenge is also professional and available support and help for young people, including young people in need, young people not in education, employment, and training, etc.</p> <p>Youth participation in decision-making is one of the challenges. The challenges include how to encourage young people to take part in a decision-making process, how to make decision-making transparent and effective for them to participate, how to include them more effectively in a way that they will recognise their ideas and suggestions as important and truly considered.</p> <p>Youth workers' working conditions, especially salary, but also more widely recognition of youth work as an important, strategic field per se, which serves larger goals in society is a challenge. Recognition that investing in youth / youth work will be cost-effective in the long run and cuts in funding are not effective in a larger perspective.</p> <p>Maintaining sustainability and development of youth work in today's economic conditions (affected by the covid lockdown).</p>

SUPPORT NEEDED

- Strong recognition and advocacy of youth work to maintain sustainability of youth work, maintain continuing development and recognise it as strategically important. It becomes more and more relevant especially in the context of (possible) economic regressions due to corona pandemic.
- Evidence based research, analysis on the influence/ impact of youth work on young people at national level and EU level.
- Financial measures, programs.

GREATEST NEED FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH WORK IN THE NEXT THREE YEARS

- Supporting further development of quality youth work
- Supporting the ability of youth work to tackle emerging challenges and innovate its practices
- Enhancing the promotion and recognition of youth work.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES

- EKCYP youth work country sheet link: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47262550/Estonia_info_youth_work_03.01.18_JB.pdf/b3495368-b206-b4ad-de43-d7e4608f5ef4
- Youth Wiki youth work chapter link: <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/10-youth-work-estonia>