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Commonalities in Learning and Teaching Methodologies and Pedagogies in Supporting Youth Worker Development as Facilitators

SUMMARY



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SUMMARY

1. Issues surrounding the learning needs of youth workers

This document is joint summary of desk researches on methodologies and pedagogies used in youth work in 4 partner countries. It should be pointed out that current situation regarding youth work is different from country to country - UK is the most advanced in this respect and is the only country where youth workers are official separate profession whereas in CRO, CZ and HU officially recognized profession called a 'youth worker' is not existing. However, this does not mean that youth work and activities related to youth work are not implemented in these countries and it is even possible to talk about competences and methodologies used by youth workers or similar professions in all partner countries.

The following text is comparison of most important youth work issues in partner countries.

CRO: Youth work as a special field has still been undefined, no official terminology and standardization in this field, distinction between youth work in broad (any type of interaction between youth and persons who work with youth (school, police, social care...) and narrow sense (organized and planned process of empowering young people for personal growth and development, building interpersonal relations; this process is based on partnership and enables young people to be active participant and creator of the process). There are no quality criteria against which youth worker (facilitation) skills and competences can be recognized. The Ministry of Social Policy and Youth attempted to define and regulate the field of youth work by establishing the Expert task force for analysis and defining youth work in 2015 and it is expected that by the end of 2018 Croatia will have official occupational and qualification standards for youth work defined.

There are not many training and development opportunities for youth workers in Croatia. Most of youth workers use the training opportunities provided by SALTO YOUTH and have to go abroad to gain new knowledge and skills for working with youth. Although trainings announced at SALTO YOUTH platform mostly cover all travel and accommodation costs for participants the problem is that many youth workers find sometimes unable to attend these trainings since they are mostly engaged on project based activities. Croatian youth workers have the following training needs in order to achieve additional expertise in the field of youth: interactive methods of transferring knowledge to young people, leading and motivating young people.

CZ: Youth work as a special field has still been undefined, currently there are 4 professional qualifications connected with youth work: : "Coordinator of volunteers", "Chief of recreational events for children and youth", "Independent leader of leisure time activities for children and youth", "Leader of leisure time activities for children and youth". The main parameters for recognition of qualifications in the area of work

with youth and children were set thanks to a pioneering project (Keys for Life) and its collaboration with two other projects (the National Register of Vocational Qualifications and the National Qualifications Framework).

Training and development opportunities for youth workers are offered at different faculties, mostly pedagogical (“Pedagogics of leisure time activities”), there is also a possibility to attend a half-year-long educational programme accredited by the MEYS (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport). Further education in the scope of lifelong learning is not systematized yet. Particular workshops, seminars, courses or e-learning tools are offered by different organizations, mostly NGOs.

HU: Students can arrive to Higher Education Training “Youth Worker” mainly from 3 different situations: after secondary level graduation they do not know where to go on; not getting to university; with outdated qualifications. The training focuses on sociology, law, psychology and pedagogy and aiming to be a practical training. With this qualification a Youth Worker Assistant can handle partial social and mental problems of clients under the guidance of experts.

There is a job title “Youth worker” (literally youth helper). With this title one can be a Children and Youth protection officer or inspector, Youth officer or Education associate, Community development assistant, and a Child protection consultant. There is no differentiating between professional youth worker and youth support worker.

In practice youth worker students go to higher education (Andragogy, Teacher, Social worker) or work at NGOs.

A lot of Ngo’s specialize on this area, either funded by the government or by the European Union. A youth worker in Hungary is aiming to take care socially, and to help the youngsters in the field of employment. A youth worker can inform the youngsters about free time activities, job offers, trainings, and children’s creative groups, for example theater club (it may be led by a social worker or youth worker). When it comes to competences and quality criteria of youth workers, the bachelors of the universities of the human sector may be identified as youth workers (recreation manager, andragogy, pedagogy, social worker, youth worker, mental hygiene expert). The minimum competence of a youth worker is standard graduation from high school, further trainings in local NGOs, to be able to make good contacts with people, personal sympathy. For an in-depth analysis there is no budget announced. But there is a new program in the Széchenyi 2020 cultural program, it aims to help the age group of 18-30, to become an entrepreneur at home, in Hungary, the planned budget is approximately 1,04 milliard Huf.

UK: youth workers are classed as an identifiable role with a skillset, UK distinguishes between youth support worker and professional youth worker. Youth workers work primarily with young people aged between 13 and 19, but may in some cases extend this to younger age groups and those aged up to 24. Their work seeks to promote young people’s personal and social development and enable them to have a voice, influence and place in their communities and in the society. The Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for youth and community workers is the body that sets the national framework used to grade and pay youth work jobs. The JNC recognizes youth and community workers’ qualifications which have been professionally approved by the Education Training Standards (ETS) Committee of the National Youth Agency.

There are training and development opportunities for youth workers and there is a list of all the validated professionally qualifying programs that are JNC (Joint Negotiating Committee) recognized; these courses

will give the status of professional youth workers. Then there are opportunities abroad that allow youth workers to learn about cultural diversity and different practices in youth work in other countries. This type of experience helps youth workers to acquire new skills and to enhance their professional development.

2. Issues surrounding the learning needs of young disadvantaged learners (NEETs)

A NEET is a young person who is "Not in Education, Employment, or Training". Each partner country has its own age group for defining NEETs depending on the country specifics.

CRO: NEET group consists of young people aged 15-29 years. 21,8 % of this age group accounted for NEET in 2014 (EU average 15,8%). Major educational feature of Croatian NEETs is that 71% have finished vocational education. "Youth Guarantee" programme is the only scheme which includes NEET population between 15 and 30 years and which has been systematically carried out in Croatia.

CZ: NEET group consists of young people aged 15-29 years . The number of NEETs in 2015 is 7.7 %. (In the group aged 15-24 years, the number of NEETs in 2015 is 4 %). Young NEETs have a possibility to find support provided by different organisations (Labour Offices, Centre for career counselling, Informational centres for youth, organisations providing social services or NGOs). Especially NGOs provide different learning and leisure time activities for those who are neither in education nor training.

HU: NEET group consists of young people aged 16-30 years. 16, 5 % of this age group is considered NEETs in year 2015. Hungarian government made a wide range of Higher Education Trainings (earlier OKJ trainings "Országos Képzési Jegyzék" - National Qualifications Register), which are basically covering the in-between field of high school and university. A lot of small time professions are in this category, and are free of charge.

UK: NEET group consists of young people aged 16-24 years. 13,1% of this age group are considered NEETs in 2015. Most common methods of engaging NEETs are: programmes which are aimed specifically at re-engaging the hardest to help young people developed by Department for Education (the Activity Agreement Pilots and the Entry to Learning Pilots), the Youth Employment Initiative, various government financing strategies for youth training and employment opportunities, local strategic plans for NEET reduction.

3. Provision of statutory and non-statutory education and the implications of the youth worker as learner

Since a youth worker is officially recognized profession in UK only there is a clear formal qualification and educational background connected to youth work. Other partner countries have more non-formal paths to training and education of youth workers.

CRO: There are no formal qualification routes that are mandatory for a youth worker in Croatia since this profession does not exist in the current Croatian Qualification Framework. In practice youth work is implemented usually by persons who graduated in pedagogy, psychology, social work, political science, economy. They usually get knowledge and skills to work with young people through non-formal education

and programs offered to them in this area (mediation, non-violent conflict resolution, communication and presentation skills, group work, prevention of unhealthy lifestyles and drugs). There are no trainings aimed at facilitation only in Croatia although there are some trainers in Croatian Youth Network who are familiar with facilitation.

CZ: Currently there are 4 professional qualifications recognized by the National Qualifications Framework in 2014 and 2015 which are connected with youth work. Further education for youth workers in the scope of lifelong learning is not systematized yet. Short-term or ad hoc courses, workshops or seminars are provided mostly by different public institutions or NGOs and through mobility projects or ESF funded projects. Facilitation skills are mostly introduced as a part of training curricula, specific trainings for youth workers focused on facilitation skills development are not frequent yet in the Czech Republic.

HU: In Higher Education Training social workers' specialization is called Youth worker. (Literally it means youth helper, or youth supporter.) With this Training students are in higher education but they do not receive any diploma. 4 semesters 120 credits (They can use 90 credits in e.g. Andragogy) Name of qualification is Youth worker assistant.

In 2017 this Training ceases. Instead of it a new BA is launched. Its name *Social and Youth Work at ISCED level 5*. Students have to choose at the beginning their specialization so the title is a little bit illusive. Although its MA is ready to launch governmental plan prepare 3 BA connected to youth work: Cultural Community Coordinator; Youth Community Coordinator; Human Developer.

A wild range of training courses are available at NGOs and at SALTO.

UK: The youth support worker qualifications are National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), and Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs). A qualified professional youth worker will develop his skills on the job and be supported and supervised by his colleagues, will take child protection and safeguarding training and his employer may also offer regular short courses on particular aspects of youth work.

4. Current engagement, gaps and teaching methods

Despite different formal and non-formal framework for youth work it is evident that all partner countries apply different teaching methods and pedagogies.

CRO: In the context of youth work in Croatia eight forms of work with young people are identified: non-formal education in youth work (trainings, workshops and other forms of work where participatory methodology is used); international youth work (EVS, camping and international learning activities); open youth work (although a guided activity young people themselves are given space and freedom to create their own activities); activism and youth participation (activities connected to raising awareness on active citizenship); peer education (work with young people who use persons of same or similar age who have certain competencies to transfer and co-create the content); social inclusion of young people (emphasis on inclusion of deprived young people, mostly labour market); leisure activities (sports and recreational /

cultural / amateur activities); information and counselling (providing information on the different aspects of youthful way of life taking into account the principles of working with young people).

CZ: Most commonly used methods in CZ are: learning based on voluntary participation and equal access, project-based learning, active participation of all learners, combination of individual and group learning, focus on acquiring skills and competences for life and preparation for active citizenship, holistic approach - development of knowledge, skills and attitudes of young people and development of emotions and values, learning based on experience and activity, division of learning process into concrete steps which are of the same importance as the learning results, learning based on participants' needs.

HU: In Higher Education Training 55% are formal and theoretical training and besides it there are 45% fieldwork. Besides this, there are also trainings available about arts and art therapy methods: drama, drama-pedagogy, self-awareness, children's theatre, circus tools, dance, folkdance, rhythm and singing. All have the possibility to rather involve the children, and not just present them the idea of learning.

UK: Many different types of teaching and learning methods are available in UK and it is, however possible to divide these in three broad groups, namely, mass-instruction methods, individualized-learning methods and group-learning methods, and these not only differ in terms of the basis mode of instruction but also place both the teacher and the student in radically different roles.

5. Trainer Skills and abilities in working across these learning methods

Facilitation as a skill of youth workers is not specifically emphasized in CRO, CZ and HU, but in UK there are training about facilitation skills for youth workers.

CRO: There is no special emphasis on facilitation skills in youth work and facilitation is not used as popular teaching method. However, there is pool of experienced trainers in youth field registered at Mreža mladih Hrvatske (Croatian Youth Network) and they can be engaged to implement different trainings, workshops, strategic planning and facilitation as well.

CZ: Facilitation skills are included into the skillset defined in the "set of minimum competence profiles" (by the National Institute for Children and Youth within the "Keys for life" project). However, the term "facilitation" is not used in the Czech environment frequently.

HU: There is a set of skills, competences, abilities, knowledge and experiences that can be learned in the Training. These are mainly organizing, situation awareness, human rights - so primarily theoretical knowledge and applying the methods. The practical experiences can be learned through internships, at NGOs and special trainings, where experienced trainers can give workshops to put everything into practice, where facilitation, moderation, and mediation skills are also tested.

UK: There are trainings about facilitation skills for youth workers. The main aim of the trainings is to strength the role of youth work and non-formal education in employability by training youth workers in the field of non-formal education and experiential learning, and the participants have the chance to further develop their competences as a facilitator. Specific objectives of these trainings are to experiment different Group Facilitation Methods and empower youth facilitators in implementing quality training activities using participatory methods, to develop facilitation skills and competencies in working with non-formal education, to share and exchange participatory methods and good practices in order to improve team work and group

creativity, to provide a non-formal environment where facilitators can work in a cooperative way, to find creative ways to involve facilitators in non-formal education and enhance motivation.

6. Solutions that have been applied and their successes. Case study

Each partner country has some good practice and examples in youth work.

CRO: Study programme Young People for Young People (supported by the National Foundation for Civil Society Development and EPG/Norwegian funds, within the framework of the project " Education for Human Rights and Democracy") - it is a non-formal study programme which consists of several months of intensive educational programme based on a participatory and experiential learning, with the adoption of skills and knowledge in the field of youth work, youth policies and contribution to social change. It's aimed to foster young people with skills and knowledge required in youth work.

CZ: The grant programme called "One world, many voices" (supported by the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in the Czech Republic) - is a successful example on how to motivate young people to be active members of their local communities and develop their skills through combination of formal and non-formal learning. It enables young people (pupils and students) to choose their own project idea, create a project fiche including budget and submit it for its assessment.

HU: EVS volunteers has the chance to make their own project. In our practice we give them trainings: mainly drama and theatre trainings, and special sensitivity workshops for people with special needs, meanwhile they do their everyday activities. In the second half of their service they are supported to create their own projects: they design it, make the budget and concept and they have to manage it themselves. During the process they learn to defend their ideas and to adapt their ambitions and plans to the possibilities. We also evaluate the projects together with them. Volunteers learn to make and manage their own projects.

UK: ALTER is a programme of social and educational integration developed by the Balearic Islands Government in collaboration with 26 municipalities of the region in Spain. Alter aims to improve the personal and social development of those secondary school students aged 14 -16 who have left school, reject conventional education institutions or have difficulties to adapt and show maladjusted behaviour. The ultimate goal is to bring back students to formal education or to promote their entrance in the labour market.

7. Wider national and EU wide implications in light of policies

Since all partner countries are EU members the main document connected to youth work on EU level is EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018 which sets out a framework for cooperation. EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018 has two main objectives: to provide more and equal opportunities for young people in education and the job market and to encourage young people to actively participate in society.

CRO: National programme for youth from 2014 to 2017 regulates „improvement activities of state administration bodies and public institutions which with their scope and responsibilities contribute to the needs of young people and raise their life quality with the aim of their optimal social integration".

National working group for structured dialogue promotes the implementation of structural dialogue in Croatia, strengthens young people, youth organisations and promotes networking between different actors.

CZ: The main objective of Czech youth policy document “Concept of Youth Support for the period of 2014-2020” is to contribute to improving the quality of life of young people, particularly through the development of their personalities so that they can adapt to the fast-changing democratic environment and use their creative and innovative potential.

HU: The Hungarian national policy about youth work is trying to familiarize the notion of community work and volunteering to young people in the age group of 17-18 years olds. It’s a new program, that students need to take a “school public service” in a third party, in order to finish their studies in secondary education. – The main priority is to ease the transition from learning to work and to take action against the radicalization of the youth, by public solidarity. The European youth strategy’s priority, is social inclusion and social mobility, specifically aimed at vulnerable groups of young groups, such as those who are at risk of poverty and social exclusion, to isolated rural areas, or those marginalized young people from communities, such as ethnic minorities, refugees and asylum seekers.

The strategy also stresses, that youth work and non-formal education - especially through such organizations and youth organizations targeting young entrepreneurs, providing an opportunity for young people to develop innovative projects, to develop entrepreneurial experience, and acquire the funds necessary to start their own business and gain self-confidence - a key element in the development of creative and innovative potential of young people, including entrepreneurship, business and civil skills; It stresses that in order for youth employment, there must be creating ways to support entrepreneurship and innovative start-ups environment. Stresses, the need to remove all obstacles standing in the way of their ideas, skills and opportunities unfolding for young people.

UK: National Youth Strategy includes a specific focus on youth work. Regardless of whether youth work aspects come under a specific strategy or action plan for youth work, or whether a more general youth policy discusses youth work, there are a number of key ways which describe youth work. These policies primarily highlight the importance of youth work, aim to raise awareness and illustrate how youth work can contribute to the development of young people.

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