



Brussels, 13 December 2013  
EAC/D.1/SD-FM (2013)

## DRAFT REPORT

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**Subject:** Second meeting of the Expert Group on youth work quality systems in EU Member States

**Venue:** European Commission, DG EAC, Joseph II, 70 - Brussels

**Date:** 3-4 December 2013

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### Purpose of the meeting

During the second meeting of the Expert Group on **youth work quality systems in the EU Member States**, the main part was devoted to discussing the main concepts surrounding youth work quality and how to organise the upcoming work of this expert group.

### **1. Activities of the Council of Europe and EU-CoE Youth Partnership regarding youth work quality**

Hans-Joachim SCHILD presented the activities of both 1) the Partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission in the field of youth and 2) the Council of Europe itself, regarding quality of youth work.

I. As concerns the [Partnership](#), Hanjo Schild presented the main current missions of this entity which has been set up in 1998: quality and recognition of youth work, knowledge based youth policy and practice, geographical focus.

The activities to promote youth work can be listed as follows:

- 1) capacity building of youth workers and youth NGOs (with training focusing on multipliers, with work on curricula, training material such as Coyote magazine, development of indicators on intercultural learning in non-formal education);
- 2) recognition (around symposia and events, strategic papers, contribution to development of tools such as the portfolio for youth workers or Youthpass, the expert group on recognition);

- 3) learning mobility (mainly via the European Platform on learning mobility launched in 2011);
- 4) knowledge building and provision ([European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy](#), EKCYP, which started around 10 years ago, and gathers data on youth policy topics and national policies, a library and a glossary; research seminars and workshops, as well as youth knowledge series);
- 5) geographical focus (symposia in Eastern Europe and Caucasus and South-East Europe, and capacity building activities in Southern Mediterranean);
- 6) support of third parties in activities regarding youth work (for instance participation in meetings, expert groups, etc).

II. As concerns the [Council of Europe](#), Hanjo Schild underlined that youth work development is part of the core values of the Council's activities in the field of youth.

The Council endeavours to improve capacity building of NGOS with some concrete tools, such as the [Quality Standards in non-formal education and training](#), which is a self-assessment tool based on 13 indicators. A [quality label for youth centres](#) has also been developed.

The Council of Europe has also developed youth policy reviews (20 countries so far) which include recommendations for quality improvement.

Hanjo Schild concluded his presentation by pointing out some of the challenges relating to discussions on quality, linked to the diversity of the youth work field, and to the specific tensions which can be found in this field.

## **2. Sharing the experience of the Thematic Expert Group on Quality in Early childhood Education and Care** (Nora MILOTAY – European Commission)

Early Childhood Education and Care has been on the Agenda at EU level since 1996 (the Barcelona target was set in 2002) but it started as an issue related to employment aspects (and the focus was on increasing the number of places in order to facilitate young parents' access to employment). In 2011 a Commission Communication developed the educational aspects and the attention to children's well-being, with a focus on quality. That was the base for launching an expert group on quality in ECEC aiming at making proposals for a European Quality Framework, with a two-year mandate (2012-2014), in the framework of the Education Open Method of Coordination.

Nora Milotay proposed to share the experience of this work on quality and to point out possible pitfalls when discussing on such an issue.

First of all, the Expert group on ECEC quality had to work on a CONCEPT, an INTERPRETATION of quality (a working definition with flexible approach). Working

on a relatively new field, this group felt as necessary to work on terminology; that is why they have created a Glossary (terminology agreed by the whole group that makes translation easy into EU languages). The group also had to identify the aspects of quality it wanted to tackle (varies according to SECTOR SPECIFICITY; which aspects are important in terms of quality and from which point of view). The 5 main issues for quality identified in the ECEC group were: workforce, content delivered to children, access and use, evaluation and monitoring, governance and funding. In each of these topics the group explored what research, policy and practice say about them. It is advisable to go to national level, for a peer-to-peer knowledge/reality check (study visits).

A key question is what the Expert Group aims to achieve. This will impact decisions on outcomes, such as QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS/BENCHMARKS or rather DISCURSIVE GUIDELINES, depending on whether these are criteria for informing or forming/monitoring policy (are monitoring & evaluation tools needed or rather a trigger to have things started?). Whatever the choice, it must be made with IMPLEMENTATION in mind.

There are also some transversal issues, which will be covered in all of the topics. The Expert group might be divided in SUB-GROUPS, one for each topic (on the basis of establishing 2 meetings per topic for example as well as a peer learning meeting).

Coming to the issue of POSSIBLE DELIVERABLES, Nora mentioned that the EG group on quality ECEC envisages producing:

- a short document with 10-12 statements
- 1 appendix with explanations + research + country examples
- mapping for each country
- glossary of terms.

### **3. Feed-back from the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting on the EU dashboard of youth indicators** (Fabienne METAYER- European Commission)

Fabienne Metayer presented the state of play regarding EU Youth indicators. She recalled that a dashboard of 40 indicators, conceived as a informing tool rather than a monitoring tool, had been set up by and Expert Group in 2010-2011, on the basis of the Council resolution launching the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018. These indicators cover the 8 fields of action of the EU Youth Strategy.

The main source of data for the dashboard is Eurostat, which just launched a new [database](#) on youth beyond the Dashboard, to complement policy [presentation](#). When no statistical data is available at EU level, other information is to be found in Eurobarometer surveys (ex: survey n° [375](#) on youth participation in democratic life).

The Expert Group exists since 2010 (5 meetings so far). Its initial aim was to elaborate the Dashboard of indicators, and it now aims to assess how the Dashboard can be updated and used.

The main questions debated at the last meeting in November 2013 were as follows:

- Management of the dashboard: is there a need to modify the structure of the dashboard, the number of indicators, the communication around the dashboard, and to foresee regular updates?
- Where are the main data needs for youth? What information do we need for the next EU Youth report?

There is now an ongoing reflection on how to follow-up the conclusions of last meeting: more visibility, stable dashboard with more information elements around, more links with other policy tools. The next meeting of the Expert Group will take place in June 2014 (after the Youth Council meeting).

#### **4. Mapping youth work quality systems in EU Member States – Discussion on templates**

Jonas AGDUR, Chair of the Expert Group on Youth Work Quality Systems, presented the preliminary results of the mapping exercise that was conducted to prepare the meeting; he underlined that it was mainly to serve as a basis for discussion.

From the discussion about youth work mapping, some elements aroused. First of all, the participants underlined the need to have a common understanding of the terminology used: starting from the actors involved in the mapping and the various youth work activities considered.

Given the complexity and the variety of youth work throughout Europe, the experts found that a common definition or description of youth work should be set in order to be able to work at national/regional/local level.

One aspect to always keep in mind in drafting the mapping of youth work is the fact that the aim is to support and help youth work in each country at all levels. Being inspiring and very concrete, not binding or limiting those realities which are already well-set. On the contrary, the target of youth work is young people, and the participants agreed not to step out from this path.

Another element very strong that rose was the wish to learn from those success examples and share the best practices at a very concrete level. The outcome for the group should fit to the various realities of the 28 Member States, in order to respect the already existing situation and to support those who are less strong in quality development (concrete guidelines for practitioners, as well as inspiring document for policy makers).

## 5. Working groups

The Expert group was split in 3 working groups, in order to discuss the following questions:

- 1 - Which definition of youth work do we want to retain for our work? Could we use the RISE document as a basis?
- 2 - Which outcomes would we want to achieve with the group?
- 3 - How do we proceed from then?

The main conclusions of the three groups were as follows:

### **GROUP 1**

1. RISE document is useful for common understanding, including non-formal/informal learning. The Council definition (as used in several documents such as the 2009 council resolution on the EU youth cooperation framework and the May 2013 Conclusions on quality youth work) could be mixed with the RISE definition as they are complementary.
2. youth work quality systems:
  - need to illustrate
  - diversity of youth work/ common elements
  - quality framework/recommendations
3. Benefits of quality
  - advancing youth work
  - improving practice

### **GROUP 2**

1. starting point:
  - definition of Council resolution, in a practical approach
  - process is key to elaborate minimum criteria for quality youth work
2. good to know our own visions and key words:
  - reflection of the current situation
  - quality & activities
  - wider recognition
  - professionalization
3. aims:
  - inspire policies of youth work at national level (+ regional and local)
  - offer to youth organisations opportunities to reflect and improve their work

### GROUP 3

1. discussion on informal/non formal learning

2. different types of youth work:

- different values and diversity of systems
- examples of good practices rather than proposals

3. four steps:

- need to have an impact on / "form" youth policies
- identification of different types of youth work, which cover also different expectations
- added value typology
- what is needed to take us to this kind of added value

In the common discussion, three main issues were identified:

- The need to find common definitions, descriptions and principles as framework for further discussions.
- The need for deep examination of already existing systems
- The need to identify illustrations and good practices from quality criteria and standards that could be useful for policy makers and practitioners, and use them to provide guidance.

In order to start to deepen the examination of quality schemes, two possible ways was discussed:

1) starting to map various parts of a quality system, or

2) starting from an identification of different settings for (types of) youth work and relate different parts/elements/systems mapped to them in order to get a clearer understanding of the function of each system.

The group then tried to list the main youth work settings (table 1 - "Boxes"), and elaborated the main elements of quality systems (as described in table 2).

**Table 1 - Common typical settings for Youth Work, which we called "boxes":**

- Youth centres
- Outreached youth work
- Informal groups
- Camps/colonies
- Information centres
- Youth work done in Institutions (such as schools, churches...)
- Youth organisations

**Table 2 – Elements of quality systems**

- Quality standards
- Quality circles
- Methods of measuring

- |                                |
|--------------------------------|
| - <b>Methods of evaluation</b> |
| - <b>Coach support system</b>  |
| - <b>Clear aims</b>            |
| - <b>System for dialogue</b>   |

On the basis of this the expert group decided that instead of starting with a discussion around the definition of youth work “and” the basic principles the group should start “to examine youth work quality systems in EU Member States”.

The expert group decided to do this through inviting all members of the group to present what they figure are methods/tools/system developed in her/his country that, in a significant way, have help them to secure and enhance the quality of youth work. This way we also hope to be able to “extract” the underlying principles and added values of youth work that motivates the use of these methods.

Please note that the two tables above have been prepared by the Expert group as a support for helping concretely the members to identify an interesting initiative.

To fulfil this function the presentations must be made in such a way that it is clear what principles and/or added values that these methods/tools are linked to and are supposed to enhance the quality of.

In order to facilitate this we have constructed the attached “Framework and structure for presentation” including the “common typical settings for youth work” (which we called “boxes”) and the “elements/parts of quality systems” that we discussed and agreed to have as basis for further work during our last meeting.

## **6. Preparing the next meeting**

The next meeting will take place on the **17-18 February 2014** (starting on the 17<sup>th</sup> at 14.30, ending on the 18<sup>th</sup> around 15.30). A formal invitation will be sent in January.

The members of the expert group should send, **before 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2014**, an email to Jonas ([jonas.agdur@keks.se](mailto:jonas.agdur@keks.se)), Conor ([Conor.Rowley@dcya.gov.ie](mailto:Conor.Rowley@dcya.gov.ie)) and Fabienne ([fabienne.metayer@ec.europa.eu](mailto:fabienne.metayer@ec.europa.eu)) telling what kind of element/system they want to present (If possible described in relation to the tables above/the attached framework). Jonas, Conor and Fabienne will then see how to organise the discussions, according to the number of suggested presentations and the themes/areas/settings covered.

## **Annexes**

- List of participants
- Framework and structure for presentations