

»Youth work impacts Europe« European Peer Learning Conference

25-27 September 2018, Ljubljana

REPORT



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Description of the activity

Organizer and co-organizers:

- *Movit, Slovenian National Agency of the EU Programmes Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps*
- *Agenzia Nazionale per i Giovani, Italian National agency of the Erasmus+: Youth in Action*
- *JINT, Flemish National Agency for the Youth in Action Programme of the European Commission.*
- *JUGEND für Europa, National Agency in the EU program Erasmus + YOUTH IN ACTION 2014 - 2020 in Germany.*
- *European Union Programmes Agency, Malta*
- *Nederlands Jeugdinstituut, NJi*
- *Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF)*
- *Agencia Nacional Para A Gestao Do Programa Erasmus+Juventude Em Acao, Portugal*

Social inclusion of all young people, including those from a migrant background, is a key aim of the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018). Youth work and non-formal learning can contribute to encouraging intercultural dialogue and building mutual understanding between new arrivals and the receiving communities. The Erasmus+ programme in the field of youth promotes fairness and inclusion for participants from disadvantaged backgrounds and with fewer opportunities (such as migrants or refugees) through specific support, priority setting and targeted use of funds. The BPE project financed under the Key Action 3 intends to develop and share non-formal education methodologies and new inclusion practices through youth work, with a view to promoting the integration and social inclusion of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants and to foster understanding, tolerance and respect among people.

The European Peer Learning Conference aimed to finalise policy recommendations related to the role of youth work supporting young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (YMRA). Participants discussed the findings and results achieved by **the four thematic working groups**, identified at the first Peer Learning Conference in Amsterdam and were identifying strategies for disseminating the final policy recommendations.

The target group of the conference were firstly representatives of the thematic working groups and/or national expert groups, including representatives of young refugees, migrants and asylum seekers. There were also NA staff representatives, connected to the project, other stakeholders, connected to youth work with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and decision makers in the field invited to the conference.

All together there was 70 participants at the conference.

Implemented programme

PROGRAMME OF THE CONFERENCE		
TUESDAY 25/09	WEDNESDAY 26/09	THURSDAY 27/09
	7h00 - 7h30: yoga, mindfulness, walking, jogging (self-organised by participants) 8h00 - 9h00: Breakfast	7h00 - 7h30: yoga, mindfulness, walking, jogging (self-organised by participants) 8h00 - 9h00: Breakfast
Arrival of participants to the conference Registration 13:00 - 14:30	9h15 Opening of the day 9h30 Best practice from the cluster 9h45 Overview of the policy recommendations prepared by the Cluster groups 10:00 Deepening the understandings and developing ownership	9h15 Opening of the day 9h30 "Cultivate your energy!" keynote speech 10h00 Synergies for policy impact: connecting with projects and initiatives across Europe to support youth work with YMRA
	10h45 break	11h00 break
12h30-14h00: on-going lunch	11h15 Collecting suggestions for the finalisation of the Policy recommendations - in cluster groups	11h30 Harvesting 12h00 Closure of the Conference and hand-over
	13h00: lunch	12h30 lunch
14h30 Opening of the Conference - arriving with our bodies and minds Overview of the project, its achievement and the work in front of us Best practice from the cluster 16h30 break 17h00 Presentation of and exchange on the Cluster Groups results on Youth workers roles and competences in working with YMRA in - activating cross-sectoral cooperation - activating advocacy processes and actions - caring about empowerment and wellbeing of YMRA - addressing gender issues and LGBT+ rights	15h00 Best practice from the cluster 15h20 Dissemination of Policy recommendations - in national and cross-national groups for creating national strategies	
	17h break	
19h30: dinner	17h45 Alternative city tours Ljubljana seen through the eyes of a homeless person, graffiti or migration	Departure On-line evaluation
Learning from other projects in smaller groups What has your project found out that can be relevant for policy development on roles and competencies of youth workers in working with	20h00: dinner by Skuhna"	
	Free evening	

25 September 2018

14h30 Opening of the Conference

Welcome by Uroš Skrinar, the director of Movit, Slovenian NA
Karin De Kelver - EU COM tutor from EACEA - framework for policy recommendations
Giuseppe Gualtieri, Italian NA, project overview
Introduction of the Facilitation team, Paola Bortini and Jaka Kovac
Graphic facilitator, Mireille Van Bremen
General rapporteur, Tea Jarc
Admin team (Polona, Ziva)
Technological assistance by Sli.do - brief intro on how to use it

15h00 Group building 1st part: stand up exercise

The participants were asked to stand up if they are from youth organisation (and inviting to say names), NA, EU institution, anybody that did not stand up yet, first time in such a big setting, first time in Slovenia, not comfortable in such a big group...

Groups building 2nd part: 3x 6 min conversations in trios (with somebody from another table)

The guiding questions for conversions in trios were:

- What makes your presence important at this conference?
- What is inspiring you most at your work with YMRA?
- What is your favourite bad habit?:) (to bring in some ease and fun)

In plenary the participants from each table shared what was most interesting that they've heard from colleagues? (3-4 voices)

Overview of project: Results achieved in BPE by Silvia Volpi

Best practice from the cluster: Wereldspelers/GloBall presented by Silke Cuypers, Belgian NA

House rules for participatory collaboration were introduced to participants:

- Listen with attention, speak with intention
- Care for yourself and others
- Nourish curiosity and solution focused attitude
- Ask for what you need, offer what you can
- Appreciate the diversity of ideas

16h30 break

17h00 World Cafe for presentation of and exchange on the Cluster Groups results on Youth workers roles and competences in working with YMRA in
- activating cross-sectorial cooperation
- activating advocacy processes and actions
- caring about empowerment and wellbeing of YMRA
- addressing gender issues and LGBT+ rights

19h00 Pre-dinner info

- Presentation of the evening
- Choice of the discussion circles - sli.do

Morning activities:

- Sli.do: what do you do in the morning to get full batteries for the day?
- Collecting offers and interests for the pre-breakfast activities - sli.do

19h30 dinner buffet style

20h30 Evening conversations in circles, to explore what is going on in the field of working with YMRA in youth work, in addition to BPE

6 circles were addressing the question: What has your project found out that can be relevant for policy development on roles and competencies of youth workers in working with YMRA?

1.C - Maari Poim, Estonian NA, Youth for Human Rights KA3 project, Youth for human rights: do we need more HRE, or better HRE in youth policy?

2.C - Judith Balog, Belgian NA, The role of municipal level youth work in supporting refugees – Synergies with the Europe Goes Local project



3.C - Andreia Henriques, SALTO inclusion and diversity, Youth workers and young refugees – training needs and opportunities (seen as a project)

Description: This discussion table will be an opportunity to share about the training needs of youth workers dealing with young refugees and it will provide an overview of the capacity-building offer available (tools and activities), mainly in the in the framework of Erasmus+ YiA programme. Participants attending this discussion table will also be invited to share their experiences and relevant tools to support the development of youth workers' competences active in this field

4. C - Mara Georgescu, Coe-Eu partnership, Outcomes on youth work and policy messages from the work of the EU – CoE youth partnership".I intend to present there our Step by step handbook and the policy messages from a seminar we organized, plus the main conclusions of a research book we're finalizing

5.C - Monique van Dam, Social entrepreneurship for inclusion

6.C – Živa Mahkota, MOVIT: Aware and Active campaign – how to reach out and develop awareness raising activities with and for young people

26 September 2018

9h15 Opening of the day

To go back to yesterday and collect what is pending and the results
What is still in my mind from yesterday?

9h30 Best practice spot: "Professional Volunteering (ProVol) Crossborder" by Perdita Wingerter and Mohammed Bayzeed, Germany

10h00 Policy recommendations deepening with an overview of the work on policy recommendation carried out until now Brief intro from Federica De Micheli on the general report of the cluster work to support the introduction of the working groups - the process until now

Plenary work on policy recommendations in trios

Aims:

- To enlarge the perspective of those who elaborated the policy recommendations
- To look at what has been created with the aim of enriching

11h00 Break

11h30 Cluster group discussions



Brief overview of the previous exercise with focus on the contents and how to improve them, to make them more relevant, and collecting suggestions for the editing committee with genuine curiosity and constructive

12h30 Plenary presentation of general suggestions by the rapporteurs of each cluster groups for the editing/finalisation committee Possibility of comments from the plenary

What else can we tell to the editing committee?

13h00 Lunch buffet style

15h00 Opening of the afternoon session with an icebreaker: Chain of action in trio

15h10 Best practice spot:

YOUMO for Gender and LGBT+ rights - Emilie Mire Aseli, Sweden
Advocacy tool - Adbulfatah Soula, Malta

15h30 Dissemination of policy recommendations

National and cross national groups explored the following questions

- Who do we need to talk to/who can support dissemination?
- Who do we already know and can help us?
- What events, institutions, places in our local community would be a good opportunity to disseminate the recommendations?
- What else do we need, what else we could do?

16h30 Presentation of map/posters in plenary

16h50 Intro to the evening alternative tours of Ljubljana

- Graffiti and alternative tour (2 tours): <http://www.ljubljanaGraffitiTour.com/> -
- Invisible Ljubljana: <http://www.kraljiulice.org/kaj-delamo/ture/>
- Arne Zupančič with a refugee: Ljubljana through the eyes of a refugee



17h00 Break

17h45 Leaving for the tours

19h30 Introduction to the organisation Skuhna

20h00 Dinner in Rog organised by Skuhna

27 September 2018

9h15 Opening of the day

Exploring what was inspiring for participants and framing of the day he previous evening we looked at Ljubljana with different perspectives - to be able to hold different perspectives is what the key speaker will be inviting us to do today, as well as the guest from the panel.

9:30 Keynote speech: dr. Anica Mikuš Kos

Dr. Anica Mikuš Kos acknowledged the importance and value of youth work and youth workers in integration of young migrants, Brought in the bigger picture (role and impact of youth work in EU society in relation to migration, inspire participants to keep searching for what is possible and what can be done in the field of youth work and migrations and motivated all participants to keep working in promoting and disseminating the policy recommendations as formulated during the Conference.



10h00 Connecting BPE with other projects and initiatives - panel discussion

Guests:

- Minne HUYSMANS, researcher, Free University of Brussels, Belgium
- Mara Georgescu, Coe-Eu Youth partnership
- Rui Gomes CoE Youth Department
- Silke Cuypers, European commission expert group on youth
- Marco Frinberger, Austrian NA, Youth goals

Question for the guests: From the perspective of your organisation, which synergies and opportunities do you see for the dissemination of policy recommendations in the field of youth working with YMRA?

Each answer will be 5 minutes

Then possibility to inter-act

Time for questions and answers, curiosity

11h00 Break

11h30 Presentation of the general Rapporteur about the final report and provisional conclusions, main outcomes and messages

11h40 Harvesting and check-out

Evaluation in pairs twice to help crystallising the take-away starting with sentence I walk away different because

After some participants share their thoughts (if time allows)

Presentation of the graphic harvesting

11h55 Passing on

DE NA takes over the coordination of the learning needs for youth workers.

12h00 Gadget

Presentation of Wild Orange in a box with a brief story of the benefit/message:
“Discrimination comes from people that have a scarcity mind set, wild orange allows to let go of fears that there is not enough”

12h15 Closing

Živa Mahkota, Slovenian NA – hosting NA
Rok Primožič, the director of Office of Slovenia for youth
Giuseppe Gualtieri, Italian NA – coordinating NA of the project
Final applause



Methods

Throughout the conference there was a mix of methods specific to NFL and some more formal methods linked to the fact that the conference hosted 70 participants and that some information were necessary to share amongst all participants.

In order to make the sharing and ownership of the contents in particular two methods were used: the world cafe and the trios that engaged the full audience in deep sharing, discussion and increased ownership.

The other methods, as described above, were also mostly working well, the flow of the conference was smooth, participants expressed appreciation that working pace was relaxed, even though the program was quite packed. Wednesday morning sessions could be done differently, cluster groups were too big to discuss the recommendations, also transition from role play to a discussion in cluster group was not totally clear to understand.

World Cafe

After presentation of the programme and getting to know each other we used the method “World café”. We introduced the method and its flow and the participants were invited to sit on the table with the cluster group they are interested in participating.

12 tables were hosted by people that were part of cluster groups in charge of introducing the topics. Blank posters were placed on the tables to enable participants to note down main ideas and insights (to create a collective memory and stimulate interweaving of ideas) and to draw and doodle (to stimulate our right brain hemisphere what brings in creativity and imagination)

-3 rounds of 20-30 minutes (participants changed the table after each round) took place with following questions:

- 1.Q (introductory) What’s about? What is the essence you identified in the cluster group on roles and competencies of youth workers in working with YMRA and (name of the cluster group)?
- 2.Q- Share/Tell about good practices and tips for youth workers working with YMRA and (name of the cluster group)
- 3.Q- Share/Tell about shadows, traps, things we need to pay attention to, being careful of working with YMRA and (name of the cluster group)

We chose World café as it is method that enables participants to share their experiences, ideas, points of view in a relaxed and vibrant way. It supports then mingling and networking, as well as hearing many different opinions and getting familiar with the topic. After discussions in small groups we invited them to share their insights in plenary.

Participants participated well, hosts of tables reported that they had in depth and fruitful debates, atmosphere



was relaxed but focused. New participants (that were not present in Amsterdam) got informed and included into core team of youth workers. Some NA representatives expressed appreciation that they heard experiences of youth workers from the field.

Circle discussions

One of the goals of the conference was to give various experts that are running different projects and trainings related to the topic space and time to present their achievements. Since we wanted to have as participative conference as possible we chose circle discussion instead of plenary presentations with power points. In that way participants get more involved, they have chance to express their opinions and questions, it also brings in more equality – it is not “the expert” who is standing on a stage giving lecture to the others, but we are all experts exchanging experiences – acknowledging the expertise of youth workers too.

First evening we invited experts to run debates in small circles simultaneously and we invited participants to join the debate that was most interesting to them. We found it quite successful since almost three thirds of the whole group participated even though it was quite late and lots of them very tired because of the traveling. It is questionable if first evening after dinner is appropriate to have any kind of activity, but it was only time slot that was still free, the program of the conference was otherwise quite packed.



Second time we used the method on the last day (again to avoid the plenary PPT presentations), then we were sitting in one big circle. Symbolically we wanted to connect the whole group, coming from small circles (in which they were working in previous two days) to one big circle, we believe it brings in more connection and awareness that we are all on the same boat. It was good to dedicate time to open discussion between youth workers and representatives of various EU institutions, but we would need some more time and a bit shorter inputs from the representatives.

Trios for the policy recommendations

We chose the method of role play/simulation for discussing the policy recommendations as we wanted to engage the full audience and check how recommendation will be accepted by target group.

The steps followed and the instructions given were the following:

We created trios and gave out cards with some of the recommendations.

Policy recommendations written on moderation cards (a colour per cluster group)

- **Yellow** Cross sectorial cooperation
- **Green** Well-being
- **Orange** Advocacy
- **Blue** Gender and LGBT+

Process

- To have small discussion from the perspective of the local authorities and youth workers - it is a warming up, to activate the discussion
- One trio per each policy recommendation
- Then there is time to process the simulation in trios

Roles in the trios:

- Sender-Youth worker in the process of finalising policy recommendations, wanting to explore to what extent the contents can be accepted for policy development and integration, to promote it more
- Receiver-Politician/other youth work either sensitive to the topic, or willing to explore what youth work does with YMRA
- Observer/scriber: to collect points that are to be discussed later on aiming at improving the recommendation and making it more pregnant, to enrich them

Guidelines:

- Do not defend the statement or your opinion
- opinions are contribution to the exploration, not conclusions
- Explore the issues

Timing:

- Decide the roles
- 2 minutes - preparation (if there are too many statements, choose the one you would like to start from)
- 10 minutes interaction
- 20 discussion focusing on resistances, strengths, contents (rephrasing or amending) and behaviour/attitudes



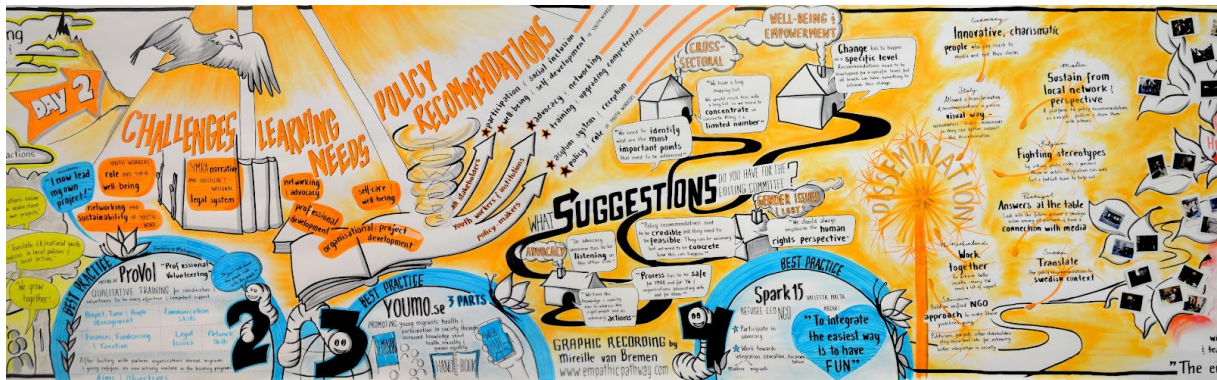
Method stimulated lively discussion and new perspectives on recommendation, just the transition to the whole cluster group was not as smooth as we expected – groups were too big, it was a bit hard to facilitate the discussion.

Graphic recording and facilitation



Since it was a big group working simultaneously on different topics we believed that graphic recording would help us to bring the bigger picture and main insights from small groups into the room - the picture that Mireille was creating during the conference enabled

participant to have all the time in front of themselves what is going on different levels of the conference. Symbols that Mireille was using in the picture also brought wider understanding of the purpose of the conference as well as of the whole project. Mireille invited participants to approach her and suggest what needs to be on the picture, with that they were invited to co-create it – we believe that brings also the feeling of ownership of the outcomes to participants. To stimulate more imagination, creativeness and innovation we used many templates to capture the insights and main ideas from small groups work.



Creating warm, creative and safe space



We used many little items to create warm and safe space, since we believe that people when relaxed they tend to work together much easier and better. We brought into the space herbs in pots, Mireille created some visual posters in advance, we used candies to decorate the tables and to cuddle the participants, relaxing music was on during coffee breaks, we used many ice breakers and body activities (to use also our bodies not just minds), participants were invited many times to reflect on how they feel in a group in couples or trios (to give a chance to speak up also to those

who are uncomfortable to speak up in the big group) ... Participants noticed that and expressed appreciation.

Description of individual programme segments and main conclusions

Tuesday

Afternoon

The programme of the conference started after lunch, at 2.30 pm. After welcome speeches of Slovenian and Italian NA, we took an hour for creating a safe and creative atmosphere in order to invite participants in active participation – we started with introduction of participants and warm up conversations in pairs and trios, later we used various group building activities. Flow of the conference was presented at this point as well as a summary of what was done so far.

1. Welcome speeches and presentation of the project

In welcome speeches, participants were address by:

- Uroš Skrinar, the director of Movit, Slovenian NA.
- Karin De Kelder – from EACEA
- Giuseppe Gualtieri, from Italian NA

The framework of the project was presented, followed by explanation of the objectives for this conference:



It was emphasised that when we talk about YYW we talk about non-formal learning, peer learning and cooperation process.

At 1st per learning conference in Amsterdam organisers used the understanding of a youth work as a lighthouse and that can help us with orientation and guidance for this conference as well.

As a result of a conference in Amsterdam, work that was produced there, based on the results they got, research, questionnaires, and contributions done in Amsterdam, we set up 4 cluster/thematic groups that defines the scope of wok also for this conference.

- **ADVOCACY PROCESS AND ACTIONS**
- **ACTIVATING CROSS-SECTORAL COOPERATION**
- **WELLBEING AND EMPOWERMENT**
- **GENDER EQUALITY AND LGBT+ RIGHTS**

The objectives and aims for this conference were:

- Identification and valorisation of existing practices;
- Sharing experiences from national expert groups, practices and stories (what is existing on grass root level) and on collecting those examples;
- Present the outcomes of the research that was produced by analysing those practices, questionnaires, interviews, life stories and desk research activities;
- Finalisation of the policy recommendations;
- Develop dissemination plans;
- Collect ideas for capacity building measures.

Main ambition for this conference is to develop Policy recommendations that are going to be finalised after the conference in Slovenia and be disseminated in 2019.

After the break we dived into results of cluster groups results with the aim of deepening and enriching the understanding. We used a variation of World cafe method to enable participants to discuss and give feedback on results of cluster group work.

2. World café

Participants were sitting around 16 tables hosted by table hosts, that were part of cluster groups and were in charge of introducing the topics to people around the table. There were rounds of 20-30 minutes, with a new question for every round.

1.Q (introductory) What's about?

What is the essence you identified in the cluster group on roles and competencies of youth workers in working with YMRA and (name of the cluster group)?

2.Q- Share/Tell about **good practices and tips** for youth workers working with YMRA and (name of the cluster group)

3.Q- Share/Tell about **shadows, traps, things we need to pay attention to**, being careful of working with YMRA and (name of the cluster group)

There were 4 topics address at the tables and the main aspects raised up per topic were:

➤ ADVOCACY PROCESS AND ACTIONS

“Precondition to advocate is to be part of the society, to know the system, know your interest and the interest of others and to know the stakeholders”

- A difficult topic, many times hard for the youth workers, it was a surprise as a topic in BPE project
- Youth work vs. youth policy / youth work and youth policy
- From advocacy to engagement
- Changing the narrative – with the class analysis
- Erasmus + programme
- Advocacy at different levels – policy discourse, legal level, schools,
- Advocacy should be done by people who are concern about the issues, but not only by them- (YMRA might be afraid to voice their opinion). They need support in this and Youth work can be a bridge between them and institutions and society/ policy.
- When things become highly political, organisations don't know how to respond
- Lack of competences in YW
 - Which kind of plural society are we looking for?

➤ **ACTIVATING CROSS-SECTORAL COOPERATION**

“Involve highest possible level (top down) and use participatory approach in designing and implementation (bottom up)”

- Recognition by other partners?
- Talk with the refugees, not about refugees – do it with me, not for me
- Connecting institutions (social service, housing, legal issues, labour, finding girlfriend/boyfriend)
- Provide support over a period of time
- Cooperation on personal level - identify key person
- Just start!
- Inclusive projects
- Tangible- what is the impact

➤ **WELLBEING AND EMPOWERMENT**

“It is important to go beyond the formal support – and youth work goes beyond.”

- Story telling is important
- Don't over-label, don't work too upfront, approach topics step by step in a creative way
- Just be there, be present
- Create conditions
- Take your time for building trust and relationships
- Start from their needs
- Don't decide for them
- Know your limits – there is a high risk of frustration among youth workers
- Mental health is a precondition for all for inclusion
- Don't ask too much – it's important to know the story, but do not intimidate
- Divide emotional from just being yourself
- Work with families

➤ **GENDER EQUALITY AND LGBT+ RIGHTS**

“Even when we want to include, we create boxes and groups”

“Sensitive topics require sensitive approach”

- Double discrimination
- Don't be solution orientated - just listen
- Tackling cultural differences
- Involve parents
- Step by step
- Mixed and separate groups
- Topic is like a bomb in populist times in Europe today
- We are facing non acceptive conservative systems and legislation dilemma

After all the rounds, participants shared their conclusions at the panel as well and tried to answer the question for conclusion: **What spoke to you the most?**

- “The problems are in the communities. How to make cross sectorial cooperation really working?”
- “There is a lot of diversity and different approaches and the communities we are dealing with. And hearing all these different experiences inspires me to take more actions.”
- “Topics are very interesting. But it made me hopeless. Let's team up together and make it happen. We can take actions and waiting for others in a bit difficult.”
- “What we need in order to achieve cross-sectorial approach is: Cooperating consortiums-don't do it by your own. Let's look from a holistic way, because everything is connected with everything.”
- “We need to shift focus and change perspective: discussion about YMRA needs to change. We need to focus on similarities and with this encourage solidarity.”
- “More focus should be also on capacity building for youth workers to address all those topics in the future.”
- “More integration, communication with society. I feel myself as a part of German society and the most thing spoke to me, that I see you trying to help us and trying to do something to us.”
- “What are the gaps, what are the information we are lacking? We need to talk with our target group.”
- “Building trust: creating opportunities for people to meet, building trust, in Youth Work through different cooperation. We need to know about each other and find a way to work together.”
- “Youth Workers have a lot of responsibilities, being a bridge between YMRA and institutions. But where can youth workers find their support? What is their support group? Youth Workers need support as well and we also need to involve the locals in our work.”

In the evening there were circle discussions going on with several guests. Participants were invited to participate in debate that were most interested in.

Evening discussions: The debates were organised by different people focus on various topics:

- **Maari Poim**, Estonian NA, Youth for Human Rights KA3 project, Youth for human rights: do we need more HRE, or better HRE in youth policy?



- **Judith Balog**, Belgian NA, The role of municipal level youth work in supporting refugees – Synergies with the Europe Goes Local project
- **Andreia Henriques**, SALTO inclusion and diversity, Youth workers and young refugees – training needs and opportunities of youth workers dealing with young refugees and it will provide an overview of the capacity-building offer available (tools and activities), mainly in the in the framework of Erasmus+ YiA programme.
- **Mara Georgescu**, Coe-Eu partnership, Outcomes on youth work and policy messages from the work of the EU – CoE youth partnership, presenting their Step by step handbook and the policy messages from a seminar they organized and the main conclusions of a research book they are finalizing.
- **Živa Mahkota, Slovenian NA- Movit** – Aware and active KA3 project how to reach out and develop awareness raising activities with and for young people.
- **Monique van Dam** - Social inclusion by employment.

Wednesday

Morning

Early mornings, from 7 to 8.30 am was dedicated for activities proposed and run by participants (walk in the forest, jogging, yoga, meditation ...). This part was optional and intended to take advantage of the resources present amongst the participants.

The day started with opening of the day that was followed by an example of a good practice:

- **“Professional Volunteering (ProVol) Crossborder” by Perdita Wingerter and Mohammed Bayzeed, Germany.**

“Professional Volunteering (ProVol) Crossborder” is an European partnership between Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Romania and United Kingdom. This partnership, coordinated by the German NGO Gemeinsam leben & lernen in Europa e.V., has developed an accessible, flexible and sustainable European model for training for volunteer coordinators and volunteers to improve the effectiveness of volunteering activities and the quality of the services they deliver. This training program aims at promoting professional skills and competences like for instance in the fields of communications, team or project management. Although these skills should primarily help people to perform their voluntary work more economically and efficiently, training participants also benefit in terms of developing crucial employability competencies and skills and acquire work references.

In order to provide also the training for refugees and migrants with limited language skills of the host society, but also for people with learning disabilities, the last two years the German and the Czech partner have further developed an easy language version of the existing training into a version.

The German partner has successfully managed to promote volunteering as a pathway into social and professional inclusion among refugees and migrants, and a lot of young refugees and migrants are now very active in their projects and activities.

The ProVol-Project is funded by the EU-program Erasmus +.

More details: www.professional-volunteering.eu

*After the presentation of the practice, we had a second round deepening and owning of the recommendations made by the cluster group. **Federica De Micheli** presented a brief summary of the general report of the cluster work to support the introduction of the working groups.*

Then we asked participants to divide in trios and question the recommendations that were given to them through role play (simulation of presenting recommendations to local decision maker).

After the break we invited participants to go in cluster groups and discuss findings from earlier session. We asked each group to present three key points in plenary.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EDITING COMMITTEE per topics:

➤ ADVOCACY PROCESS AND ACTIONS

- Creating platforms for NGOS, YMRA, using the existing ones already – where YMRA would have a direct influence and have more space for accessing society.
- Youth Workers want to advocate with them.
- Process of advocacy have to be safe for YMRA and for Youth Workers and organisations advocating with and for them.
- In advocacy someone has to be listening on the other side.
- Importance of spreading and disseminating recommendations to the people that will be drafting policy directly- the importance of getting involved from the very start.
- Approaching MEPs, candidates running for different positions at different levels.
- We are the ones having this knowledge now, we have capacities to address the right people and do advocacy actions.

➤ ACTIVATING CROSS-SECTORAL COOPRATION

- Right now, we are having a long shopping list – we will reach less with a long list, so we need to concentrate to a very concrete things and come to a limited number. We need to identify what are the most important points that needs to be addressed.
- The final report should include the rest of the things that will not feed into the policy recommendations paper.
- Participatory approach is relevant when dealing with cross-sectorial, when working with other institutions. We shouldn't do anything without our target group or for target group without involving them. We need to include them, and pay attention to their needs in developing phases, from the beginning.

➤ WELLBEING AND EMPOWERMENT

- Change has to happen on a specific level. Recommendations needs to be developed for specific level, but all levels can contribute something to achieve this change.
- Recommendations should be addressed to specific levels and specific organisations/ institution/ organisations.
- Recommendations are too general. We need to be more specific, develop them according to the target groups of YMRA and take their specifics into the account.
- The text should be more concrete, tangible and simple, so that it cannot be interpreted in a different way.



- It is important to understand the receivers and what are their needs so we can provide them with solutions for their problems.
- We should direct the recommendations not only to ministers for youth, but also the ones responsible for education, integration. Different field has a role to play.

➤ **GENDER EQUALITY AND LGBT+ RIGHTS**

- We should always emphasise the Human Rights perspective. Also, in terms of YMRA. Having holistic perspective on this, at all level is needed. We need to think, what should be there according to HR and it is not working. This approach should be improved and we need to act and question the existing practices.
- Policy recommendations need to be credible and they need to be feasible. They can be visionary, but we need to be concrete, how the implantation could happen. We need to be specific and define how things should be implemented. They need to be more elaborated.
- A lot of recommendations are very similar, we need to bring them together. We should think of changing the structure of the policy paper in order to join similar things.

General comments:

- “In the recommendations, there is no mentioning of volunteering YMRA and the work volunteers are doing. There should be more focus on cooperating with NGOs.”
- “Still not sure, who are we addressing. Policy makers are politicians. They need to be clearly identified. “
- “Many outcomes are toward the youth workers and what we need to do. This should not be part of the policy paper.”
- “I am missing EU level and what we expect from them. The project presents the potential to really address the EU level.”
- “Constantly refer to the rights and the responsibilities decision makers need to take. This should be brought more clearly in the report.”

Afternoon

After lunch, we heard two presentations:

➤ **Emilie Mire Aseli - The website www.youmo.se**

Youmo.se is a site in six languages for young migrants from 13 to 20 years of age. Youmo.se answers questions about sex, health and relationships, as well as gives information about gender equality and rights in Sweden.

The handbook “Youmo in practice”

“Youmo in practice” is a handbook empowering adult in how they can talk with young migrants about issues relating to health, sexuality and gender equality. The handbook has 28 exercises for adults to do together with young migrants.

➤ **Abdulfatah Soula** - migrant-led NGO Spark15, which is a result of several initiatives organised through cooperation between migrant and human rights NGOs and youth workers who provided input towards the NGOs establishment.



After lunch we focused on dissemination of policy recommendations. The idea was to look at dissemination as a great possibility to foster the understanding of the public opinion and of the policy makers and all stakeholders involved about the YMRA. The method identified will initially see discussion in national groups (+ one cross-national) and then gradually bring it to the plenary discussion where we will identify our next steps on different levels (EU, national, local ...). We used templates to support the

discussions.

Ideas developed in the national groups for dissemination of recommendations:

- **Germany:** They will include innovative, charismatic people who can reach to media and tell their stories.
- **Italy:** Transforming the recommendations in nicer, visual way- using infographic, videos or movements, so they could better support the dissemination of the recommendation.
- **Malta:** Sustain from local perspective. They want to use different networks as a platform to work on policy recommendations. They will publish recommendations and disseminate it, share it with others, they have contacts with. They expressed a very big interested to continue working on it.
- **Belgium:** Fighting stereotypes, with presenting some positive roles and aspects of migrations and presenting them in public. Migration can work. They will ask a football team to help them with this.
- **Portugal:** They started with a question: who do we already know and can help us? And the answers also lie with the people around this table. They were thinking a lot about which events they already have planned, where they could disseminate the results there. But they were also looking further in the future and agreed they need to have a strategic vision among all the partners, while at the same time having a connection with the media who could support them and make their work more visible.
- **Sweden:** They are planning to have a meeting, once the report is finish, so they can translate recommendations in the Swedish context. They will divide recommendations according to the different levels, and also to see and identify what their NA can do in their capacities and really implement some of them. They will connect with representatives of civil society and will try to get their voice being herd in the Swedish system, but also at the European, so they will get in contact with relevant stakeholders.
- **Netherlands:** They believe working together, including different parties in essential to achieve better results. Many youth workers would still need quite a lot of support. Different parties that work with youth can use each other's expertise to help them.

- **Slovenia:** They want to build on unified NGO approach to make these guidelines going. Working with YMRA needs to be as good at political level, as on other levels, but also parents and other stakeholders are playing a very important role if we want to achieve better integration in the society.
- **European organisations:** The document can be used as guidelines/principles for concrete work done with the target group.

Later in the afternoon participants - while moving to the dinner location - had a chance to have one of 3 different guided tours around Ljubljana (Ljubljana through the eyes of homeless person, graffiti tour or a history of migrations in Ljubljana tour). Dinner was organised by organisation Skuhna. Skuhna is employing refugees and serves international cuisine from all over the world. A presentation and interaction with the organisation representatives was before dinner as a way to enlarge the understanding on how YMRA can be integrated in social life.

Thursday

Morning

After opening of the day, key note speaker (humanitarian, child paediatrician and psychiatrist, Dr. Anica Mikus Kos) was invited to have an inspiring speech. The aim was to acknowledge the work of youth workers, motivate the participants for the dissemination phase and to give importance to the next steps in the project.

Later there was a variation of round table where representatives of some of the EU institutions presented their thoughts about the role of youth work in integration of young migrants (each of them got a question in advance in order to prepare short and concise contribution), - it was followed by a plenary discussion.

Panel:

Question for the guests: From the perspective of your organisation, which synergies and opportunities do you see for the dissemination of policy recommendations in the field of youth working with YMRA?

Guests:

- **Rui Gomes (CoE);** highlighted the importance of recognition and the quality of youth work and emphasize how important are the recommendations. CoE has been developing the recommendations on the rights of children/young people (YMRA) and the part of recommendation is defining the role of youth work in protecting YMRA in the transition from childhood to adulthood. They are also preparing a project on social inclusion of young refugees. They want to refer to these policy recommendation as the guidelines for action and as a compilation of expertise.
- **Mara Georgescu, Coe-EU youth partnership;** presented her scope of work, where she is working with people that are working with young people, meaning youth workers, civil servants, policy makers etc. Partnership has 3 main priorities which are youth work, social inclusion and participation.

She also emphasized the importance of the research aspects and knowledge-based youth work. Soon they will be organizing a Cross-sectorial seminar: bringing together all kinds of people who are working in education, legal system, on topic of YMRA, where they want to see what their needs are and what can Youth Work can offer to them. The objective of the seminar will be to build cross sectorial cooperation and explore how all of these actors can work better so that YMRA gets the best services. In this seminar they also want to include the knowledge produced by the BPE project. It is going to happen on 4th and 5th December in Strasbourg. She also thinks the outcomes of their seminar could serve also the BPE project in the future. She expressed her commitment in promoting recommendations developed in the BPE project also in her work.

- **Minne HUYSMANS, researcher, Free University of Brussels, Belgium;** is doing a research on social support and social network, connected also to sense of belonging. In his research he came to the conclusions that the support provided to YMRA is very practical, where a lot of professionals are involved on topic of education, housing, legal system, etc. but there is a lack of this aspect of relationships, companionships, establishing links to the society. He sees great potential in youth and in youth work in tackling and filling this gap: Few actions that could be taken by youth and youth work is focusing on this connection between YMRA and communities, where they could build bridges among YMRAs and local communities by focusing on the person rather than on the status. There is a clear need of involving them as active actors, not as passive subjects.

- **Silke Cuypers, European commission expert group on youth;** is a member of an Expert group on young migrants and refugees that was established under EU working plan for youth 2016-2018. They started their work in September 2017 and will finish it by the end of this year. It's made up from representatives of different member states, where 18-member states have participated, together with some other institutions.

The group has two main tasks:

- To develop a Tool box for youth workers with advices on how to work with YMRA. Advices are going to be highlighted by good practices and examples from different Member states.
 - To develop a set of recommendations on Youth Work and YMRA – this is going to serve as an input for possible Council Conclusions on the topic. Recommendations are going to focus on the role of youth work in the context of refugees and will include rec for Member states and for the European Commission.
 - She sees a lot of synergies with the BPE project and even the same people are involved in both processes. She called on all of the participants to join forces in disseminating the recommendations.
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- **Marco Frimberger, Austrian NA, Youth goals;** presented the Youth Goals which are a product of 6th cycle of Structured dialogue and are representing the view of young people on the future of Europe. They are very much connected to what BPE topic is addressing, especially in Youth Goal number on Inclusive society, Gender equality and LGBTIQ+ rights, Mental health and wellbeing etc. But of course, also other topics such as participation, access to education, labour market, etc. are very much connected to the situation of YMRAs. Youth Goals are getting a lot of recognition already and also the future EU Youth Strategy is referring to it. Marco proposed that when we are developing and talking about recommendation, we could connect them also to Youth Goals. He also referred to the timing where we are, in connection to the next generation of the programmes Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps.

The conclusion of the panel discussion:

Everybody in their context can contribute. Even though there are different initiatives and a lot could be done to improve cooperation, it is still important that those initiatives work in their context. And in reality, this topic hasn't been very visible and present and it is not being so loud, so even more actions could be taken. The experiences from different levels are being appreciated and taken into the account to higher levels. There are different roles of different partners. Sometimes we need to address different institutions and different actors in a different way. We must use all the possibilities to promote our values. And this value is humanity. To look at Europe with a brighter perspective.

The general Rapporteur presented main outcomes of discussions about policy recommendations and participants were invited to add comments.

We finish the conference with harvesting of insights, German NA took over the coordination of the project next step, participants got a small present and we ended with closing speech of the organiser.

- **Representative of a German NA;** Next phase is the last phase and it will concentrate on capacity building. The focus will be not so much on the policy recommendations but more to the other two parts that were addressed in this project as well: challenges that youth workers dealing with YMRAs are facing and what are the learning needs. They will take up these two aspects, trying to develop the training course. They will do a pilot testing and then see, how they can continue their work, maybe also with the network of NAs. They will keep everybody updated about the results and let us know, when they finalize the concept.
- **Rok Primožič, Director of Office for Youth, Slovenia;** Thanked everybody for the work that you they are doing and he looks forward receiving the policy recommendations. He will do his best to make them a reality. He stressed that another important thing to keep in mind is that we need to make sure that the focus on working with YMRA is not only being used now because of the migration crisis that Europe is facing, but it will stay as a recognised area also in the future. Policy makers like to put the burden on the current political and societal issues on the youth work and youth work can correspond to the needs in society, but should not be misused for this.
- **Giuseppe Gualtieri, Italian NA,** thanked everyone for a great work.

Evaluation

The participants were asked to do evaluation in pairs. A written evaluation is now carried out directly by the organisers and it goes beyond the scope of the trainers.

The general feedback was very positive and appreciative of the methods, working environment and facilitation style adopted. Some literally reported that "a lot has been achieved, without having the feeling of being under pressure. Well done!"

The graphic recording done by Mireille is to be considered part of this report.

Short evaluation by trainers:

Conference was running smooth, participants connected well, networking of youth workers, NA and other EU institutions representatives was successful. Not much new came up regarding policy recommendations but participants had a chance to discuss them, to suggest and express their opinions, there is more ownership of recommendation among participants now, therefore it is more likely the dissemination will be successful. The dialogue between EU institutions and youth workers started, it was appreciated from both sides, though we would need more time to deepen it. We appreciated the support of Polona, Živa and Silvia as well as from all NA representatives.

Follow-up proposals

There will be follow up of the activity, mainly connected to the dissemination of policy recommendations to different stakeholders.

The policy recommendations will be designed and adapted to the way, most suitable to be used and taken into consideration on different levels.

The next stage of the project, building on the results achieved so far on the conference and in the previous stages will be developing and testing of a training course for youth workers, working with young refugees.

Annexes

- Distributed at the Conference: the synthesis of the Policy recommendations, prepared by Federica Demicheli.
- On the USB key the participants received all the outputs of the project created to this point:
 - Best practice Compendium
 - Research report
 - Reports from the four cluster groups
- Graphic recording by Mireille de Bremen
- Participants List
- Policy recommendations elaborated at the Conference

