Inter CITY – European Peer Learning on Local Youth Policy
European Conference
DOCUMENTATION

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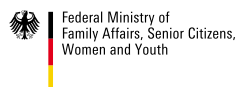Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,
Women and Youth

Youth
in Action

InterCITY

European Peer Learning on Local Youth Policy

DOCUMENTATION

InterCITY was realised within the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010 – 2018).

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Creating a European platform

Preface
JUGEND für Europa

The renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010–2018), also referred to as the EU Youth Strategy, describes *mutual learning* (or *peer learning*) as an important instrument of youth policy in Europe. Peer learning can contribute to improving a common understanding of youth policy approaches and is a source of inspiring impulses from abroad, thereby helping to improve the Member States' own youth policy strategies.

This is why the German Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) has placed a strong focus on peer learning as it helps to implement the EU Youth Strategy in Germany. In the context of this process the Ministry has set up a Transfer Agency for Youth Policy Cooperation in Europe to support peer learning and promote the transfer of youth policy experiences in Europe. The Transfer Agency creates European platforms, forums and other mutual learning opportunities where youth policy stakeholders can meet, discuss and exchange their knowledge and experiences. In this context, the idea of organizing a first European conference on local youth policy was born. The Ministry joined forces with the German Association for Public and Private Welfare and the local authorities of Leipzig and Cologne to organise the conference **InterCITY – European Peer Learning on Local Youth Policy**, which took place from October 10 to 12, 2012 in Leipzig.

Youth-related challenges such as the transition from youth to adulthood, youth unemployment, education and social participation, growing demands on the young people's time and reduced living space exist in similar forms in many European countries and are subject to national and European policies. In many European countries it is the municipalities that are responsible for youth services and youth work. This is the level that is closest to the citizens and as such, the local authorities are the central agents that determine how young people live and grow into young adults.

To create a European platform for local youth policy and local youth work, to exchange opinions on these topics and challenges and to learn from each other was the main motivation of the InterCITY conference, which was attended by almost one hundred local youth policy stakeholders from all over Europe.

These conference proceedings are a summary of the three-day event in Leipzig. While it cannot reflect the whole atmosphere or the entirety of all the intense debates that took place, it nevertheless provides a good overview of the speeches, the workshops and their project examples, and the essentials of the various debates.

This conference is a good example of what an intense exchange on a European level in such an important field such as local youth policy can look like. We therefore hope that these proceedings are not just a mere summary of the event, but that they inspire the reader to consider other projects and events of this kind.

In Leipzig the idea was born to establish a European Network of Local Government Youth Work to promote peer learning and to function as a European platform for local government youth work. This idea will be the subject of a planned follow-up conference in 2013 or 2014 in Helsinki/Finland. Hopefully these proceedings can also inspire this conference. ↙

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Address by HANS-GEORG WICKE
Head of JUGEND für Europa

Ladies and gentlemen,
On behalf of the German Association for Public and Private Welfare, the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, and JUGEND für Europa, allow me to extend a very warm welcome to the InterCITY conference.

My special thanks go the City of Leipzig, the host of this conference. I am delighted that more than 100 participants from 27 countries have decided to travel to Leipzig to spend two days discussing European Peer Learning on Local Youth Policy. Originally, I was supposed to co-present here with Michael Löher, the President of the Association. Unfortunately he has taken ill so you will have to make do with just me instead.

>> *Youth work =*

education for citizenship!

Why was this InterCITY conference organised?
The collaboration between the Association, the Ministry and JUGEND für Europa provides a clue:

_ In Germany, the local authorities are responsible for providing youth-related services. They carry the primary responsibility when it comes to determining how young people live their lives. Since the Association has traditionally always worked closely with the local authorities, it made sense to organise this conference for them as a discussion platform.

_ The InterCITY conference plays an important role in the Ministry's multilateral cooperation project to develop an independent youth policy, in which six other countries plus Germany are involved. In Germany, like in all states with a federal structure, the local level plays an indispensable role in national youth policy development. It hence comes as no surprise that an exchange between local authorities across Europe is important, too.

_ JUGEND für Europa is not just the national agency for the Youth in Action programme; in the context of its involvement in various projects, such as the Transfer Agency for Youth Policy Cooperation in Europe, it is a long-term contributor to the question of Europe's role and identity, of how to build bridges between the various levels, and of transnational cooperation in the youth field. In light of this, we were confident that there was a need for a special event to encourage a dialogue between local authorities on youth policy and youth work.

So over the next two days the InterCITY conference will examine what is happening at the interface between the local level, youth policy, and Europe. How important is inter-municipal cooperation in the youth field in Europe? Allow me to outline ten reasons why this cooperation is vital.

Local authorities are responsible for shaping the circumstances under which young people grow up, both in political and in practical terms. If they want to fulfil that role effectively, they have to identify the best approaches and strategies. An international exchange can help in that respect, particularly if it is a long-term process rather than just a one-off event.

Exploring what others are doing can be helpful to the practitioners who work on the ground in public-sector and independent organisations. Such an exchange can be an enriching experience. It can help to gain perspective, explore unfamiliar approaches, and reflect on one's own strategies. It helps workers to professionalise. It extends their professional networks, improves their language skills, and generally extends the range of possible options.

Translocal cooperation means more than "just" learning from each other, which is a logical consequence of any form of cooperation. It allows local authorities to work together on shared issues and challenges, to find and develop joint solutions, to form long-term networks and to implement European projects.

Experience has shown that local realities change with every European and international project that is completed; the more regularly these projects take place, the greater the change. Local authorities become more international. Organisations become part of networks. More European activities are offered. Europe becomes part of the local authorities' profile, which generally makes them more viable.

For many years traditional city partnerships were the backbone of translocal cooperation. Now, as municipal budgets are stretched

further and further, city partnerships as well as European and international activities are having to justify their very existence. Transnational cooperation that is dedicated to jointly shaping the circumstances under which young people grow up are capable of rejuvenating existing city partnerships, bringing new ones to life, and reflecting the life-worlds of today's young people.

Municipalities and Europe have traditionally always been remote from each other, not just geographically, but also structurally, politically and conceptually. Past attempts to bring the two together have never been entirely successful. Rather, local authorities often see themselves as a passive object of EU policy-making, rather than an active subject. Governance within Europe's multi-level system can only work effectively if the EU acknowledges and respects the local perspective. At the same time, local authorities have to rise up and play a strong role in Europe – they have to help create a Europe that corresponds more closely to their needs.

Europe is struggling to justify its existence. There are many reasons for that, reasons that are too numerous to go into here. However, one thing is certain: Local authorities are equally called upon to communicate proactively how valuable Europe is and to promote its benefits. They are called upon to provide corresponding services to their citizens. They have to provide them with an opportunity to become active contributors and participants in Europe, to get to know other cultures, and to become part of Europe.

In 2009 the Council of the European Union adopted a framework for youth policy cooperation in Europe that is also referred to as the EU Youth Strategy. This framework is being implemented in several countries. Some local authorities are sceptical and distant about it, and frequently refer to the principle of subsidiarity.

However, the Youth Strategy as a strategic framework for youth policy in the Member States can also be beneficial to the local authorities, too, provided they decide to play an active role.

Young people want Europe, and they want to be Europeans. The scepticism they feel relates to Europe as an institution. They want to be mobile and are on the lookout for mobility opportunities. Providing such opportunities for cross-border learning is another responsibility of the local authorities. In terms of youth policy, they are particularly called upon to provide services in the non-formal (that is, non-school) area in a child and youth services context.

Besides mobility, other aspects of translocal cooperation and youth policy include

_ Participation and democratic development
_ Civic engagement
_ Cultural diversity
_ Combating racism and xenophobia
_ Recognition of non-formal learning
_ Transition between school and working life
_ Situation faced by young people in certain urban or rural environments
_ Social integration of young people
_ Employment

and many more. There is no lack of issues that could benefit from close translocal cooperation.

Our agenda promises this will be a very exciting and insightful conference. I hope that you will all return home with fresh insights and having made new contacts. My wish is that this conference prepares the ground for a sustained dialogue on youth policy issues between Europe's municipalities.

I would like to thank our colleagues from the Transfer Agency for Youth Policy Cooperation in Europe and the German Association for Public and Private Welfare and indeed everyone who has contributed to making this conference a success, particularly the presenters, the interpreters and of course you, the active participants. ↙

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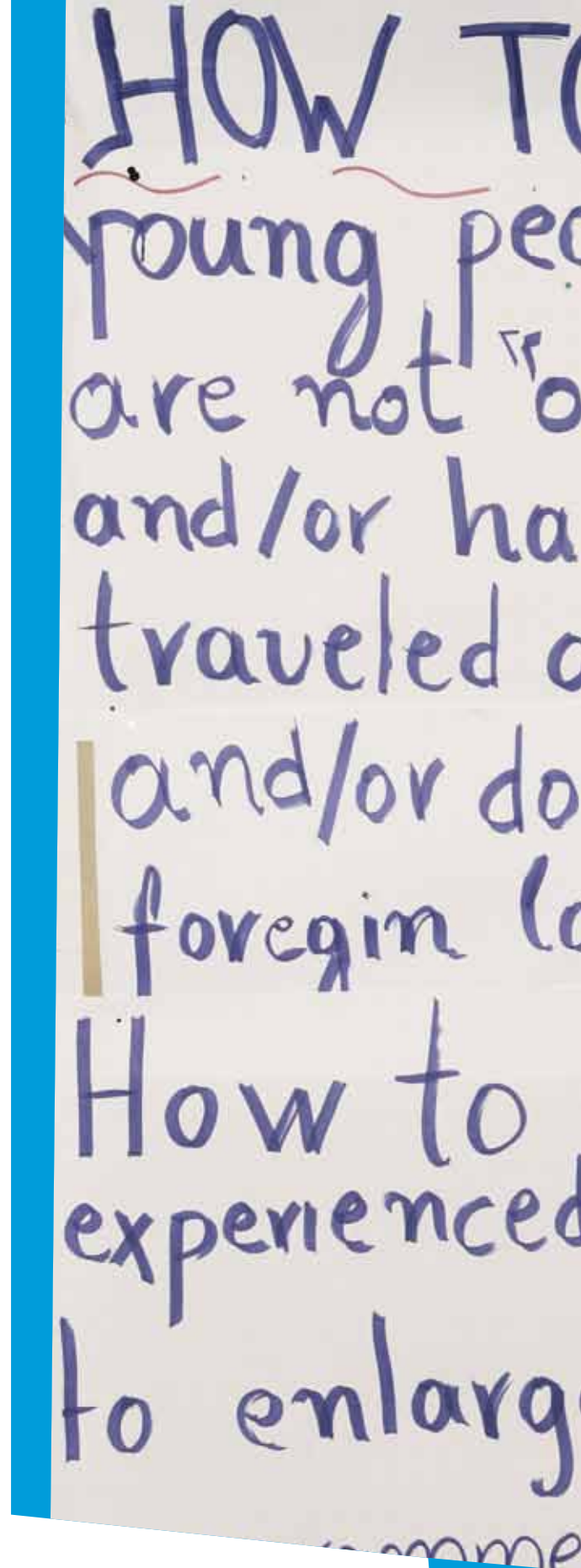
Personal greeting by THOMAS SCHMIDT
Deputy Head of the Youth Welfare Office, Leipzig

Dear Ms Kraushaar, dear Mr Wicke, dear municipal youth policy experts and managers,
Allow me to extend a very warm welcome to you on behalf of the City of Leipzig to Inter-CITY – European Peer Learning on Local Youth Policy.

Leipzig has a long international history. Always a trade fair city, in 1497 the Roman-German King Maximilian I gave it 'privileged trade city' status. Since then, Leipzig has been one of the most important centres of trade and change in Europe. Every year the Saxon metropolis of Leipzig is host to a large number of experts from Germany and further afield who come to attend a wide range of research, business and cultural conferences and events. It is also home to a vibrant and young creative scene. The University of Leipzig, one of the oldest in Germany (it turned 600 in 2009) is very popular with German and international students. Leipzig consistently attracts visitors from across the country and around the world, some of whom settle here long-term.

The challenge for youth policy is to support young people as they move through the various phases of childhood and adolescence into adulthood. Together with the education system and informal education providers, we need to create the necessary frameworks and strive to eliminate social imbalances at as early a stage as possible. Another major concern in addition to education is to achieve a greater degree of coordination between youth policy and the labour market on the one hand and youth policy and health policy on the other. In this context, the primary aim of child and youth services is to provide support. Child and youth services in Leipzig pursues an inclusive approach that provides all young

people with equal access to activities, projects and events organised by the city's child and youth services organisations. I'd like to mention four issues that currently play a major role for youth policy in Leipzig:

1. Leipzig is a growing city whose birthrate has been rising consistently since 2004. Further increases in 2010 and 2011 indicate that demand for child and youth services is set to rise, to which the city has to find an adequate response. For instance, services for young families will become a greater concern in the next few years.

2. The demands placed on children and young people especially in the field of education and the transition into working life have become immeasurably greater in recent years. Greater emphasis will have to be laid on facilitating a successful transition from one stage in their educational career to the next. Integrated local education structures and inclusive education are set to become more important in future.

3. Leipzig's living conditions report, education report and annual social affairs provide a good overview of the requirements of the city's children and young people. The statistics speak a clear language. The question is what child and youth services can do to assist children and young people from impoverished families.

4. Another area whose significance has been on the rise for a number of years is health education, an aspect that is also connected to the poverty issue. There is an increasing need to educate people on how to remain in good health, especially when it comes to food and dietary habits, but also in regard to preventing addiction.

While we strive to implement youth strategies at the local level, we are also aware of the importance of cooperating with other German cities and municipalities as well as partners outside of Germany. Leipzig feels strongly about transnational cooperation and about maintaining European approach in all areas of life. We are a member of Kommune goes International, an initiative by IJAB, the International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of Germany. In this context we aim to internationalise our municipal child and youth services and provide especially disadvantaged young people in Leipzig with access to international exchange and mobility activities. What's more, since 1992 Leipzig has been an active member of the EUROCITIES network, which currently consists of over 130 large European cities with more than 120 million inhabitants. EUROCITIES is dedicated

to representing the voices of cities at the EU level. It is a platform where members can discuss specific challenges, and it functions as its members' political representative vis-à-vis the European Union. The network's primary functions include the active development of European policies, an exchange of best practices among its members, and promoting joint transnational projects.

I am delighted to welcome you to the Inter-CITY conference, part of the peer learning project of the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, here in Leipzig. I hope the conference will be a resounding success and that you will return home full of inspiration for your work with young people. Enjoy your stay in our city and come back soon! ↙

Youth policy in Germany

1. ADDRESSES   2. INPUTS

Address

by **REGINA KRAUSHAAR,** Head of Department in the Federal Ministry
for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

Ladies and gentlemen,
I am delighted to welcome you all to the InterCITY Conference on European Peer Learning on Local Youth Policy here in Leipzig. This conference is a major milestone in the multilateral cooperation project for an independent youth policy.

I would hence like to say a few words about how we are shaping the process of creating this independent youth policy in Germany. In this context I will also highlight the role of the local authorities.

Youth in Europe

The way in which young people grow up varies from country to country, depending on local circumstances, institutions and social structures. For instance, a child in France will experience learning in a completely different institutional environment than a child from the Czech Republic. School life in Lithuania is quite different from that in Belgium. The future prospects of Swedish teenagers are entirely different from those of their German peers.

In the audience are a large number of young people, some of whom are members of local youth councils. I assume that you can confirm what I just said. I am delighted that you are here with us today to contribute your insights as experts in your own field. A debate about youth policy can only be successful if we conduct it with you, rather than if we just talk about you!

Despite all the national differences I just mentioned, however, one thing is the same in all countries: no other period of life involves more exploration of the world than adolescence.

The way in which young people experience growing up, loosen the ties to their parents and develop their own independent characters – in short, their process of emancipation – will vary from person to person and possibly also from country to country.

However, no matter what the country, we need to find political responses to young people's questions and needs that they, and justifiably so, voice towards their societies.

Youth in Germany

Germany faces an immense demographic challenge. Today, more than 16 million Germans are under 20. By 2020, that number will have dropped to below 14 million. By 2050, the younger generation is projected to have shrunk to 10.5 million.

In other words, in 2050 young people will account for less than 16 per cent of the general population.

At the same time, the number of young people from the immigrant community will increase and in turn, acquire a new significance. These statistics require Germany to urgently rethink its youth policy and in that context, to make it a firm part of its social policy for the future. This country already needs as many young people as possible to engage and contribute towards society. However, the challenges are not just demographic in nature. We have been witnessing significant changes within the younger generation itself. In terms of knowledge and skills, Europeanisation and globalisation are placing increasing demands on us, and this is particularly true when it comes to young people.

I am sure that this is an issue not just for young Germans, but for young people in your countries, ladies and gentlemen.

Youth in Germany

For instance, we are observing that young people today are required to complete their education much faster than previous generations, leaving them with less time to acquire vital social skills by working in a youth association or club, for instance. At the same time, the private sector and civil society urgently require well-educated and socially skilled young workers. In other words, young people are being given less and less time to acquire these personal strengths.

The logical consequence is that they have less and less spare time to spend in non-formal settings. They no longer have the freedom to spend time volunteering, meeting friends or simply relaxing – environments in which they could acquire valuable social skills.

Having recognised that we are unable to halt or even reverse this phenomenon, we need to deal effectively with the consequences and support our young people in coping with these changes.

I would summarise it this way: We're seeing a progressive heterogenisation of youth.

Youth as a phase in life consists of a multitude of different lifestyles, attitudes, life stories, and socio-economic and cultural circumstances. The issues I have just outlined indicate as much.

Some of the challenges I have referred to may seem somewhat trivial, compared to the many troubling problems that exist in the world. I am aware of the fact that some countries are having to dedicate all their energy to combating youth unemployment. Around 21 per cent of young Europeans are not in training or employment. That's more than 5.5 million. I can assure you that we are well aware of this pan-European challenge. We are hence currently looking for supporters who wish to join the EU Starter Programme, under which we plan to create one million jobs for young people in the voluntary sector.

Young people can work in hospitals, retirement homes, schools and museums where they acquire vital professional experience while helping to increase the quality of service provided by these institutions. I hope that we will soon find the backing we need for this programme so we can begin to offer young people across Europe an opportunity to gather valuable learning experience.

**An independent youth policy –
A national concern and dialogue process**

In 2011 Germany began developing what it refers to as an independent youth policy. In this context, "independent" does not mean a youth policy that considers itself "independent" of, i. e., separate from, other policy areas. Rather, it refers to a setting where youth policy aspects are mainstreamed in all policy areas that in some way impact on young people's lives.

The aim of this independent youth policy is to change the way we perceive youth as a period of life.

For instance, we intend to make improvements in three important areas, all of which have been recognised by the European Youth Strategy:

1. the link between formal (school) and non-formal (non-school) education,
2. improved participation opportunities for young people, and
3. successful transition between school and vocational training and then the labour market.

We discuss these issues together with experts from child and youth services, schools and local authorities, the private sector and the research community, politicians and – last but not least – with the young people themselves in a series of forums.

This process is particularly important to us. We have hence set up a national centre that is dedicated to developing an independent youth policy. Under our lead, the centre works with stakeholders from a wide variety of social spheres.

To ensure that young people can provide input and help to make the right decisions, we have launched a project that enables as many

young Germans as possible to make their voices heard.

The outcomes of the forums are consolidated and summarised using an online participation tool. Young people in the local communities, such as members of youth clubs, school students, friends or individuals, discuss these outcomes and tell us what they think via the online portal. Their opinions are fed back to the federal level, that is, the Ministry, and to our partners working at the centre who again provide the young contributors with feedback.

I hope my description of the process has made it clear to you what we seek to achieve with this: We want to create an independent youth policy that carries the full backing of society in general and young people in particular. I would like to extend a very warm invitation to the young Germans present here today to join the movement if you haven't done so already. We value your opinions and we need your help! I'm sure you agree that this is the only way to design a youth policy that genuinely responds to your concerns and wishes.

Youth policy – a sector-specific or cross-cutting issue?
That having been said, an independent youth policy is more than a list of demands that is the result of a well-coordinated consultation process involving all stakeholders. It is more than just a call for improved time management for young people so they can better balance their attention between formal and non-formal learning, for instance. Rather, an independent youth policy – as I have just hinted – erves to change the existing approach, which is to take an isolated view of individual issues, and start developing an integrated view of what it means to be young.

A successful independent youth policy has to ensure that its individual components work together to produce a sound overall concept that – and this is my personal vision – can produce the best possible opportunities for our young people.

So how can this vision be made a reality? Should youth policy concentrate on its core issues, of which there are already many? Or should it take a cross-sectoral approach?

This is, in fact, a question of principle. If youth policy is to have a holistic impact on all areas of life – if, for instance, it is to advocate on behalf of young people – how can it influence decisions that are by their very nature not a core competence for youth policy? What can youth policy do to acquire the necessary respect of other policy areas?

I'm sure you agree that such an integrated approach is best achieved by developing sustainable governance structures.

There are very few experts in Germany who are able to provide input on these issues. At the same time, I am sure that these are questions that are not just being asked in Germany, but in many other European countries. We have hence decided not to try to respond to them by ourselves, but instead to launch a peer learning process involving other interested countries. Through this process – referred to as European Peer Learning on Youth Policy – we want to learn with you and find adequate responses to these questions.

More recognition and respect for youth as a target group
Another matter that concerns not just Germany is the image young people have and the role they play in society. Are young people really seen as serious contributors to solving future challenges, or are they—wrongly— seen as a fringe group, at least where solving these challenges is concerned?

How can we create a culture of recognition and respect for what young people are doing and contributing?

The fact is, despite the valuable role that young people already play today, especially when it comes to the challenges of the future, society does not always reward them with the recognition they deserve. On the contrary, often enough they are portrayed as an aimless group of people who, at best, only want to have fun. Their public image, to which the media have heavily contributed, is dominated by stories of binge drinking and excessive violence. By contrast, there are far fewer headlines that focus on the achievements and contributions of young people. And this it the case even though young people do amazing things, such as perform successfully in music competitions, work in church communities, sports clubs and other local bodies and are youth association members or volunteers. If you just think about the young people in your country, I am sure you will be able to come up with many similar examples! And they do so despite the fact that young people have to meet ever-increasing expectations and, at least in Germany, have less and less time to spend on such activities. There is no doubt in my mind that

_ the image of the younger generation has to be improved;
_ the many contributions to society that young people make have to be respected;
_ and from now on, young people have to be recognised as genuine partners in solving all of the challenges of the future.

The consequences of the solutions that we choose now will be felt most strongly, and

for the longest period of time, by the younger generation. Also, young people have a very specific view of current developments and the resulting issues that have to be addressed, and this view is immensely valuable to society!

So young people are not only an economic factor and will not just populate the labour market of tomorrow – no, they play a major role in society that we would be well advised not to ignore. One related question is the target groups for whom we develop our youth policies.

In recent years German youth policy has mainly concentrated on those groups that required most support, such as young school drop-outs or young people with difficulties in finding their place in German society. Their needs are as valid as ever, and we will continue to look after them. However, we must allow their issues to distract us from the needs of young people who appear to have no difficulties in finding their way in life. We will only be able to meet our goal of creating a policy that meets the future needs of all of society if we direct the spotlight at youth as a period in life, with all the different life-worlds, needs and skills it involves.

Germany has decided to launch a nationwide Alliance for Youth. We are inviting strong advocates from all corners of society who will join us in working together to create an independent youth policy. Besides child and youth services representatives, these advocates include representatives from schools and the private sector, researchers, and of course young people. I would like to thank those of you who are here today for agreeing to join the Alliance and for making a valuable contribution towards our aims.

Role of the municipalities and regions
I have only touched on a fraction of the challenges faced by young people today. The fact that the competences are spread across many different bodies at the federal level does not make matters easier, although I have to say it does make the task quite exciting!

When it comes to developing an independent youth policy, Germany's federal structure

naturally requires the involvement of the Länder and municipalities, too. My special thanks go out to our colleagues from these levels. It's wonderful to see you demonstrating your interest in this important issue here.

Now some people may say, "The more actors are involved, the more difficult it gets to find a common solution." I am confident that decentralised solutions offer us many opportunities to respond faster and more effectively than any central body ever could. Local stakeholders know their regions. They know where the potential pitfalls are.

I would like to mention two assets that make the local level so valuable from a youth policy perspective:

1. They are much closer to the young people,

and

2. young people are far more interested in shaping their immediate environment by working with local representatives rather than "the state", which at this age feels far to abstract and remote to them.

In fact, cooperation between local political actors and young people can result in valuable outcomes that don't just impact positively at the local level, but can provide valuable input for a national youth policy, too.

In this context, a sound federal policy can at best provide an enabling framework. Our primary job at the federal level is to firmly establish an independent youth policy as a social policy for the future.

This policy acquires its specific character at the local level, which is where young people's interests lie, which is where they live, learn and grow. The municipalities and regions decide how and when to adapt and adjust their youth policies on the ground.

Don't get me wrong; I certainly do not wish to suggest that the federal level is shirking its responsibilities, but the role of the municipalities has to be strengthened. The Federal Government will ensure this as it develops an

independent youth policy. We are currently debating how we can support and assist the local authorities across Germany in addressing local challenges, such as youth welfare planning, one of the most important tasks on the ground.

The title of today's conference says it all: you and your local authorities are to be given a stronger role. Together we want to address three important challenges that local authorities face in connection with creating a new local youth policy:

1. How can local authorities shape their youth policies politically and structurally in a way that fits in with regional and federal structures?

2. Can local authorities approach youth policy as a sector-specific policy and defend it vis-à-vis other policy areas, or do they have to take a cross-cutting approach that involves mainstreaming youth issues in all other relevant policy areas?

3. How can local authorities help to improve the public image of young people? How can they create a climate of recognition of young people and respect for their input and contributions, and ensure that youth policy is seen as a social policy for the future?

I am delighted that we have received so much input from so many experts and young people from across Europe. The response was so overwhelming that we could have filled two conference agendas. To me, this shows at least one thing: the European Youth Strategy came at the right time.

There is an enormous need for debate, discussion and learning, not just at the national, but also at the international level. I look forward to hearing what we can learn from you today, and I am particularly intrigued to hear the results of the discussions.

All the best for the next three days.
Thank you! ↙

"Situations of young people in Europe in the municipal context – which are the new challenges?"

by **DR LASSE SIURALA,** Adjunct Professor, Aalto University Secretary General, Finnish Network for Urban Youth Work

Economic depression hits young people in Europe

The abbreviation "NEET" refers to young people *N*ot in *E*ducation, *E*mployment or *T*raining. The recent EU Youth Study (September 2012) shows that youth unemployment has been sharply growing after 2008. It also means that since 2009 poverty among youth has increased. Thus the 2020 EU target of reducing risk of social exclusion and poverty by 25% by 2020 is not working. At the same it is important to note that youth unemployment and poverty differences across Europe are huge and appear to be increasing. Recent youth unemployment statistics (August 2012) show that while the European average is 23%, the youth unemployment rate in Greece is 55% and in Spain 53%. At the other end of this statistical continuum we find the Netherlands (9%) and Austria (10%) indicating how strikingly different the conditions for young people's labor market entry are in Europe.

Interestingly, the majority of young people are still feeling relatively fine and are moderately positive towards their future prospects. Most young people feel healthy (only 4% report "bad or rather bad" health, Eurostat – SILC, 2010). Of course too many young people smoke daily, drink too much, are increasingly obese, have mental problems and so on. There has been a long term trend of young people towards low voting turnover, disinterest in party politics, political youth organizations and politicians and, only 25% are "quite" or "very interested" in politics (European Social Survey 2002 and 2010). However, new forms of social interest and activism have appeared. About 25% of young people in Europe have used Internet to access or post opinions on civic and political issues via website in 2011 (Eurostat 2011, youth indicators).

So, there are good and bad news. Another bad news is definitely the same as the distribution of the NEETs across Europe: there is, for example, a huge variance in the interest at politics over Europe. While the EU average for those who are "very" or "quite" interested in politics is 25%, for the young people in the Czech Republic it is 6% and for Swedish young people 36%. In similar manner there are countries where young people do not take the opportunity to use the Internet to voice their concern, like Belgium, Cyprus, Poland and Slovakia (around 10%), and countries where young people actively use the Internet to express their views, like Germany, The Netherlands and Finland (around 50%). European level statistical averages conceal huge dispersions.

How are the governments guiding local youth policies?

A key topic of this conference is to look at the relationship between national youth policies (governments), the international youth policies (European Union, Council of Europe) and local youth policies (the municipalities). In this respect youth policy can be seen to have two dimensions; *vertical* and *horizontal*.

The *vertical dimension* refers to the relations between central and the local youth structures; what are the youth policy objectives and guidelines adopted by national governments and international organisations, and how are they implemented in the regional and local level? On this dimension the main questions of vertical direction are: "How strong is the central guidance? How do governments steer local youth work?"

Another question is related to vertical delivery; "How successful is central guidance? How are governmental youth policy objectives in reality implemented in the local level?"

The *horizontal* dimension refers to the relationship between youth work and other administrative fields relevant to the living conditions of young people (like education, employment, housing, etc). Horizontal coverage refers to the scope or breadth of the administrative fields that the youth administration should deal with; should youth work extend from leisure oriented activities to issues like education, housing, employment, health, national defence, etc? Another set of questions is related to horizontal delivery: "How successful has cross-sectoral co-operation been?"

To make this more concrete, I carried some years ago a study on Nordic youth policies using this framework.

Vertical direction:
There is no Nordic model.
Some governments want to guide the municipalities more than others do. Tentatively Nordic government youth policies can be located on the continuum between strong and weak vertical direction; Sweden providing quite detailed guidelines for the local level, Finland giving the biggest freedom for the municipalities to run their youth policies and youth work, and Norway and Denmark situating in between.

There is also a strong international vertical direction; the governmental youth policy objectives are very similar to those of the large international organisations like the European Union or the Council of Europe, where participation, active citizenship, autonomous life and social inclusion are also highlighted. (EU & CoE through setting objectives)

Vertical Delivery – Lessons to be learned: Brilliant objectives and a detailed evaluation grid is not enough.
The Swedish government youth policies decided in 1999 (Government Bill on Youth Policy) to set 3 general objectives and 41 measurable sub-objectives for youth policy in Sweden. The evaluation grid was extensively followed-up some years after to assess the effectiveness of the policy. It must be appreciated that, not many countries have designed and evaluated their youth policies as ambitiously as the Swedish did. The problem was, however, that the government youth policy did not trickle down as well as it was expected: "There has not been development to the right direction". The general impression was that there was nothing wrong with the 3 general objectives or the 41 sub-objectives. The problem was how they were implemented to the local level? The municipalities in Sweden expressed the following concerns on the process:

1. they were very critical at the lacking funding for the government objectives,
2. they were 'doubtful about how these objectives have been formulated' and strongly felt that they were not heard during the process and
3. they expressed their worry about the municipal autonomy in this context.

The municipalities felt that the government exceeded their mandate telling the local level how to concretely run their youth policies and youth work.

We call this the delivery gap – failure to cascade down government objectives. The delivery gap may be caused by lacking funds or the failure to involve the point of service (local youth policy and youth work) level to the drafting of the policies. Another cause can be too much government direction.

Can there be too much government direction?

During recent years there has been public and political concern of NEET in Finland. Ministry responsible for youth prepared an act on outreach youth work, which the politicians happily enacted as of 1st of Jan 2011. The law says that in order to outreach the NEET the municipalities should recruit a necessary amount of street workers (funded essentially by the ministry) and set up a centralized register of all NEETs. The street workers would get this information, search the young people, discuss with them and guide them to the required services (education, training, employment, social or health services etc). Many people felt that here the government went too far to tell the municipalities how to implement youth work. The critique relied on the following principle:

*"The central government should have a leading role by indicating **what to do**. At the same time, local authorities should be given much freedom as regards **how to implement** youth policy. Mechanisms for delivery, therefore, should have flexibility within certain parameters established by national governments." (Select committee of experts on the establishment of guidelines for the formulation and implementation of youth policies, Directorate of Youth and Sport, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2003).*

At the same the government profiled youth work as a service to work with predominantly youth at risk. This leads us to the contemporary debates on the identity of youth work: What is youth work?

Youth work – an oxymoronic practice?

Recently interest in the history of youth work has emerged. Search for the roots of contemporary forms of youth work help understand why we are doing what we are doing. What is youth work for? It has been argued that youth work is constantly defining itself between two apparently contradictory aims: promoting the autonomy of youth and the integration of young people. Ideally, youth work should negotiate itself an in-between role: Youth work is often a combination of supporting young people's own activities and measures to support youth with fewer opportunities. It is like an oxymoron – an internal contradiction. The

question is: Is youth work pushed today too much to work with youth problems? Is youth work becoming an instrument of social, education and employment policies? How could youth work argue for more emphasis on early prevention than care? Is youth work gradually losing its identity as an autonomous actor between young people and politics? What could youth work do to defend the voice of young people? What is youth work? Four sets of international seminars on national youth histories have looked at the issue since 2009 with two Council of Europe publications and two more in print. The 5th conference will be held in Helsinki June 2014 titled "Autonomy through dependencies".

Youth work is claimed to be in identity crises or at least facing uncertainty. In addition to the history conferences, also different kinds of networks have emerged, very possibly to manage the uncertainty.

Organizations which succeed to deal with uncertainty involve themselves with ongoing social interaction with others in their field – even with competitors – to modify their strategies towards a joint performance. Organizations interlink (forming clusters or networks) to control a common threat or source of uncertainty – or they become the losers. As an example, considerable uncertainty is caused for the youth field through the integration of the youth program into the Erasmus for All-program. The youth field, youth organizations, representatives of organizations working with youth, municipal youth workers, youth researchers and youth policy makers, would need to create a network, a platform, a consortium or a cluster through which they would elaborate a joint strategy to – for example – construct a cross-sectoral program with formal education to make transparent and recognize non-formal learning as a crucial learning context in the integration of young people in the society – or the youth field becomes a loser?

>> *Youth Work is not something to replace failures of the school!*

2. INPUTS

Horizontal Coverage: The extent to which youth policy and youth work should cover policy areas outside leisure activities.

There is a consensus in the youth policies of the Nordic countries on the main areas of co-operation. Typically they include leisure, employment, education, health and housing. There is a further consensus among international organisations and national governments, including the Nordic countries, that the youth sector should take a leading role in co-ordinating youth related matters across all policy areas and in all levels of public administration.

Horizontal Delivery: How is the cross-sectoral approach implemented in the national and local level?

How to reach interprofessional consensus on the nature of social issues?

According to John Kania and Mark Kramer *("Collective Impact", Stanford Social Innovation Review 2011)* social issues can be perceived either as technical problems or adaptive problems. Technical problems can be clearly defined, the solutions are known to us and the organization, which has the capacity to solve them may be identified. Adaptive problems are complex, we do not know the answers and no single organization has the capacity to solve them alone. Let's have a look how different sectors and actors tend to define the problem of the NEETs:

The education authorities: The NEET problem is a problem of too few vocational education opportunities for young people. Funds should be allocated to the education sector to establish more classes and schools for vocational education.

The labor and employment agencies: Young people are not well enough aware of their education and training opportunities. That is also why so many choose a wrong educational path, become school leavers and end up NEET. To solve the problem of the NEET, the funds should be given to vocational guidance.

The Social sector: Young people lack educational motivation and are unemployed because their parents lack the motivation and are themselves unemployed. Precarious situation in labor markets is inherited. The only way to solve the problem of the NEETs is to support the families of young people with fewer opportunities. Funds should go to family support and social care.

The health sector: According to studies 80% of the long-term NEETs have severe mental and physiological problems which keep them from normal educational and employment paths. To get the NEETs back to school and work we need funds for health services to first cure the young people in question.

Youth work: Young people at the age of finishing comprehensive school do not know who they are, what they want to do in their life and what kind of jobs fit them best. This is why they are not able to make sustainable career choices, end up school leavers and jo-jo between different precarious jobs and unemployment. Funds are needed for youth work to help young people – already at the age of 13-16 years – to reflect and clarify their identity, dreams and educational and occupational thinking.

The example shows how easily different actors define the social problem of the NEETs as a technical problem: all know how to solve it and are convinced that their organization is perfectly capable to do the job. If, however, we admit that the problem of the NEETs is more complicated than we should first think that we need joint competences to search for the solutions, then we face a very different policy option. If the NEET issue is jointly conceptualized as an adaptive problem, all the actors would need to sit down and start reflecting the problem and not lecturing on their own supremacy on this issue. Such a process can contribute to client-oriented solutions, interprofessional collaboration and very possibly new service concepts. Like Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky *("Leadership on the Line", Harvard Business School Press, 2002)* said: "The single biggest failure of leadership is to treat adaptive challenges like technical problems."

Youth policy is about youth agency.
The paradigmatic form of youth participation in a municipal context is the Youth Council or the Youth Parliament. The limitations of Youth Councils and Youth Parliaments include:

_ concerns only a few: Current forms of representative participation like youth parliaments and youth councils offer opportunities for citizenship learning for only a small part of young people (school of democracy for the few)

_ those few are selected active young people: The youth representation of these youth councils is often restricted to a limited group of 'insider' youth; disadvantaged and marginal young people tend to be underrepresented (elitism)

_ participation is often tokenistic: There is little actual impact and the dialogue with decision makers is occasional and tokenistic, participation stays at the level of consultation (Matthews and Limb, 2003; McGinley and Grieve, 2010; Kallio and Häkli, 2011).

_ during the term of the Youth Council motivation decreases and oftentimes a small group of activists seize the power

_ youth council is a copy of the adults form of participation: "participation in predefined ways in predefined structure … simply mimicking adults is not always the most authentic, empowering and beneficial type of participation" *(Malone and Hartung, 2010, p 26)*

Clearly, local youth participation needs redirection. McGinley and Grieve suggest that 'Part of the answer may be to move from a representative approach, symbolized by youth councils, to create a participatory culture. As Malone and Hartung (2010) put it, '[we need to] think of new ways to interact with children outside the predefined ways in predefined structures.'

**Interprofessional collaboration –
are we ready for it?**
Peter Peverelli and Karen Verduyn (Understanding the basic dynamics of organizing, 2010) have studied how companies and organizations cope with change. They argue that those that fail are characterized by "social and cognitive fixations"; an organizational culture which is stuck in internal rhetoric, which is suspicion to discuss with other actors and disciplines, which does not think there is anything good coming outside your own field and which overemphasizes its own identity. In youth work that means being stuck with the basic rhetoric and methods of youth work; the face-to-face encounter with young people, open youth work, mobile youth work, information and counseling, youth organisations, youth participation etc. If you cannot reach beyond those ways of thinking and doing, for example expanding to Internet, rethinking youth participation, linking to sports, culture, computer business, etc., you may suffer from social and cognitive fixations.

The key elements of a new approach or a model is inspired by

1. agonistic pluralism (acknowledging the variety and complexity of the youth scene),

2. the changing nature of youth engagement and expression (need for low threshold participation and opportunity for a variety of expression) and

3. the need for collaborative intergenerational dialogue (structures for continuous, open and tolerant dialogue).

Accordingly, the following criteria for a youth participation model were formulated:

"Access, spaces and dialogue"
_ providing a maximum number and a broad variety of young people an access to express their citizenships (access)
_ supporting easy to get in and out spaces for versatile agency (spaces)
_ developing dialogue with the City's decision makers (dialogue)

For further information on this model applied at the City of Helsinki, see: Lasse Siurala and Heini Turkia: **Celebrating Pluralism: Beyond The Discourses Of Youth Participation**, in Patricia Loncle et al. (eds.) **Beyond discourses, practices and realities of youth participation in Europe**, (2012)

To conclude, it appears that European youth policies and youth work could make use of networking – on both the vertical dimension (how are youth policy objectives created and implemented) and horizontal dimension (how can we run succesfull interprofessional collaboration). We need opportunities for peer learning on local integrated youth policies, interprofessional collaboration and youth agency. Peer learning from each others practices reguires a network – European Network on Local Government Youth Work? We also have the expertise and knowledge that would be useful for international European organizations to design and implement their youth policies. ◤

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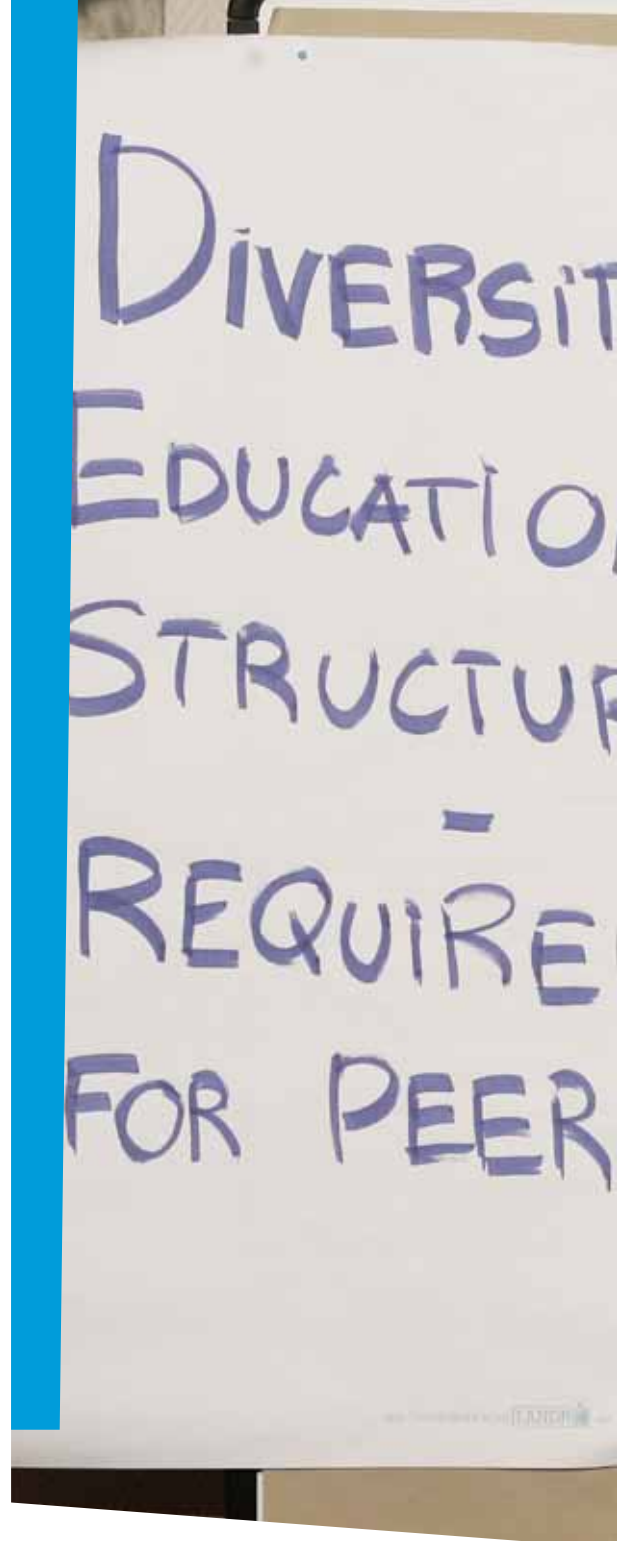
A sustainable European network of local stakeholders

Trans-local collaboration and cross-border peer learning – Building a sustainable European network of local stakeholders // The "YEPP" approach and methodology

by **ANGELIKA KRÜGER**, Berlin (Germany),
and **ALEXANDRA TEIR**, Kristinestad (Finland)

Thank you for inviting us to present the "YEPP" approach and methodology and share with you our 10 year experiences and lessons learnt, in particular with regard to trans-local collaboration and cross-border peer learning and the building of a sustainable European network of local stakeholders. We will conclude our contribution with some observations about why we recommend that youth policy should have a trans-local and transnational dimension.

Context: What is "YEPP"?

"YEPP" is a well-tested and widely recognised approach and methodology that grew out of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme. If well-implemented it achieves youth and community empowerment, civic engagement and active citizenship to bring about sustainable changes in disadvantaged areas and regions across Europe. *(Evans and Krüger, 2012)*

The **Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme** was implemented for 10 years (2001–2011). Over this period the Programme was active in 18 disadvantaged communities in 8 European countries including Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Poland and Slovakia. The Programme was a joint initiative of a group of independent European and US foundations working in partnership with the International Academy for Innovative Pedagogy, Psychology and Economics (INA) gGmbH at the Free University of Berlin (Germany) and the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation of the OECD under the auspices of the Network of European Foundations for Innovative Cooperation (NEF). This partnership created synergies to combat social exclusion in disadvantaged areas across Europe and to bring about lasting changes.

Its Mission was to develop a sustainable, participatory process that creates an active civil society with disadvantaged youth and the communities they live in. *(10 Years of YEPP Policy Folder, 2011)*

In 2011, the foundation-led Programme came to an end but "YEPP" did not. It succeeded in achieving sustainability. Most of the local communities continued working based on the "YEPP" approach and methodology and there has been interest in other communities to implement the YEPP Concept of Change, in particular in Italy. A broad and participatory consultation within the YEPP Community led to the decision to establish the **YEPP International Resource Centre (YEPP IRC)** at the Institute for Community Education of the International Academy for Innovative Pedagogy, Psychology and Economics (INA) gGmbH at the Free University of Berlin (Germany) in January 2012. The YEPP IRC is a mission-oriented service provider and support agency building on the results and assets of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme and supporting local communities in Europe and beyond who implement or wish to implement the "YEPP" approach and methodology.

The **YEPP Concept of Change** is based on a set of common goals, principles and working methods. They form the conceptual common ground to which all members of the YEPP Community commit to.

The YEPP Concept of Change pursues five common goals:

1. Youth empowerment: To enable young people who are at risk of social exclusion in communities which provide little or no opportunities to participate in local decision-making processes, to create change in their communities and to become active citizens in the wider society. Youth empowerment is embedded in community empowerment.

2. Community empowerment: To create self-confident and competent communities, so that residents and local stakeholders become active citizens and advocate changes to the environment in which children and youth develop.

3. Partnership: To establish strong and sustainable partnerships and strategic alliances involving actors from different sectors (public, private, and independent) and levels (local, regional, national and international) taking into account that successful partnerships are based on trust, equality, mutual understanding and shared responsibility *(Strocka et al, 2009, p. 52)*.

4. Advocacy: To influence public and independent policies to ensure that the principles of youth empowerment, community empowerment and partnership become mainstream and achieve sustainability.

5. Learning: To provide opportunities for learning and capacity-building.

The set of **common guiding principles** underpins the work at all levels and includes, for example:

_ Identify the needs of the local community and mobilise local resources.
_ Engage local stakeholders as motor of change.
_ Recognise and engage young people as agents of change.
_ Integrate local, regional, national and transnational dimensions.

The YEPP Concept of Change includes a set of common working methods including a

particular YEPP infrastructure and the YEPP Cycle of Change.

Concept: YEPP's multi-level approach
Within the YEPP Concept of Change, the multi-level approach is one of the key conceptual elements. It integrates systematically the work at local, regional, national and international level which is of particular interest for our discussion at this conference.

At the local level
In the YEPP Local Sites, stakeholders from the public, private and independent sectors including young people get organised in informal action groups or formal non-for-profit organisations, so called Local Support Groups, and work in partnership to bring about change.

Supported by a Local Coordinator and an Evaluation Facilitator, Local Support Groups engage in a continuous participatory strategic planning and community development model which is driven by an on-going process of analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation – the YEPP Cycle of Change.

At the regional and national level
Local Sites that are situated in the same country or the same region establish informal or formal Regional or National Clusters as a framework for trans-local professional exchange, collaboration, and strategic alliances with a stronger voice that is heard at the political level, e. g. "YEPP Italia".

At the international level, the YEPP Community Network includes all YEPP Local Sites, the YEPP IRC, the YEPP IRC Steering Committee and partners. It has been built as a platform for regular cross-border peer learning, transnational collaboration and joint trans-local and transnational initiatives and projects for all YEPP stakeholder groups. It has become an inspirational network interlinking the transnational with the local work in a systematic way, reflecting the needs and resources, showcasing and recognising examples of best practice of the young people and other local stakeholder groups, being beneficial for the personal growth and the development

of the local community. It has enhanced and strengthened the motivation for local change processes as well as established collaboration, has built new partnerships and finally strengthened advocacy.

Since 2001, YEPP transnational activities included:

_ **YEPP Community Conferences and Youth Meetings**
These events have been the highlights of the transnational activities. They offer a platform for learning, wider sharing and exchange of best practices between the local teams and young people, and address decision-makers on local, national and transnational levels. Six such events took place involving more than 800 participants and 250 young people.

_ **Capacity-building workshops and trainings**
These events address topics of common needs and interest of young people, youth workers and Local Teams, such as community development, community education, participatory monitoring and evaluation, advocacy, YouthBank, self-initiatives, youth organising, leadership, entrepreneurship, project management, fundraising and income-generation. Twenty such events took place involving more than 300 local stakeholders.

_ **Media youth exchanges, workshops, trainings, bi-lateral international networking of the YEPP EmpowerMediaNetwork – "Create and Share"**
Since 2005, such events took place each year involving more than 500 young people, local media coaches and youth workers.

_ **Bilateral study visits and exchanges** This form of exchange and learning served young people and local actors to get to know in depth and learn from the situation and activities in other Local Sites, to discuss developments and processes of common interest and to plan joint projects.

_ **Regular meetings of the members of the Local Teams, Local Support Groups and Steering Committee**

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At least once a year, Local Coordinators, Evaluation Facilitators and members of the Local Support Groups from all YEPP Local Sites have the opportunity to engage in peer learning which has inspired a lot of new developments and disseminated examples of best practice.

The YEPP Steering Committee including representatives of the partners – foundations, NEF, INA and OECD/CERI – met three to five times a year being actively involved in the development, implementation, evaluation and improvement of the Programme.

Reflecting on the experiences of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme, three key components of building a successful and sustainable YEPP Community Network can be identified:

_ **Respecting diversity of the local stakeholders and sectoral differences of the partners** on the one hand and the **development of an agreed common ground** on the other hand.

_ **Building inter-personal and inter-organizational trust and partnerships** supported by implementing a needs- and resource-based approach combined with social events (Eurovillage, intercultural evenings etc.) as well as a process-oriented, systematic and longer-term approach integrating the local, regional, national and transnational levels and building an integrated personal and institutional network.

_ **Shared ownership and responsibility.** YEPP transnational activities have taken place mainly in the Local Sites. Activities are organised with young people run by young people – not for them. Hosting an event in their own community was always met with great enthusiasm, commitment and pride by the young people.

Local stakeholders commit to programming and mobilization of local and European funds. The benefits of being a member of a sustainable and growing network of local stakeholders in several European countries are that one has already reliable partners who are committed to the same common ground – whom one can trust.

>> *Keep it real, keep it local!*

Experiences: For example, Kristinestad (Finland) *by Alexandra Teir*

Kristinestad has been actively involved in YEPP since 2001. The benefits of the cooperation between YEPP and Kristinestad can be seen on an individual level, a group level, and on a municipal level.

Over the years, Kristinestad has been able to take part in several YEPP-events, for example meetings, workshops, and conferences and youth meetings. The youngsters and youth workers that have participated have been able to exchange experiences with other participants from different YEPP Local Sites across Europe and with guests from around the world. When working with youth participation, it is most beneficial to exchange experiences with others that are engaged in the same field, but in different situations and with different conditions and challenges. Sharing these experiences has boosted creativity and motivated the young participants to influence and take part in their own community. It is amazing to see how enthusiastic and inspired people are after taking part in a YEPP-event. Being a part of YEPP has also helped Kristinestad in building networks. These kinds of networks of likeminded people are most important to have and to treasure in the future.

For youngsters in Kristinestad, experiences from YEPP have also sometimes been an eye opener. Even though the municipality has a lot of work to do regarding youth participation, it still has come a long way compared to many other YEPP Local Sites. When I took part in my first YEPP-workshop in 2004 in Antwerp, the biggest issue we wanted to solve in our municipality was our local traffic which was not functioning properly. However, at the workshop we met youngsters from Bosnia and Herzegovina who had serious problems with youngsters getting involved in illegal activities and drugs. Suddenly, our lack of enough bus tours seemed quite insignificant.

Over the years, Kristinestad has gained a lot from being a member of the YEPP Community Network, and in the past few years it has received recognition within the network. Kristinestad has been able to function as a

"role model" for new and less experienced YEPP Local Sites. Since Kristinestad already has made great results within the youth participation field (e. g. Youth Council, Little Parliament, youth initiatives etc.), the participants from Kristinestad have been able to share experiences and expertise on how to, for example, create a Youth Council. The Youth Council of Kristinestad has played an active role within YEPP and its members that have participated in several YEPP-events.

As a result of YEPP, Kristinestad has become a member of the YEPP EmpowerMediaNetwork (EMN). This membership has resulted in the creation of a Youth Channel where youngsters make short films and programmes for the local TV-channel, as well as arrange media workshops and courses. The Youth Channel has also participated in short film competitions and EMN's Media Workshops in Europe.

Due to YEPP, Kristinestad is in contact and cooperation with several other Local Sites in Europe. One of them is the YEPP Local Site Novello in the Piedmont region in Italy. Novello and Kristinestad face similar challenges and opportunities regarding youth. For instance, youngsters from both towns tend to move away to larger cities with better job prospects, leaving Novello and Kristinestad with an aging population. The two towns came in contact through YEPP and have been Twin Cities since 2011. Through Novello, Kristinestad has also come in contact with the Cittaslow-network. Cittaslow is an organization promoting the quality of life, for example including slow food, a healthy environment, and cultural diversity. Kristinestad is now the first and, so far, only town in Finland with a Cittaslow-status.

It is clear that being a part of YEPP has been beneficial for Kristinestad, and hopefully Kristinestad has also given something back to the network. When it comes to youth participation one can never do too much, but together, Kristinestad and YEPP have come a long way already.

Assessment: Why should youth policy have a trans-local/trans-national dimension?

Relating our experiences to youth policy, one of the main issues discussed at the InterCITY conference, we would like to share some key observations based on the results of the evaluation of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme and to present some reasons why we recommend that local youth policy should have a trans-local and transnational dimension as a conceptual component.

For us, the benefits of the trans-local and transnational dimension for local stakeholders and the community they live in with regard to youth and community empowerment, partnership, advocacy and learning are:

Cross-border and intercultural learning and acting together towards becoming European.
The experience of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme shows that regular cross-border and intercultural learning and acting together strengthen the cross-cultural competences and attitudes, foster mutual understanding between young people and local stakeholders in different countries, and broaden the participants' horizons. They help to overcome borders in one's mind, of localities and between nations. They help to overcome prejudices, combat racism and xenophobia towards building respect, developing solidarity, promoting tolerance among young people and other local stakeholders and leading to become European thus fostering social cohesion in the local and the European community.

Personal growth through building self-confidence and self-initiative, capacities, skills and attitudes, to become active citizens in the local community and society at large - finally in Europe. Opportunities for local stakeholder groups to present and discuss their work regularly with their peers from other countries lead to recognition and certification. It increases cross-local and cross-border mobility of young people and other local stakeholders – for some of them it was the first time outside their own community.

Community empowerment is fostered through the wealth of invaluable initiatives, projects and good practices that would not have been developed separately. Furthermore, common quality standards are promoted.

The position of stakeholders, in particular young people at local level is strengthened. Being part of a European Network helps young people to be better heard by their local politicians and administration.

Building a European identity of local projects opens doors and attracts new people to the local process.

Altogether, the trans-local and transnational dimension contributes to building the "Europe of citizens".

From our perspective, the benefits of the trans-local and transnational dimension for local youth policy are:

Learning through cross-border dialogue for designing and enhancing local youth policies.
Several local governments have adopted the "YEPP" approach and methodology when designing their youth policies and improving the local youth work. In other local authorities, the "YEPP" approach has enhanced and strengthened existing youth policies by shifting the focus from providing services for young people to developing services and projects with young people run by young people. The evaluation shows that young people's voices have been heard and influenced youth policies in most of the YEPP Local Sites.

Consultation of young people to become co-designers of policies which concern them directly or indirectly. Despite their broad discontent and distrust in politics, young people seize the opportunity to engage in dialogue with local, regional and European decision-makers to make their voices being heard. As soon as politicians and administrators are serious about listening to the young people and are open for their concerns, opinions and ideas, a fruitful dialogue developed.

At the transnational YEPP Community Conference and Youth Meeting in Genoa-Cornigliano in October 2010, the youth delegates developed in cooperation with the politicians the "Golden Rules of Youth Participation in Decision-making" which have been followed up locally.

Youth- and community-led structures become public policy partners.
Inspired by other YEPP Local Sites, youth- and community-led structures (e.g. Youth Councils, youth parliaments, youth boards, Youth Banks and community foundations) have been established and grown into sustainable public policy partners.

Participation and partnership at local and transnational level have a democratizing effect.
Civic engagement takes different forms, for example through engaging in dialogue with policy-makers, taking political offices in a young age and more campaign-oriented citizens' movement approaches.

Access to other pan-European strategic alliances has opened up and enabled local stakeholders from different communities to work together on issues of children and youth participation in decision-making, e. g. with Eurochild; European Youth Forum, Children and Youth Interest Group of the European Foundation Centre; young people and other local stakeholders from the YEPP Local Sites have participated in several events of these partners.

Thank you for your attention! We hope to build more partnerships committed to youth and community empowerment and to social change through civic engagement and to further strengthen youth policy cooperation in Europe. ↙

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Alexandra Teir was a Member of the Municipal Council and Board of Kristinestad in 2008-12. She was then, at the age of 20, the youngest to ever be elected counsellor in Kristinestad. She has also been active in the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme in Kristinestad.

For more information
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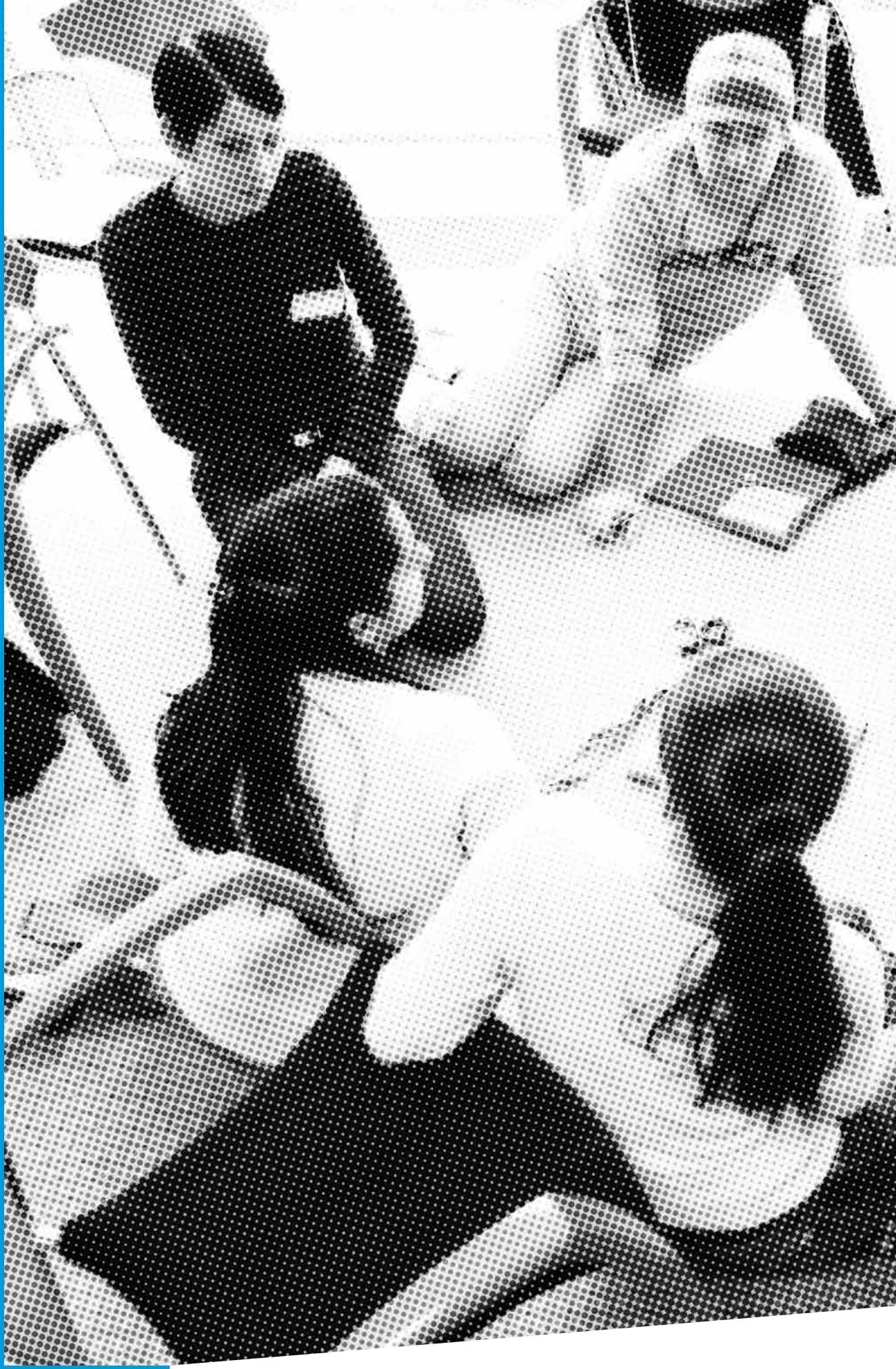
Workshops **PARTICIPATION**

Workshops Participation: Summary

This workshop aimed at discussing the current state of affairs of youth participation in a local and European context.

One objective was to create a "miniature" European picture of municipal practice in the field of youth participation. Another was to explore and compare the political dimension of participation in the shape of local youth policy.

The workshop began with a compilation of arguments on why participation is needed:

_ Self-esteem/importance
_ Important for the future and now ➔ otherwise young people they live with our decision
_ Young people are specialists/experts in the issues that concern them
_ Participation to foster (active) youth citizenship ➔ young people are part of our society ➔ participation strengthens their responsibility and motivation
_ Hard to develop the core issues of young people without participation
_ Opinions of young people are important
_ Participation is a (human) right
_ Learn to participate in order to take part in democracy
_ Work towards a good job
_ Division of influence and power

At the core of the workshop were two project examples, one describing the state of affairs in youth participation in Tower Hamlets (a district of London), the other describing the influence of young people in the municipality of Karlstad in Sweden.

After these examples were presented, participants chose various policy areas (health, environment, employment, leisure time and education) that were then discussed in smaller groups; specifically, they talked about action strategies and how young people are involved in these policy areas.

These selected results can serve as recommendations for better youth participation at the local level:

General
_ Participation needs time.
_ We do not trust young people enough to let them participate.
_ Participation is often manipulation.
_ We have to develop new strategies and more direct/practical forms of participation (especially for less educated and non-organized young people).
_ We need to mainstream youth in all fields of local policy, not only in youth policy as such.

Education
_ Recognise the power of non-formal education. Non-formal education (and its methods) is a powerful tool to strengthen the participatory competence of young people.
_ Different methods of teaching: non-formal, active, participatory are needed.
_ More participation in curriculum development.
_ A participation culture at schools is needed.
_ More cooperation between the formal and non-formal education sector.

Environment
_ Adopting an area of land and taking responsibility is a good way to make young people participate in their local environment.
_ Involving youth in eco-campaigns and raising their environmental awareness may be helpful.
_ Youth can also educate adults in respecting the environment.
_ Y.P. socialise in their environment ➔ organise via Facebook ➔ self-organisation empowerment.

Employment
_ Global problem to get young people involved in decisions ➔ concerning this area!
_ Young people often feel helpless.
_ Special job centers for young people could be helpful.
_ It is too difficult to move from lower education to higher education (especially in Germany).
_ Children pick up their parents' understanding of life ➔ parental education.
_ Young people have no political influence in this area.
_ Mentoring system from business sectors (entrepreneurship).
_ Competence centers all over the country …

›› *Young people don't have time anymore!*

Workshop Participation I
Youth Involvement in Karlstad
in Sweden

Visions & Goals
_ Residents who are happy and proud to live in Karlstad.
_ Creating jobs, attracting workers and a good environment.
_ Guiding values to follow the visions are an attractive, growing and green city for everyone with a well-run municipality.

Strategy
Beneath regular meetings – also with politi-cians and civil servants – there exist several working groups that handle different kinds of questions: school, social environment, culture and leisure. It exist a constant dialog with the other departments

LUPP – Local Follow Up on Youth Policy: Tools for local monitoring of youth policy in order to gain knowledge about how the situation of young people looks locally and to develop effective youth policy based on cooperation between various sectors.

Organisation
The Youth Council of Karlstadt consists of 25 delegates and 15 deputies and is an demo-cratically elected assembly. It is open for and organized by students between age 15–19. To get elected they have to be a registered citizen in the municipality of Karlstad. Voting takes place on the internet during school and the response rate is about 40% The youth council is a non party-political organisation

Accomplished projects
_ UNO – The Culture House and youth center
_ "Youths for Safety"
_ Legal graffiti wall
_ Culture- and sports scholarship
_ World summit on Media for Children and Youth
_ Fairtrade City

Further Informations:
Sanna Andersson, Student and Youth Coordinator, City Management Office: ↘sanna.andersson@karlstad.se
Fanny Fernlöf, former Chair of Karlstad Youth Council and Youth Coordinator: ↘fanny.fernlof@karlstad.se

About Karlstad:
One of Sweden's 25 largest city. 87 000 inhabitants living in Karlstad, about 38% of these are in the age of 0–29 years old. The city has the vision "Karlstad 100.000".

Workshop Participation II
Youth Involvement in Tower Hamlet
in London, UK

Visions & Goals
Support and empower all young people to engage with decision makers on issues which affect their lives by:

working together on projects, leading on and developing local & borough wide projects, creating a safe and supportive environment for all young people to express their views and by creating opportunities for young people to work closely with decision makers

Strategies
Trust, enthusiasm, optimism and empowerment as key qualities of a good participation worker. Respect towards the points of view of young people, knowledge and outlook on life and support them through their ideas equipping them with the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions along the way.

Ways to involve young people in decision making: Consultations, Youth Forums, Volunteering, Suggestion boxes, Session development, Youth inspections, Interview panels, giving them a budget, attending local, regional and national meetings and projects.

Organisation
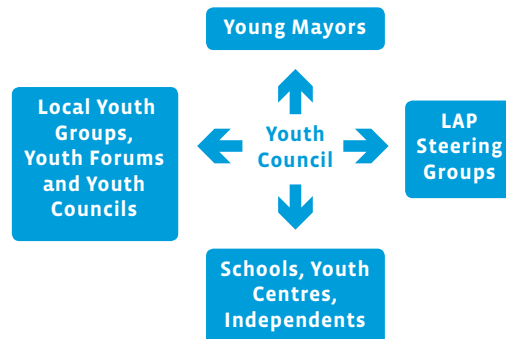
Accomplished projects
Worked out by the Young Mayor: Anti Knife crime project, Community Cohesion Event, Surgeries in Different Schools and Youth centres, Currently working on reducing young people not in education, employment or training, Scrutiny report on a issue chosen by young people, Be part of consultations, Represent young people at events and do speeches, Attend high profile events i.e.. House of Commons debate, meet with London Mayor Boris Johnson ...

Further Informations:
Phil Long (Youth Involvement Manager); Nahimul Islam (Young Mayor 2011-2013) ⬎ http://amp.uk.net/

About Tower Hamlets:
Olympic host borough, 300.000 people living in 8 square miles, very multicultural, borough has had a lot of immigration over the last few decades, key attractions include Canary Wharf and Tower of London, 20.000 13–19 year olds, 45 youth centres, 93 schools (primary and secondary), high youth unemployment.

Workshops **EDUCATION**
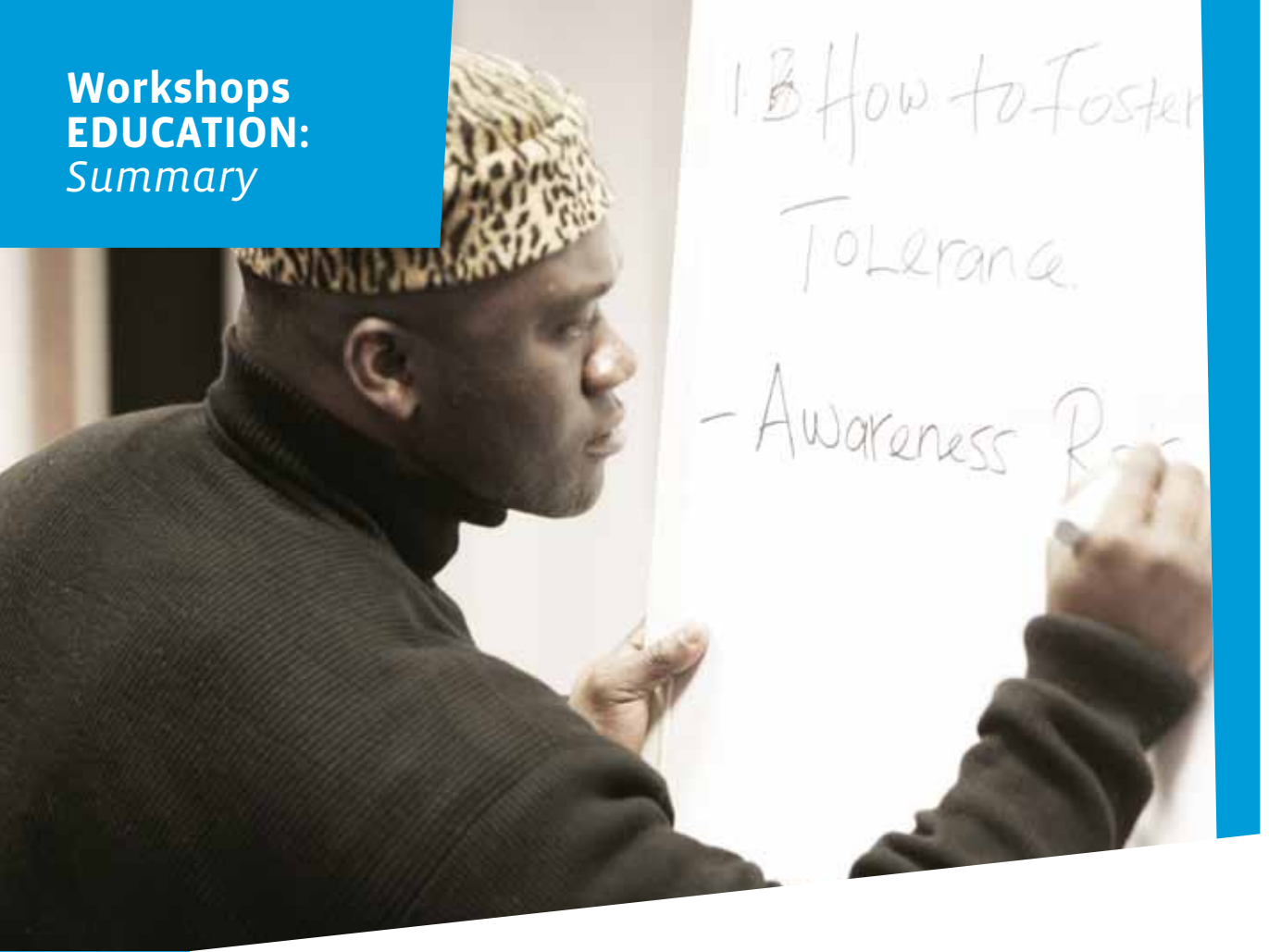
Workshops on educational facilities in municipalities Summary

This workshop focused on the municipalities' role in shaping an active local youth and education policy that strengthens young people and enables them to participate fully in society. Two practical examples were used to illustrate how local authorities can contribute towards (better) local education services.

All workshop participants considered education to play a vital role for young people as they grow up. They also agreed that education had to be interpreted as a wide field that besides school also encompasses health, strengthening parents, young people's safety, participation, as well as sports, culture and other leisure activities.

The participants, who came from many different countries, felt that school has to be a more open place, even though the non-German participants were surprised to hear about the partnerships that exist here under the Kommunale Bildungslandschaften ("integrated local education structures") scheme. For instance, the Dutch speaker said, "I don't

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[1] Note: It turns out that the terms "youth work" and "Jugendarbeit" should not be used as equivalent terms, since the German term "Jugendarbeit" is used in Book VIII of the Social Code to mean something other than "youth work", which refers to simple measures to assist young people in, e. g., finding jobs.

have legal reasons to ask school: What are you doing? But we do it!" A participant from Cyprus said she thought it was inconceivable for a local authority to engage in a dialogue with local schools. It was emphasised that while local authorities are not responsible for "bad schools", they are aware that they exist. One problem with schools that was identified is their strong focus on examinations and the lack of attention they give to students once they graduate and move on. Participants pointed out the role of the teachers who should recognise problems and take appropriate action. They also mentioned that there are indeed positive things to be said about the development of school systems.

And yet, the local (German) education system often appears to be less of an "organised and culti-vated landscape" and more of a jumble of options and activities that provides very little guidance to individuals. The first practical example, from a German Landkreis (county), was designed to show that the various institutions and representatives that have a role to play under the German federal system have to be identified and a structure developed that enables all stakeholders to draw up shared objectives and to know at all times who one's partners are and what they are doing. The actors within this structure should begin by analysing a typical educational career to work out who is responsible for how long for what young person, and what these representatives have to expect when they acquire responsibility for a given young person.

The practical example from the Netherlands recommended that participants identify their role and the youth policy objectives of their local authorities, and select the appropriate instruments for reaching them. All measures, the representative said, have to be designed with these objectives in mind. Municipal youth policy has to follow a clear political logic. The Dutch municipality in question has pledged to enable its young people to explore and develop their talents and to find "sustainable and suitable" jobs. For instance, it has introduced a local project to reduce the number of school dropouts. To this end, it takes an integrative approach, much like that

of Germany, and works together with schools, local partners, parents and the young people themselves.

Workshop participants then proceeded to discuss three key issues:

1. Cooperation across (federal) levels,
2. defining youth policy as a cross-cutting or sector-specific issue and
3. target groups.

Although all participants were in favour of cooperation across various levels, they were unable to come up with a workable solution for interaction between the regional and national level. For one, this is because circumstances in the various countries (where structures range from extremely federal to centralised) vary widely. For another, thanks to the existence of an independent youth policy, Germany seems to have a different perception of this problem. This difference becomes apparent when looking at the degree of interaction between researchers (the theory side) and practitioners at the local level. Neither were participants able to find a conclusive response to key issue 2. – whether youth policy is a cross-cutting or rather a sector-specific issue.

The decision to include all young people was generally considered the right one *("It's all the youth you need to go!")* The discussion centred on "problem-oriented" versus "youth-centred". It was important, said participants, to think carefully and then decide on what foundation municipal youth policy should be built: Should it be oriented towards young people with "specific needs" and hence take a more interventionist approach? It remained unclear how the objective of connecting with "all young people" through local youth policy can be reconciled with the aim of providing employment opportunities to "special" young people and designing projects specifically for them. In light of this, a "more global" education system seems more appropriate for reaching out to "all" young people, rather than pursuing specific projects to minimise the number of dropouts, although they may be capable of providing measurable results faster.

As for the role of the local authority, participants also discussed who carries responsibility for young people. One possible approach is to say that local youth policymakers cannot (and should not) shoulder responsibility on behalf of young people or their parents because it is not their job to manage their lives for them. However, policymakers can help them by providing a well-managed comprehensive youth policy. As a meta issue, participants debated why youth policy is necessary, what its role is, and what it should seek to achieve. There followed a controversial discussion on whether it should do "more" than enable young people to find employment and whether this "more" constituted things like developing young people's talents so they could find a more long-term and suitable job. The statement "I don't pay money to make them happy but to bring them into jobs!" triggered another wave of controversy.

Another hotly debated question was whether the "youth work" community should, for instance, care about whether and how young people take part in municipal leisure activities. The representative from the Dutch local authority clearly objected: "Youth workers should not organise free time activities." There was no need for a policy in order to enable people "to simply be young". From a German perspective, however, one would have to disagree with that last statement, to the extent that the independent youth policy seeks to take a different view of youth (in the sense of both this period of life and young people themselves) and to portray young people in a light that is clearly different from the negative and often short-sighted picture that is frequently painted by the media. Maybe a different perspective and respect for young people is precisely what is needed in order to rejuvenate local youth policy.

Cooperation between local authorities was also a topic of discussion. Participants discussed typical problems involving assigning responsibilities, the difficulties associated with people taking on the responsibilities of others and/or relinquishing their responsibilities to others. It was clear that it is important for all departments inside an administration to have and maintain control over the budget.

Relinquishing power can also bring with it the necessity to hand over part of one's budget, said participants, fear of which often prevents people from changing established structures and hierarchies.

In addition, the workshop focused on the financial resources that are available to local authorities for the purpose of strengthening local youth policy. It is important, said participants, to be able to monitor where the money is going and how it is being spent. In the context of "integrated local education structures", the question was raised as to whether there were any financial resources available for "networking" activities. It was pointed out that in Germany, Länder-specific programmes exist to support the development and maintenance of these integrated local education structures. The Dutch local authority has taken on the implemented programmes on a voluntary basis and has not been able to earmark additional funds for this in its budget. Finally, participants discussed the idea of "pooling" several budgets in an attempt to not separate the various responsibilities, but rather create a shared (financial) responsibility. However, this idea was considered to be too innovative and maybe also in conflict with municipal budget regulations, so it was not pursued further during the workshop. However, participants seemed to agree with the statement that overall, there are sufficient financial resources in the system.

In this context they also discussed the potential outcomes of youth policy and how the outcomes of youth work can be made more visible. It had to be borne in mind, they said, that doing nothing for the target group also carries a certain price tag. ("Suppose you don't do anything to the target group, how much does it cost you? Return on investment.") Local authority representatives generally felt that it is important to be able to demonstrate measurable results so the associated expenses can be justified. The very last subject of discussion was monitoring and evaluating the current system and how it could be changed where necessary. The pressure on having to demonstrate measurable results so as to legitimise youth policy activities seems ubiquitous, and appears to be an obstacle to youth policy. ↙

Workshop Education I
Networking in the district of Viersen
in Germany

Visions & Goals

_ Along the biography of the young people: Who is responsible? How long? What does the next one expect?
_ Everybody should know at all time what everyone else is doing.
_ Lets talk with the young people not only about them!

Organisation

Regional conference on education

Land: District Council; Education Authority

Steering comittee

Region:municipal administration Regional office

Land NRW, Schools, Cities
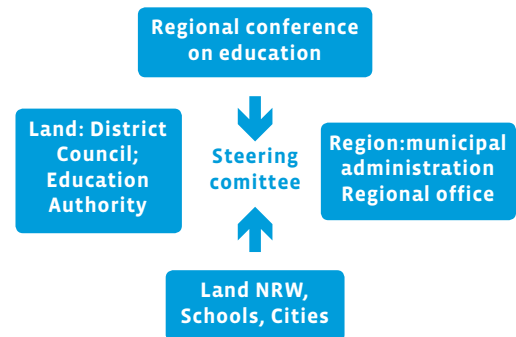
Strategies

_ Joint venture between the state of NRW and county Viersen based on a contract of cooperation
_ Cooperation at eye level
_ Common goal: build up a network
_ Carried by a common understanding and concept for the responsibility to shape the educational structure

Projects

_ Transition nursery school ➔ primary school ➔ secondary school ➔ Trainee - Job
_ Common Strategies
_ Consequences of demographic changes for school and education
_ Cooperation sport clubs – school etc.
_ Prevention (violence, health)
_ Social work in school

Further Informations: Ingo Schabrich �’ Ingo.Schabrich@kreis-viersen.de

About the administrative district Viersen:

300.000 inhabitants; municipalities from 16.000 to 76.000 inhabitants, 55.000 inhabitants < 18 yrs.; 23.000 inhabitants 18–25 yrs.; 8% 5-25 yrs. unemployed = 12% of the unemployed people

3. WORKSHOPS

4. CONCLUSION

5. PARTICIPANTS

Workshop Education II
's-Hertogenbosch
in Netherlands

Visions & Goals
_ Develop talents to find sustainable and suitable jobs.
_ Reduce the number of dropouts.
_ Statement: *Prevention of early school leaving starts before birth …*

Strategy
Identify the role and goals of the municipality in youth policy and choosing instruments and aspects of a central role for education:

Health, Upbringing capacity of parents, Safety, Participation, Culture, Sports, Leisure activities

For all from 8 months to 23 years, without target groups. Cooperation with schools, other partners/departments, parents, youths. Prevention rather than curation. Building on responsibility of others.

Accomplished projects
Municipality
It's role: legal, Financing, Directing, Supporting and co-operating, Encouraging and stimulating innovation, Building bridges, Overall view.
It's challenges:
_ Co-operation with other municipal departments
_ Balancing between municipal policy making and responsibility of others
_ Re-defining its role: work more efficiently, with better quality and lower costs

Accomplished projects
_ Child centres for 0–13 years old (nursery, kindergarten, primary school)
_ Career counselling routes (primary, secondary, vocational schools) (European projects)
_ T.O.M. – Tailor-made guidance (prevention and curation of dropouts)

Further Informations: Henny Wibbelink ↘h.wibbelink@s-hertogenbosch.nl

About 's-Hertogenbosch
City with 140.000 inhabitants, 30.000 between 0 and 23 years old. 's-Hertogenbosch has 50 primary schools, 11 secondary schools, 6 school for special needs. 14.000 participate at the senior vocational training, 11.000 at the higher vocational training. Around 350 dropouts per year.

Workshops **TRANSITIONS**

Workshop on municipal youth policy with special reference to the transition between school and working life "Transitions"

Local authorities find it a challenge to support young people on their way into adulthood and working life, especially since many of the difficulties arise in areas outside of the authorities' sphere of influence and cannot be addressed by the local authorities alone.

Nonetheless, many local authorities across Europe have developed successful strategies and solutions through their day-to-day work and use them to support young people as they transition from school to employment.

These include:

_ Creating and safeguarding access for young people to activities and services (in regard to the labour market, education, culture, sports, leisure, health...)
_ Inclusion of groups on the fringes of society (socially disadvantaged young people, school dropouts, gangs)
_ Development of local networks (labour market, school, politics and administration, other civil society stakeholders);
_ Providing services in socially difficult areas (deprived urban districts, rural areas)
_ Involvement of local businesses

The actual strategies and measures depend on the youth policy framework of the European country in question, the varity of which means there is extensive expertise across Europe.

During the workshop, the youth strategies of two European municipalities that work under very different circumstances were presented.

1. ADDRESSES   2. INPUTS

These examples highlighted the broad range of options for action for the local authorities.

_ Kristinestad, a small community in Finland, is located between two larger cities and has few jobs to offer for well qualified young people, most of whom therefore decide to relocate elsewhere.
_ By contrast, Izmet is a large industrial town near Istanbul and is home to several industrial companies and a growing younger population.

Both cities have developed measures to promote young people's employability and improve their opportunities on the labour market, and offer activities to support young people's personal development and encourage their civic engagement. Both local authorities work with other local stakeholders and local businesses to reach out to all young people in the towns, but they also have designed measures for specific target groups. Representatives from both local authorities stated that it was very important to enable young people to participate in local issues and decisions.

Results
Following the presentation of these examples, the participating experts discussed them at length and contributed their own experiences and ideas. The group drew the following conclusions:

The challenges for municipal youth policy are:
_ Employers have high expectations of and place strong demands on employees
_ Young people lack motivation as well as professional and regional mobility
_ Not enough recognition is given to skills and abilities gained in non-formal and informal settings
_ Qualified young people prefer to relocate from rural areas to the cities.

Structural challenges:
_ Emergency measures take precedence over preventive approaches
_ Too many "off-the-shelf" measures that are not sufficiently adapted to the needs of the local young population
_ Providers do not coordinate their activities and measures

_ Insufficient communication between local and central actors
_ No consistent, coordinated promotion structures
_ Standalone short-term measures that are not integrated in comprehensive promotion strategies; lack of long-term integrated programmes
_ Large distance between political decision-makers and administrations and the situation on the ground.

Participants listed the following challenges for local youth policy-makers:
_ Need to invest in prevention and education, not in "repair measures"
_ Need for a direct connection between labour market, education and youth policy
_ Financial promotion programmes and instruments need to be better and more systematically coordinated
_ Standalone measures have to be part of long-term strategies
_ Call for more direct youth participation
_ Impact of services and measures has to be evaluated and adjustments made where necessary.

Measures and activities
_ Implementation of long-term municipal youth strategies (with stable financial and political backing) that bring together local stakeholders from various areas
_ Improved cooperation between local stakeholders across the various sectors in the shape of, e. g., joint activity design or job shadowing
_ Greater visibility for non-formal and informal learning activities provided by the youth work community
_ More participation opportunities for young people (regional conferences, youth forums, youth parliaments)
_ Stronger dialogue between policymakers and young people
_ Creation of local platforms where young people and adults can meet and communicate (e. g., volunteering exchanges)
_ Stronger use of new media in order to improve communication between local stakeholders and young people ↙

Workshop Transition from Education to Work I Izmit
in Turkey

Visions & Goals
_ New graduated people can develop themselves by attending different courses. They can further qualify themselves and shorten the process of transition from school life to working life.
_ Help people to learn some professions for being ready for working life.
_ Help people not only to take up profession but also to socialize.

Offered courses
1. Education: 8 different language courses (English, German, Russian, Arabian, Ottoman, Spanish, Italian, French); Computer programs courses like Autocad, corel draw, photoshop, solidworks.
2. About Fine arts: music lessons, lute courses, painting, sewing, designing accesssory, inkering, needleworking, knitting courses, Theatre, Chess , Folk Dance, oilpaint courses.
3. Professions for being ready for working life: courses like Masseuse, Hairdresser, Computer management, Webdesign, Animation, Computer accountancy.

Organisation
İZMEK (Courses for people to Take up a profession)
İzmek has been working for young people and housewives to take up a profession and learn handcraft for themselves with cooperation of İzmit Municipality, ASO directorship, İzmit education centre since 2009 in every district of İzmit.

Izmit Local Youth Policy
_ İzmit cooperates with the strongest local youth organizations of Turkey targeting young people with diverse social, economical and political orientations.
_ Youth Meeting workshops in 80 cities of Turkey (social inclusion as important topic)
_ Izmit is part of the biggest youth network in Turkey.

About Izmit:
The city has around 302.960 inhabitants. The rate of the People between 15–64 years is 69,84%. Rate of the People between 0–14 years 24,30%. Rate of the People oldern than 64 5,86%. The general unemployment rate in İzmit is about 10,5%.

Further Informations:
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Workshop Transition from Education to Work II Kristinestad
in Finland

Visions & Goals
_ Make young people stay in Kristinestad after a (higher) education and supporting youth in getting a higher education.
_ Find and create enough employment opportunities for youth with higher education
_ Suitable work for suitable education!

Strategies
_ Foster youth in entrepreneurship from preschool to upper secondary level
_ Vocational education in Kristinestad
_ Attract larger businesses and industries to Kristinestad
_ Promote mobility to enable distance working.

Organisations
Municipality
_ Youth Council: Communication channel between youngsters and politicians having a say in municipal issues
_ Job Center: Regional occupation project funded by the municipality and Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment. Kristinestad as project owner, in co-operation with neighbour municipalities.

Accomplished projects
_ Thesis support: Financial support from the municipality to students from Kristinestad studying at higher education level
_ Young Entrepreneurship – One Year of Business: Product- or servicebased business with real capital. Not for economic gain, but education in entrepreneurship and business management
_ Summer job bill: Support when applying for a summer job / Support the entrepreneurs to hire a young employee
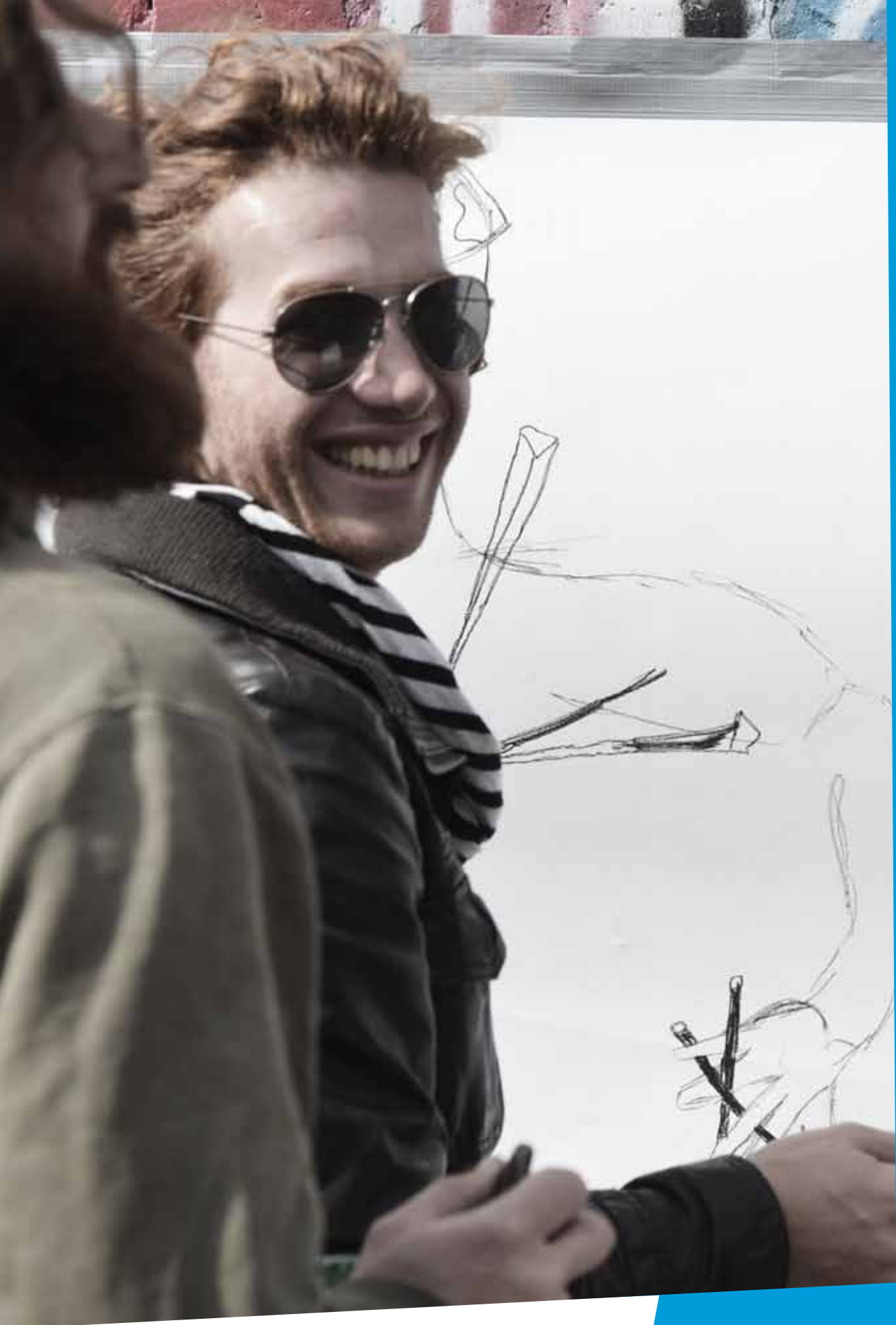
Further Informations:
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About Kristinestad
7096 inhabitants, 0–14 years 11,9%, 15–64 years 60,7%, 65– years 27,4%. The city largest employer: Service 66%, industry and production 20%, agriculture 14%. City with a CITTA-slow status.

Workshops **INTEGRATION**

Workshop on Integration /
Cultural Diversity
Summary

This workshop aimed at discussing collaboration across levels of governance, and to discuss examples of cross-sectoral youth policy in the field of integration and cultural diversity. After a welcome and introduction by the two workshop facilitators Nina Schmidt from JUGEND für Europa and Maria Schwille from IJAB, a quick buzzgroup discussion with three to four people in each group took place. The groups wrote down the three most important words connected to social inclusion/cultural diversity. The participants were asked to define target groups, stakeholders and specific approaches. The results of both workshops showed a broad range of perspectives and in both of them the danger of gapping and parallel societies was mentioned, as well as the need for a common language, tailored approaches and for assisting different social groups in making contact.

Alfred Quintana from the European Youth Observatory introduced the Youth Plan of the city of Barcelona as a practical example. The city has historically always been a destination for national and international immigrants, with its immigration rate undergoing a sharp rise between 2001 and 2010 when almost 250,000 new immigrants came to the city. Today immigrants account for 17.3% of the city's population, including approx. 40,000 young people. One in four young people in Barcelona belongs to the immigrant community. 46% of immigrants are from Latin America, so for most of them language is not a major problem.

>> *Is there any/enough money for youth work?*

The Government of Catalonia has adopted a Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2005– 2008. The City Council also has an Immigration Plan 2012–2015 and has adopted youth policy initiatives such as the Youth Plan 2006–2010 and the Youth Plan 2012–2015. In managing diversity in the city, the Government observes the following principles:

_ Cultural differences are perceived as positive and beneficial to the community
_ Cultures have to communicate so they can mix and get to know each other
_ Citizens have to develop common foundations and values
_ Fundamental objectives: Confident relationships, valid communication, debates, mutual learning, peaceful settlement of cultural conflicts, cooperation, coexistence and social cohesion

The Government observes these principles by cooperating on policy with the immigration department and the youth department of the City of Barcelona as well as by cooperating with the Immigration Council of Barcelona, other civil society organisations, the Youth City Council and the Immigration City Council. The example provided showed how youth policy and immigration policy have to be managed in a cross-sectoral manner. Mr. Quintana also pointed out that it is difficult to achieve more than just a dialogue between policymakers and representative bodies. The majority of the young people who make up the Youth City Council, for example, are not members of the immigrant community; cooperation sometimes already suffers from not finding a common language and not sharing the same social reality.

Maria Schwille reported on the second practice example, the three-year project "Kommune goes International" (KGI) which aims to empower young people, give them a sense of belonging and to reach kids that so far have not been able to participate in international mobility programmes.

To this end the 20 KGI municipalities have developed local action plans for international youth work. They are part of a network of local partners that is supported by programmes that enable all young people to participate in cross-border exchange programmes (mainly in non-formal settings). The project has now received additional funding. The municipalities benefit from their membership of the network in that they receive coaching and other non-material support.

Similar to the city of Barcelona, KGI has developed a set of criteria for successful cross-sectoral cooperation in the field of integration/cultural diversity:

_ Sustainable partnerships and networks are built that involve all the stakeholders that deal with young people, including immigrant networks and organisations
_ Political support is provided on the local and all other political and administrative levels
_ Infrastructure and human resources are provided by local authorities

Maria Schwille mentioned an important aspect of this project, namely identifying, e. g., "young people from the immigrant community" and reaching out to them with specific programmes and approaches without stig-

matising them. Here it is important to value diversity and to work and reflect for a given time on positive discrimination. The workshop turned into a debate (that unfortunately suffered from lack of time) where participants discussed other projects and approaches they had came across and challenges that are yet to be solved. Several sources of tension were mentioned:

_ Tension between different generations and "waves" of incoming immigrants
_ Finding a balance between integration and renouncing one's own cultural background
_ The challenge of accepting diverse cultural and religious backgrounds and stipulating common rules for everyone
_ Tension experienced by central governments and regions with different social realities.

Participants identified further obstacles, such as the lack of a robust system to evaluate the success of projects in the field as well as the lack of continuity due to cyclical project funding. The needs of the target groups have to be considered and heard already at the beginning of such projects; despite this, some projects suffer from a lack of early participation of the target groups they are designed for. Approaches that combine formal and non-formal learning methods have proved to be produce good results in this context. ↙

3. WORKSHOPS   4. CONCLUSION

5. PARTICIPANTS

Kommune goes International –
An initiative of „JiVE.Youth Work international – Experiencing Diversity"

Visions & Goals
_ To strengthen young people, give them a sense of belonging and to reach those kids that have not been able to participate in international mobility programms yet.
_ 20 municipalities develop „Local Actions Plans for International Youth Work " with a network of local partners and
_ programms which enable all young people to participate in cross-border exchange programms (mainly in non-formal settings).

Strategy
Kommune goes International (KGI) works if…
_ Sustainable partnerships and networks are built involving everybody dealing with young people including immigrants networks/organizations;
_ Political support is found on the local and all other political and administrative levels
_ Infrastructure and human resources are provided by local authorities;
_ International youth work is acknowledged as an integral part of youth work;
_ Youth work experts are trained to be capable and motivated for international activities.

Organisation
_ 3-year-programme (mid 2011–mid 2014)
_ Succesful applicants receive coaching and training but no additional funds and access to a network: 21 cities work individually but can share and exchange their experiences in the KGI-Network
_ KGI is working with differnt partners: IJAB (International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of Germany), YOUTH for Europe, Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, German Federal Youth Council, Cooperative Federation for Youth Social Work …

Benefits to this day
_ New multilevel networks have been built and awareness has been raised
_ (Re-)establishment of competence centres for international youth work in the municipalities
_ Internationalisation of youth work on the whole
_ Special agendas/modules have been developed to open international youth work for all
_ Numerous projects and programmes

Further Informations:
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Background:
Cities have cut back on international youth work (IYW) despite the fact that at the same time IYW has been proven to be an effective method.

1. ADDRESSES   2. INPUTS

Workshop Integration
Workshop in Barcelona, Spain

Visions & Goals
_ Consider the cultural difference as a positive and common value. Cultures have to dialogue to meet and recognize each other. Find common basis and values .
_ Fundamental objectives: confident relationships, valid communication, debate, mutual learning, pacific regulation of cultural conflicts, cooperation, coexistence and social cohesion.
_ Guarantee social cohesion and coexistence

Strategies
_ Assumption of conflicts (Mediation), oppose stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination and xenophobia (urban rumors), avoid segregation dynamics (education), strike a balance between "social membership feeling" and the cultural origins
_ Transversality principle: Youth Department + Immigration Department
_ Participatory principle: Social Capital + City Council

Organisations
_ Generalitat de Catalunya (Catalan self-government): Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2005–2008
_ City Council of Barcelona: Youth Plan 2006–2010 / Youth Plan 2012–2015 (in progress), Immigration Plan 2012–2015
_ Young Civic Social Net (associations,…)
_ Coordinating and participating organisations: Youth Council of Barcelona, 100 Youth Council

Accomplished projects
_ Familiar regrouping, "Regrouping Families Accompaniment Project"
_ Training Project for young immigrants (16–18 years old)
_ Incorporating Youth City Council in Immigration City Council
_ "Latin Kings" phenomenon: from criminal gang to social and cultural association

Further Informations:
↘ Quintanaaquintana@ub.edu

About Barcelona:
1,6 mio habitants, 287.617 young people (15–29 years), 280.000 immigrants (17.3%), 25 % of young population (15–24) are immigrants, 14.2 % (40.000) of immigrants are young.

3. WORKSHOPS

4. CONCLUSION

5. PARTICIPANTS

NAVIGATING THROUGH THE SEA OF INFORMATION

A view from the outside
The conference as seen by **CLAUDIA ZINSER**

Dear participants,
My name is Claudia Zinser, I am a freelance consultant for youth participation who is based in Berlin but works all over Germany. Now I'm addressing you as the General Rapporteur of this conference. As a matter of fact I believe I was chosen as the name of my consultancy appeared inspiring to the organisation team. It's called *a view from the outside.*

In fact, this is what I have been trying to do over the last three days: to be a fresh pair of eyes from the outside, but also to be on the inside, to enjoy the inspiring international atmosphere, to listen carefully to the speakers and of course to ask the participants for their impressions.

I would like to take you on a brief sightseeing tour of the three days of the InterCITY conference. Follow me to the Kubus in Leipzig.

It's 1.30 pm on Wednesday, October 10. Some of you may have been travelling since the early morning or maybe you even arrived in Leipzig last night. Maybe you had time to check in at your hotel and now here you are – at the conference in the Kubus. A friendly welcome, your name tag, your three-day public transport ticket, coffee, tea, water and some cookies are waiting for you. And here's some bar tables. Well, they don't exactly create a bar atmosphere but still they invite different people to group together, establish contact and start sharing information…

Up the stairs you go to the conference room … headsets for the interpretation which is being provided this afternoon are being handed out … and again, a warm welcome from different people awaits.

First, the host and facilitator Jochen Butt-Pośnik invites us to be inspired by the atmosphere of the Kubus and be part of this laboratory, a European laboratory. We, and the issues we've brought with us, are the ingredients, ready to be stirred up.

Second, Hans-Georg Wicke (JUGEND für Europa) is forced to deliver a monologue rather than the dialogue he had planned, as his co-presenter Michael Löher from the German Association for Public and Private Welfare is ill and can't be here. Luckily his presentation is not soporific or boring at all. He opens our minds to the large spectrum of local responsibilities and issues and the benefits that European projects can offer to the local level.

Third, Thomas Schmidt, deputy head of the Youth Department of our host city Leipzig, takes us through some of the highlights of a long history of research and philosophical debate in Leipzig and gives us an impression of the challenges this city faces.

Fourth, Regina Kraushaar, head of the Youth Division at the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, addresses us. I admire her warm and unconventional way of looking at young people and their issues, and I like her approach, which is to give young people the social recognition they deserve, to regard them as serious and respected partners in all subjects relevant for their future, and to help change their negative image in the media.

I'm curious about the outcome of our discussion of the Independent Youth Policy, as the roject focuses on three main aspects:

_ Formal and non-formal education
_ Participation
_ Successful transitions from education to work

The welcome part is followed by a very interesting keynote address by Lasse Siurala, the Secretary-General of the Finnish Network for Urban Youth Work.

A participant later tells me, "Lasse helped to expand my local and national view to a European view and to recognise the different realities young people face in different countries." What an effective start to a European conference.

I am shocked, for example, by the various youth unemployment rates we told about, which range from almost 56% in Greece to 8.1% in Germany. Of course I've heard this before but to see it on a slide certainly has a bigger impact. And I learn a new expression, NEET youth – young people who are Not in Employment, Education or Training.

For me it's very helpful to get an impression of how different national governments manage local youth work, and it's interesting to see that the governments that have exact specifications and a whole range of measureable objectives are not the most effective ones. Instead, it appears to be much more effective to provide guidelines on what to do and to help fund the measures, but to leave it up to the local level **how** they want to implement the guidelines.

Another interesting aspect is Lasse's input about the conflicting priorities of youth work, an area that is torn between emancipation and integration. As I see later on several flipchart papers, participants have taken up this image and refer to it often.

Lasse Siurala is obviously a networker. I like his idea of starting a network "just in case" someone asks for ideas. For example, there's the Finnish Network for Youth Work, Youth

Research and Youth Worker Training. Now it's organised as a youth lobby. The members have thought ahead and they are prepared.

Also enlightening are his examples of when people tend to see a social issue as a technical problem, meaning everybody has their own specific solution, or alternatively as an adaptive problem, where no single organisation has the capacity to solve it alone.

From others I hear that they like his strong advocacy for youth as social group with its own totally justified needs. To him, youth is more than just the passage from childhood to finally being a complete person, an adult person.

His keynote address is later commented on by two women who are confronted with municipal practice and problems every day, Dr. Heike Förster from the city of Leipzig's Youth Department and Henny Wibbelink from the Youth Department of 's-Hertogenbosch in the Netherlands. Jochen Butt-Pośnik is interested in hearing about their experience of the subjects Lasse Siurala just touched on in his speech.

After the inspiring keynote address and the subsequent debate we are "allowed" to have a coffee break – in fact, an "ongoing" coffee break as it transitions seamlessly to Café Europe, a variation on the World Café Method: a few people at each bar table with one host. The groups complete three discussion rounds each with a set of different questions, while the host stays at the table and everybody else rotates to a new one. The questions that guide our intense discussions are:

1. What is your understanding of youth work?

2. What does it mean for youth policy on municipal level?

3. What are the key challenges and topics of local youth policy?

In the evening I ask people how they liked the Café Europe method. Here's what they said:

- "It's a good way to communicate with people."
- "You hear about other countries and systems."
- "You get people to move around."
- "People tend to stick to the responses they already gave to questions 1 and 2, so it doesn't lead to a deeper discussion."
- "Our table, we had deep discussions. But only some of us moved to the next table; most of us wanted to stay."
- "I'll try this at my next event.It prepared the ground for the next two days."
- "It's a relaxed way to talk."
- "It's a bit like speed dating."

Several people tell me they appreciated the warm and entertaining style of the host and facilitator Jochen Butt-Pośnik and of course his ability to switch languages so quickly.

At 6.30 pm, the "formal education" part transitions to "non-formal and informal education" with some very good food, further conversation and funny walking acts (from the magician and the juggler) – whose performances attract comments such as "not necessary but a very nice gimmick"!

So here we are. Day 1 is over. If there were any feelings of stress in the beginning, now the atmosphere can be described as one of relaxed excitement.

Thursday, October 11

Here we are at day 2 of the InterCITY conference. It's a workshop day, with four interesting subjects making it difficult to decide what group to join:

_ Participation
_ Educational facilities
_ Transitions
_ Integration/cultural diversity

As I'm not able to be in every workshop at the same time I move from one workshop to the next and ask for impressions. Participants are mostly very pleased with the examples, suggestions and recommendations and generally with the discussions.

There are some critical voices as participants' prior knowledge of the subjects varies widely, which makes matters difficult for the workshop facilitator and may make the workshop less useful for people with a lot of experience in the field.

Several participants express their utter astonishment at the fact that the systems in Europe are so different. Somehow this is common knowledge but still surprising once you delve into a detailed discussion. The German education system, especially, provokes a lot of surprise as it turns out to be very exclusive. And I start to understand why a representative body such as the Youth Council has less difficulty than we have in Germany in reaching out to a variety of youngsters in other countries.

I'm told that the workshop participants are pleased to receive some theoretical input as well.

After two sets of workshops we meet again at the bar tables for coffee and to exchange our impressions from the workshops. We're able to observe Jochen Butt-Pośnik having a hard time obtaining information, as people seem to be allergic to using microphones. But he manages in the end.

Most of us are quite exhausted after this second day – there's so much to think about and to process!

What a wonderful idea to offer us a guided tour of Leipzig to clear our heads in the cold air and fill it with completely different impressions. Thank you! Our tour guide is very funny and pokes fun at the men in our group, provoking much hilarity among the ladies.

We close day 2 with a good meal in the Auerbach Cellar. Those with staying power are able to enjoy the Mephisto Show. Considering some of the faces I see at the breakfast buffet on day 3, it must have been a good and long night for some of us.

Which leads us to the third and last day of the conference: today.

Friday, October 12

Thank you to Robert France from the European Commission for providing us with insight in the EU framework on mobility, one of the aspects of the EU youth policy, and on discussing the importance of mobility, especially learning mobility.

And thank you to Angelika Krüger, the Vice President of the International Academy of the Freie Universität Berlin and Alexandra Teir from Kristinestad, Finland for telling us about the many ways learning mobility can be organized locally, nationally and internationally. YEPP, the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme, is a complex system of establishing change circles on the local level and to bring people together with other local and national partners in different countries in order to empower youth and local communities. I am impressed by the enormous organizational and educational effort they have put in. I'm also reminded that it is trust, respect and shared ownership that are the foundations of a successful programme.

Because I'm busy writing my conclusions I'm not able to participate in the Open Space for Cooporation and Networking but I'm sure it is a great source of many new partnerships, projects and benefits for everybody.

However, I do find a moment to ask Lasse Siurala for his personal thoughts about the InterCITY conference. One of his aims, he says, was to learn from others - and he did! Another objective of him is to force youth policy to keep progressing. He does this by questioning and also criticising current conditions and the players involved – and this is

>> Challenge: put together the knowledge of youth and decision making power!

(I quote) "much easier if you know the people in person". So he's pleased to have met a lot more people he can question.

Of course, as is my duty as General Rapporteur, before the conference I had asked Claudius Siebel from JUGEND für Europa, one of the main organizers of the conference about the goals he would like to achieve with the InterCITY conference. His answer was, "For me, the InterCITY conference is in the first instance a platform for trans-local exchange and cooperation. If at the end of the conference there is at least one concrete idea for further cooperation I would be satisfied."

So I'm asking you, my fellow participants, to please raise your hands if you have found a new cooperation partner or developed a concrete idea for a new cooperation project over the last three days. I can see several hands being raised! Excellent! Claudius, you have good reason to be very satisfied!

My special thanks go to **Claudius Siebel and Hans Brandtner and all the other partners** in the organization team for having put together this wonderful three-day-conference here in Leipzig with lots of interesting methods, examples, inputs, strategies and people!

Have a safe trip home, everybody! ↙

3. WORKSHOPS

4. CONCLUSION

5. PARTICIPANTS

What have we been doing the last three days?

ew

have this

od friends

friend

Cool People

uch Jur during
this week & especially
on the karaoke-Night!

Lots of new
people. I like that.
Jest zajeb

InterCity – Conference between European counterparts on their municipalities' youth – A view on the conference from a French participant

The conference as seen by ROMAIN GALATI from City of Valence, France

At the initiative of the German European Youth in Action Agency, the city of Leipzig in Saxony invited over a hundred European cities to the «InterCity» conference from 9 to 12 October 2012. The event's objectives were as follows:

_ Allow the delegates from all over Europe an opportunity to get together and discuss common issues.
_ Highlight the cities' good practices and successful examples of youth operations.
_ Encourage cities to participate actively in the creation of a youth policy at the national and European level.
_ Emphasize the importance of European interrelations between cities.
_ Encourage the networking of European cities.
_ Raise the cities' awareness of Europe.

Three days of exchanges and discussions to assess EU achievements and Valence's youth program in relation to the priorities of Europe.

Subject matter
Youth participation
How cities involve youth in local life?
The InterCity conference was centered on the European approach of 'Youth Work/Youth Policy', a concept which translates poorly into French. It refers to youth policy activities by cities or associations with the goal of training young people to become active and engaged citizens in local life.

Although there is no official common youth policy in Europe, each country keeping its sovereignty over this issue, the concept of

Youth Work has a broad consensus among member States. It is built in large part on non-formal education and youth participation.

This is the first Youth in Action conference truly geared towards the cities. Without a doubt, Youth in Action is of the opinion that the municipality level is the right level to be effective in leading a genuine youth policy.

Cities can receive directives from regions and States and are at the same time very close to young people at the local level, as opposed to Europe where the States are often too far from the reality on the ground. In consequence, cities can also submit their expertise, know-how and their feed-back to national and European decision makers to influence general youth policy in their countries.

Valence and its sister cities do not have a youth service. The youth theme is a cross-cutting concept found in varying degrees in the Ministry of Youth and Sport in France, Education for Culture in Germany, etc.

The main difficulty in cooperating on a European level on the topic of youth comes from the fact that this same subject sometimes leads to totally different realities between countries and even amid regions within a State.

Emancipation or Integration?
What should be the objective of a city towards its youth, emancipation or integration? Should education for good citizenship be focused on encouraging these young citizens to get more involved in the local life or is it more appropriate to enhance their training and

education to better integrate into the working world? Between these two options, cities can have a strong influence through the actions and policies that they put in place.

In Valence, there is an education/early childhood service, but not a youth service. Youth is seen as a transversal concept in relation to sport, culture and employment. Synergies exist between these services, but each one remains independent to prioritize its own activities.

Valence focuses more on integrating young people into the labor market than on their emancipation. Nevertheless, the city supports many structures and associations that contribute to the empowerment of young people.

In terms of emancipation and participation, the city of Valence has a Municipal Youth Council. This model is widely recognized throughout Europe, but in practice, its development is being strongly contested at the European level.

The Municipal Youth Council – Do the youth actually participate?

To give young people the opportunity to participate in local life, Valence created a Municipal Youth Council in 2009. The young participants are between 13 and 15 years old and meet monthly by commission on various themes.

In our sister cities, you can find the equivalent to the Valence MYC (Municipal Youth Council). There exists the Jugendparlament in Biberach, Clacton Tendring Youth Council of Clacton and the Consiglio comunale dei ragazzi in Asti. Each is organized in its own way and it is impossible to rate them on a value scale given that each organization has its strengths and weaknesses, reflecting different priorities.

For example, in Valence, the MYC essentially represents junior high students, whereas in Biberach, it caters to high school students. In Clacton, it is open to all and in Asti, the council concerns especially children 9 to 11 years old.

At the European level, the number of MYCs is considerable, but their implementation is the subject of significant criticism.

Of course, in principle, all these cities support the idea of involving youth in the Municipal Council. However, in practice, Europe seems to find several severe flaws causing a loss of interest in the concept.

For example, many MYCs affect only a minute slice of the youth population; often just a few youngsters coming from well-off families who tend to be interested in politics. This elitism questions just how representative the MYCs are to the city's youth.

In addition, many critics doubt the genuineness of young people, going so far as to say they are simply putting on an "imitate the adults" show. Except that impersonating adults cannot be considered as real participation by the young people.

Lastly, Europe wants to know what real impact the MYCs have on the cities' decision-making process. Are they really being listened to? Can they make proposals which are then heard? Do they have a significant budget? Do their efforts have a measurable impact on youth at the local level? Etc.

The European method for good youth participation

There is no miraculous way to encourage youth to play a part in local life and the reality is very different from one country to another.

However, Europe has implemented a number of tools to assess cities' achievements in this area.

Successful youth participation can be illustrated using the five points of a star:

_ Rights
_ Means
_ Space
_ Opportunities
_ Support

First of all, young people must have knowledge of their rights and what they imply. It is necessary for the cities to inform young people through information campaigns tailored to their target age.

Furthermore, young people need the means to participate. In terms of means, this implies **financially**, because if participation in the MYC is set too high, this excludes a significant part of the youth. Practicalities also have to be taken into account such as the distances involved and the availability of work tools. Finally, the kids need the support of their parents to participate.

Young people need space to express themselves. This space can be tangible, such as an available meeting room, but can also be found on internet discussion forums, or social networks like Facebook, etc. They have to feel free in this space or they won't appropriate it.

In addition, young people's participation should open the door to opportunities. Are their ideas even being heard? Can they influence the decision-making process? Has their participation had any significant and visible impact locally? If young people get the feeling they're not having any influence, their participation becomes unproductive.

Clearly, young people need support, which translates into being prepared and trained to participate. It is not enough to just let young people speak for the sake of having something to say. They need information and to acquire certain skills to be able to express themselves on topics that sometimes exceed their ken.

This method is illustrated using the form of a star which is expedient in evaluating young peoples' participation, and not just in the MYCs.

Good practices
Merge the MYC with the young initiative program, in order to allow young people to choose the projects that the city must support.

Elect an MYC "mayor" from among the youths who will be their spokesperson. He can influence the decisions of the adult Mayor through either a right of veto, or by having the possibility to amend projects.

Integration
The second theme of the **InterCity** conference was the **integration** of different populations within the same city. This theme is heavily debated in Europe in a context of social tension and Islamophobia in varying degrees depending on the country.

On the question of integration, there are two types of countries, **immigration countries** and **emigration countries**. Indeed, even within the European Union, migration flows between countries vary considerably. As for Valence and its European sister cities, they can be placed in the immigration country category.

Interculturality or communitarism?
With the disappearance of the European Union's internal borders, **citizen mobility** and exchanges are encouraged. As a result, cities have to deal with accommodating people of different origins and cultures and integrate them. These migration flows are both a source of cultural enrichment for cities, but can also be a source of tension.

Indeed, different life styles can complicate **living together**. Religious differences may be a source of conflict, as well as communities who bring their geopolitical conflicts along with them (Israel/Palestine, Turkey/Armenia, Ex-Yugoslavia, etc.).

Two approaches compete at the European level: **an intercultural approach and a community approach**. The intercultural approach considers citizens as a whole and promotes interactions between them, while the community approach considers citizens as a set of distinct communities and proposes actions specific to these communities.

At the European level, the community approach is the subject of much debate. Indeed, even if this approach stems from a willingness to promote different cultures within the same territory, it is accused of not creating links between communities, and even suspected of enhancing rifts.

An example is shown in Germany of a city having built a mosque to integrate the Turkish community. The result has been that the mosque is only frequented by this community and it has no contacts with German citizens.

In fact, Europe supports the intercultural approach and this translates into a set of criteria to be respected when applying for European project financing. This intercultural dimension involves appreciating all cultures on the same level and opening projects up equally to all citizens.

For example, the Lyon Language Forum presents all languages on an equal footing, including French. In this way, it establishes links between the city's citizens, regardless of their origins.

Other examples are the Franco-German exchanges. It is very rare to see French communities in Germany or German communities in France. Therefore, when Franco-German exchanges occur, they involve all citizens of the city and not just one particular community.

Good practices
Organize intercultural events involving all citizens without community distinctions.

After 2013?
The current European programs are scheduled for the 2007-2013 period. Future programs will be for the 2014-2020 period.

These future programs are still very vague; the negotiations between the European Parliament, the Commission and the different Governments are still ongoing.

Although it is a certainty that the European programs will continue to exist, it is uncertain under which form. In Leipzig, Mr. France of the European Commission was present to reassure the ongoing future of European programs, but without really giving any concrete information. In fact, he advises to take advantage of the latest round of funding until the end of 2013 and to stay informed through the European Union website of the negotiations in progress.

InterCity II
The productivity of the exchanges and the diversity of cities represented prompted Youth in Action to ask the question as to the continuation of this new network of European cities. Youth in Action has proposed to organize **InterCity II** in another European country. In this case, the German Agency will provide technical and financial support.

It is important to note the low French InterCity participation, since only the cities of Valence and Dunkirk were represented. A poor turnout arising from a lack of commitment to Europe on the part of French cities, considering that France is a large European country.

Thus, to improve the participation of French cities, a consideration could be made to organize InterCity II in France in 2013.

Valence could be a candidate to host this event with the technical and financial support of the European Agency.

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EU ★ JUGEND-STRATEGIE

Bundesministerium
für Familie, Senioren, Frauen
und Jugend

Deutscher Verein
für öffentliche
und private Fürsorge e.V

JUGEND für Europa
Deutsche Agentur
für das EU-Programm
JUGEND IN AKTION

Invitation

European Conference in Leipzig, 10 – 12 October 2012

InterCITY

European Peer Learning on Local Youth Policy

Background

Youth-related challenges like the transitions from youth to adulthood, youth unemployment, education and social participation, growing demands on the young people's time and reduced space for their living occur in similar forms in many European countries and are subject to national and European policies. Equally, in many European countries it is the municipalities that are responsible for youth services and youth work. Municipalities are the level that is closest to the citizens and as such they are the central agent for providing the conditions of living and growing up for young people.

Currently the Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (BMFSFJ) (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth) is carrying out a European peer-learning project in youth policy. Together with six other EU-member states we will discuss issues of youth policy and find

solutions over a period of two years. An important point in this regard is the role of municipalities in drafting and implementing youth policy. This conference is part of the project and will offer a platform for discussing this central topic of youth policy within a European context. We intend to discuss not only strictly youth policy but also issues related to political strategies:

_ Which challenges are the municipalities in Europe facing in putting into practice youth policy and do they tackle these challenges?
_ Which are the central issues?
_ Which instruments do they use with what effect?
_ How can international collaboration between municipalities be used for these purposes?
_ Which role can national youth policies and the EU youth strategy play for the municipalities?

Objectives

The conference aims at
_ offering agents from all over Europe an opportunity to discuss various subjects and have an exchange about them;
_ present good practice examples showing how municipalities in Europe exercise youth policy;
_ stimulate the municipalities to take an active part in developing youth policy and youth work on the national and European levels;

_ draw attention to the European trans-local exchange and European peer-learning as strategies for furthering the development of municipal youth policy and awaken interest in them;
_ offer a platform for developing European networks;
_ make municipalities more aware of the EU youth strategy and its added value for youth services.

Target group

The invitation is directed to persons involved in youth work and youth services as well as administration – ideally both – on the municipal level.

InterCITY

European Peer Learning on Local Youth Policy
European Conference in Leipzig, 10 – 12 October 2012

Programs

Wednesday, 10 October 2012

14.00 hrs. | Opening by the organisers
Kick-off dialogue
_ **Michael Löher,** German Association for Public and Private Welfare
_ **Hans-Georg Wicke,** JUGEND für Europa
Welcome addresses by
_ **Thomas Schmidt,** Deputy Head Youth Department Leipzig
_ **Regina Kraushaar**, Head of the Youth Division, BMFSFJ

15.00 hrs. | Input presentation
"Situations of young people in Europe in the municipal context – which are the new challenges?"
_ **Lasse Siurala,** Director Youth, City of Helsinki

Comments from municipal practice
_ **Dr. Heike Förster,** Youth Department, City of Leipzig
_ **Henny Wibbelink,** Youth Department, City of 's-Hertogenbosch

16.30 hrs. | "Café Europe"
Exchanging on realities of local youth policy

From 18.30 hrs. | Buffet
at the KUBUS

Thursday , 11 October 2012

9.30 hrs. | Welcome

9.45 – 12.15 hrs. | Workshops with project presentations
Topic 1: Participation
Topic 2: Educational facilities in municipalities
Topic 3: Transitions
Topic 4: Integration/cultural diversity

12.15 hrs. | Lunch break

13.15 – 15.45 hrs. | Repetition of the morning workshops

16.15 – 17.30 hrs. | Impressions from the workshops

18.00 hrs. *(optional)* | Guided tour through Leipzig
in 4 groups

20.00 hrs. | Common dinner in Leipzig
Auerbachs Keller
Grimmaische Str. 2-4
04109 Leipzig

Friday, 12 October 2012

9.00 hrs. | Welcome

9.15 hrs. | Brief input
"Mobility as overarching topic of a European policy for young people in the places where they live"
_ **Robert France,** European Commission

"Trans-local collaboration and cross-border peer learning – building a sustainable European network of local stakeholders"
_ **Angelika Krüger,** Vice president International Academy, Freie Universität Berlin

10.30 hrs. | Cooparation and networking
Your space for presentations and networking

12.15 hrs. | Closing session
_ Short film
_ Summary of the conference by Claudia Zinser

13.00 hrs. | End of the conference

Organisers

InterCITY is an activity organised by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, JUGEND für Europa and Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge e.V. (German Association for public and private Welfare) in collaboration with the cities of Leipzig and Köln.

Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge e.V.

Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend

JUGEND für Europa Deutsche Agentur für das EU-Programm JUGEND IN AKTION

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Notes