

EXTERNAL REPORT – Written and designed by Susie Nicodemi & Agathe Denais

# Migration shaping youth work

A collection of inputs gathered during the *Migration Shaping Youth Work Seminar*, hosted in Vienna, Austria

19-23 November 2023



# What is this report?

## Context

We start by introducing what this report is not. The aim of this report is not to find common ground on big concepts such as ‘post-migrant societies’. Nor does it give agreed definitions, or a holistic overview of the needs and recommendation for youth work with migrant youth.

Rather, it hopes to express the voices of representatives that work with migrant youth using non-formal learning, in different communities and corners of Europe. During the seminar, we were privileged to hear the stories and opinions of many different actors. This report aims to channel those together for a wider public. It should illustrate some of the experience, priorities and opinions of those stakeholders involved in every day community action in societies shaped by migration. It should give some insight into the real world of youth and community work with migrant youth, on local, regional and international level.

This seminar was the first step in one new strand of the Strategic Partnership on Inclusion.

By pulling together some of the realities in one report, we hope to inspire others, disseminate resources and provide some input for the next strategic steps on this priority.



## NA Strategic Partnership on Inclusion

Erasmus+ Youth National Agencies & SALTO centres cooperate strategically to involve more inclusion organisations and increase the participation of young people with fewer opportunities in the Erasmus+ programme and European Solidarity Corps.

The consortium of NAs developed a strategic approach to reach out and involve 4 target groups that are underrepresented in Erasmus+ and Solidarity Corps in the different countries. Working with organisations and young people facing barriers in a post-migration society, they take the following steps:

1. Mapping new organisations & needs analysis
2. Motivation, information & capacity building
3. Partnership building & networking
4. Support for international mobility as part of their inclusion work
5. Mapping existing resources & tools or creating new ones
6. Monitoring impact & documenting the tested approaches

## Other priority strands of SPI

The SPI has three other priority strands, with different combinations of National Agencies working together on them:

- (Organisations working with) **young people with disabilities and health issues** (AT, BE-FL, CH, DE, DK, EE, EL, FI, FR, HR, IS, LT, LV, MK, PL, PT, RO, SK)
- (Organisations working with) **young people in a NEET situation** (AT, BE-FL, BE-DE, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IT, LV, NL, PT, RO, SE)
- (Organisations working with) **young people from rural areas** (EE, FI, EL, IE, IT, LT, LV, MK, RO)

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# BACKGROUND OF THE SEMINAR

# 1. Context of the seminar

## Context

European societies are shaped, and continue to be shaped, by migration. While this is a reality, many societies struggle with accepting, acknowledging, recognising, appreciating and valorising it. In this seminar, we wanted to deepen the understanding of how societies are shaped by migration, engage with the lived realities of people experiencing structural barriers because of migration, and focus on the daily practices and realities of youth work.

The roots of this seminar lay in the belief that youth work, and using the European Programmes for youth in those places, have the potential to smoothen and support renegotiation and adjustment processes. They can help bridge gaps and improve connections. By bringing together youth workers and persons connected to the field of youth, we wanted to explore this potential and the conditions to realise it.

In the seminar, we started by using the lens of post-migrant societies. The concept doesn't imply that migration has been or should be overcome, it rather describes the aftereffects and how migration shapes and reconfigures the present. The concept of post-migration uses a structural and societal perspective, while avoiding the trap of 'us versus them'.

## Aims & objectives

This seminar was held over 3 days in November 2023 and aimed to deepen the understanding of societies shaped by migration and the role Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps can play in it. The objectives were to:

- Explore what it means to recognise societies as shaped by migration and the role youth work plays in it.
- Create a space for peer-learning opportunities on how to do youth work within the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes and at the same time including young people with experience with migration.
- Understand the accessibility of Erasmus+ and Erasmus Solidarity Corps for young people facing barriers within a society shaped by migration.
- Co-create a concrete outcome to make the knowledge in the seminar transferable to the field of youth in general.



# 1. Context of the seminar

## Participant recruitment

This seminar was co-created by an international group of stakeholders, and aimed for an inclusive approach from the beginning.

In recruiting participants, the National Agencies reached out to many networks and third party organisations who have a closer contact with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. By opening relationships, encouraging communication, and offering funding to participate, National Agencies also enabled the increase of awareness of European Programmes to some new and different potential beneficiaries.

For the application process for participants, for the first time we included voice and video application, as well as the traditional approach of apply-online through an written application form. A new system had to be designed and set up for this as an innovative practice, within the existing system of hosting international seminars by one NA, and the other NAs recruiting and selecting participants to send.

The balance of the participant group was also important for the National Agencies who supported the process - having active youth workers, representatives from NGOs working directly from migrants, participants with migration background themselves, individuals with international project experience, as well as representation from different countries and types of youth and community work.

## Training style Approach

The training team developed this approach for working sensitively with a mixed participant group:

- Holding space for participants and inviting the sharing of professional and personal experiences about the topic.
- We used non-formal methods as well as empowering language.
- We went through a learning journey together, with a main role for participants.
- The seminar connected to the local realities in Vienna through Study Visits to local organisations, and using the local reality for inspiration as part of the programme thinking.
- We invited participants to contribute to the seminar in the run-up to it through a padlet.

The Communication Support Tool on the next page illustrates this approach used, and can also be transferable in other projects and activities, as a way for different voices to be heard and respected in a group process.

# 2. Communication support

During the seminar, there were many methods and resources used that could be used more widely. This Communication tool can provide a framework for international groups to work together. It enables us to be gentle and supportive with each other as a group, and to be able to dive into sensitive topics.

## I communicate my boundaries

I communicate what I am comfortable sharing or not. I express when something is outside my comfort zone. It's also ok to say 'I'm not comfortable about this right now' without explanation.

## I speak about my own experiences

I express things from my own experience and feeling. I don't rely on 'you said' or 'I heard'. It's an authentic way to bring knowledge into the room.

## I treat diverse perspectives respectfully

I listen to what others have to say. I don't have to agree with it, but I don't judge it. I explain my own position, and why it is different.

## I don't shame anyone

This should be explicit, and a conscious effort, for words and actions of others.

## Personal things shared stay in the group

I express things about my own experiences, I help build the trust in the group. I keep personal vulnerable things shared by others close to my heart and not shared indiscriminately. I never share other people's things without permission.

## I share silence

I use that time to breathe and think. I allow others the time they need to express themselves. It can take time to voice things, or to get to the point. It can provide a break. If there are pauses, I take that time to reflect on what is happening for myself.

## I show agreement by hands shaking

My positive opinion is shown non-verbally in the group plenary space by spinning hands in the air. This helps to get a picture of the agreement within the group.

## I focus on my own learning

I take care of myself and what I want to learn, or if I want to get more out of the situation. I take responsibility for my own (learning) outcomes in this seminar.

## I respect the use of a non-native language

In this international environment, I am compassionate and empathetic if something is not phrased perfectly. I use simple language that is understandable for others that have different language skills. If something is not phrased in a way that is comfortable, I explain why and provide an alternative phrasing for people to use.

## I try to avoid to generalise

I talk about specifics. I try not to stereotype or pre-judge.

## I listen actively

I make sure I am physically and mentally present when other people are speaking, to really listen to what they have to say. I am attentive and present to their words, and not focusing on other things that are going on in my head/phone/life.

## I take responsibility

I am responsible for the time I take up when I'm speaking and for what I am saying. I am mindful of others in the room that might also want to talk. I am careful of what I say and how I phrase it. Taking a long time to talk means it takes time and space from others.

## I communicate the background of my questions

Giving context opens up more levels in communication. It's a tool that can improve connection.

# 3. Programme

The seminar had 3 full programme days, with free evenings to encourage networking and connection to local reality

| Time          | 19/11    | 20/11<br>EXPLORE            | 21/11<br>EXCHANGE                                  | 22/11<br>ENACT                                       |
|---------------|----------|-----------------------------|--|--|
| 9:30 - 11:00  | Arrivals | Introduction to the seminar | Introducing Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps | Concepts: youth work + societies shaped by migration |
| 11:00 - 11:30 |          | Break                       | Break  | Break  |
| 11:30 - 13:00 |          | Group dynamics              | Best practices: peer learning                      | Challenges + barriers in youth work / with migrants? |
|               |          |                             | Lunch  |  |
| 13:00 - 14:30 |          | Lunch                       | Study visit (break included)                       | Lunch  |
| 14:30 - 16:00 |          | Mapping local realities     |  | Co-creation of cheat sheet                           |
| 16:00 - 16:30 |          | Break                       |  | Break  |
| 16:30 - 18:00 |          | Understanding barriers      |  | Reflection & evaluation                              |
| 18:00 - 20:00 |          | Dinner                      | Dinner   | Dinner   |
| 20:00 - 21:30 |          | Welcoming                   | Free evening                                       | Dinner out   |



## 4. Inclusion & Diversity priority of Erasmus+

Inclusion is often seen as the way to include people facing access barriers or having fewer opportunities. There are several policy initiatives of the European Commission where inclusion is a key objective to ensure more people are included in education, training and youth work.

People should be able to actively participate in the democratic processes and in public life, regardless of their background or circumstances. Modern societies and political systems rely on the inclusion of diverse people. In this respect, participating in European Programmes can contribute to develop a sense of shared citizenship and to foster a greater involvement in society.

Doing youth work and youth work projects in post-migrant societies demands certain approaches and capacities. This seminar aimed to share and learn about these, between a diverse participant group.

Having more and better international youth projects that involve young people living in post-migrant societies is an aim for several National Agencies of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes.

There are systems and structures to help make that happen. One of those, SALTO Inclusion & Diversity Resource Centre, provides resources for persons and agencies supporting young people with fewer opportunities. By offering opportunities for training, exchange and reflection on inclusion practice and diversity management, SALTO Inclusion & Diversity works towards the visibility, accessibility and transparency of its inclusion & diversity work and resources, and towards making 'inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities' and 'positive diversity management' a widely supported priority.

This seminar was planned and delivered under this framework.



# 5. Welcome to the seminar

## Welcome from SALTO Inclusion & Diversity

This seminar was organised by different institutions that work for the European Programmes who are cooperating together for the priority of including more and different young people in the opportunities funded by the Programmes for youth.

SALTO Inclusion & Diversity coordinates the Strategic Partnership for Inclusion (SPI). This is a cooperation between 25 National Agencies that aims to increase the participation of young people with fewer opportunities and facilitate access of new organisations in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes.

This seminar is organised through one of the strands of SPI: “Barriers in a post-migrant society”.

Originally, this strand of the SPI had an objective to reach out to those with migration backgrounds, refugees, asylum seekers, and organisations working with them, using the phrase ‘diverse cultural backgrounds’. However, ‘diverse cultural backgrounds’ is not an individual trait of a certain group of people, nor is it inclusive. The phrase of ‘post-migrant society is now used’ - not only to analyse or understand our societies as they are now, but also as a lens to help us imagine a future of inclusive societies.

European Programmes should be inclusive for everyone. We want to co-create together the conditions that help people to participate. We are shifting from the previous way of offering a package of opportunities, to asking: “what do you need?”. Once we hear what people need, we can start working on it. We can’t do that alone, so seminars and moments of bringing people together provide opportunities to hear more and different voices and to co-create. We want to deepen the understanding of ‘what is a post-migrant society, and what is the role of youth work in it?’

This is the context for this seminar, as the first one in the SPI strand. It aimed to provide a space to share different experiences, expertise and stories and learn from those. We created a space defined by our own rules and our own co-created structures. We can also bring that out to a real society. We can implement small real local changes that then create structural changes. Then we can accomplish a society in which we are all included.

We hope that this seminar will provide a first step for this. The outcomes of the seminar follow in this report, and we hope they will be the base for the future steps of more and different young people from post-migrant societies included in European Youth Programmes.




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Pieter-Jan De Graeve, SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, hosted by JINT, National Agency for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps in Belgium Flanders

# CONCEPTS

# 6. Important concepts

Definitions taken directly from the [glossary of the youth partnership](#).

## Youth Work

For the purposes of European Programmes, young people are aged 13 – 30 years old.

Youth work is a term that covers activities with and for young people of a social, cultural, educational or political nature. The main objective of youth work is to provide opportunities for young people to shape their own futures.

Youth work is education 'out-of-school', most commonly referred to as either non-formal or informal learning. The general aims of youth work are the integration and inclusion of young people in society. It may also aim towards the personal and social emancipation of young people from dependency and exploitation. It can be delivered by professionals, recognised with state qualifications, or by volunteers.

Youth work also deals with unemployment, educational failure, marginalisation and social exclusion. Increasingly, youth work overlaps with the area of social services previously undertaken by the Welfare State. It includes work on aspects such as education, employment, assistance and guidance, housing, mobility, criminal justice and health, as well as the more traditional areas of participation, youth politics, cultural activities, scouting, leisure and sports. Youth work may at times be organised around a particular religious tradition.

## Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education is any educational action that takes place outside of the formal education system. It is an integral part of a lifelong learning concept that ensures that young people and adults acquire and maintain the skills, abilities and dispositions needed to adapt to a continuously changing environment. It can be acquired on the personal initiative of each individual through different learning activities taking place outside the formal educational system. An important part of non-formal education is carried out by non-governmental organisations involved in community and youth work.

## Non-Formal Learning

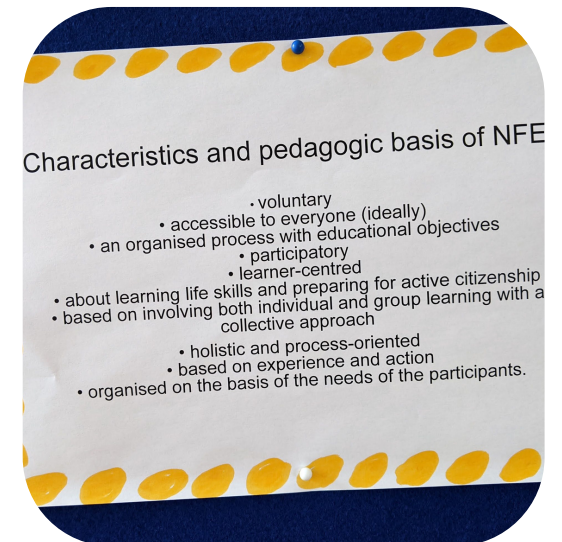
Non-formal learning (NFL) is purposive, but voluntary. It takes place in a diverse range of environments and situations for which teaching/training and learning is not necessarily their sole or main activity. It can take places in many environments (indoors, outdoors, on public transport....etc).

The NFL activities or courses that take place may be staffed by professional learning facilitators (such as youth trainers) or by volunteers (such as youth leaders). The activities and courses are structured, intentional, planned, and have learning objectives.

Non-formal learning and education is the key activity, but also the key competence, of youth work. It typically does not lead to certification, but often there is focus on the recognition and transfer of learning.

## Migration

Migration - The movement of persons away from their place of usual residence, either across an international border or within a State.



## Youth work...

Youth workers from across Europe who work with migrant youth shared some of their interpretations of youth work together. For participants at the seminar, youth work...

### ...uses Non-Formal Learning

Youth work helps to create a space for non-formal learning, which is an organised educational process with pre-planned learning objectives, is voluntary, accessible to everyone, participatory and learner-centred. It is holistic and process-oriented, based on experience and action, organised based on the needs of the participants and involves both individual and group learning with a collective approach. The pedagogic basis of non-formal education is about learning life skills and preparing for active citizenship in society.



"Youth work opens doors, and opens minds" **Participant**

### ...is future oriented

Young people are our future. Youth work needs to look at what is coming, and adjust to meet that. We need to deal with it before the future comes.

### ...provides diverse opportunities

Youth provides wide-range mentoring, accompaniment and it empowers the young people to be autonomous, to take care of themselves, not having to rely on others to satisfy a need (as opposed to independent, which has the meaning of 'not considering social relations'). It helps them fulfil their potential. Youth work provides different opportunities and a diversity of choices to give all young people chances; it shows young people how they can be, and what they can do in their life. It helps them navigate challenges.



"Youth work provides positive healthy experiences in your complicated situation right now, so that in the future you are able to deal with more by yourself" **Participant**

### ...creates citizens

Through different participative methods, young people learn how to be part of something, to take ownership of a space or a process. Through experiential learning, with self-reflection and self-awareness, they understand their own interests, values and attitudes and opinions, and become able to express their own needs. By raising their voice and taking part in society processes, youth work helps develop citizens.

### ...is needs based

Young people work on things which matter to themselves in youth work; it is needs based. Youth work offers the right frame for their needs that gives a boundary, while opening a space for them to own. Young people then fill in the picture themselves.

### ...involves creativity

Giving access to young people to express themselves, through art, music, culture, sport, theatre, youth work strikes a balance between something useful and something fun. On the other side, very often youth work isn't well funded, so rather than following a perfect needs-based project management approach, time and energy is often spent on being creative with limited resources.

### ...is not diverse enough

A society shaped by migration is not reflected in the youth work of today in many communities. Youth work should represent the background, needs and interests of the diversity of all the young people it serves, and aims to serve. There should be more leaders, youth workers and role models who represent a diversity of young people. It should be participative and inclusive, with provision also for the harder to reach.

**...is undervalued and underfunded**

Recognition of the power of youth work and non-formal education is not strong enough in other sectors in society, including sometimes other education sectors. Change is often counted in qualitative assessment, through numbers, rather than the impact on individuals. The job profile of a youth worker should be better recognised, more attractive to more people, and valued (and funded) better.

**...is delivered by youth workers**

Accompanying young people navigate their choices and journey; a youth worker is often a problem-solver or a care-taker. For some, a youth worker is friend. For others, there needs to be a professional distance, and it's more about building trust and mutual respect, without official hierarchy, to be approachable; to create a relationship with open communication. A youth worker helps to provide a safer space for young people - both within the organisation where they work, and outside that, in other spaces. They ensure protection, especially from more formal figures who can seem intimidating, such as politicians.

Often young people don't have a lobby, so the youth worker should be their support for that, without manipulation of the message. Youth workers mentor and empower young people to be able to be the voice, their own voice. They help channel the youth voice to be heard.

**Some youth work topics, when working with migrant youth in Europe:**



# 7. Post-migrant societies

## Postmigrant society

Post-migration is an academic concept from cultural and social studies. It is used by politicians and journalists to describe the complexities of contemporary societies shaped by past and ongoing migrations. In a post-migrant society, different people in the public sphere, such as politicians, the media etc, talk about post-migration to describe the societies in which they live, impacted by migration.

## A new concept?

Post-migration is not a discourse or discipline that all people in all EU countries are familiar with. It is an academic concept that comes from cultural and social studies. Discussions about migration are very diverse within Europe. Post-migration as a concept is currently used in different countries, including (but not only) Germany, UK, Denmark, Italy, Switzerland, Austria and Sweden. The concept is quite new, it isn't mainstream (yet).

## Why 'post'?

Post usually means 'after'; that something has finished. In this phrase, it doesn't mean that migration is over. It means that there has been migration (immigration, emigration) and that society has been impacted by that. There are now more and different voices to be heard. A post-migrant society is structured by migration; it makes spaces for a plurality of voices and experiences.

## Multi-faceted

A society shaped by migration will have more and different voices and faces. There will be many new different sides, different points of view. These should be heard. There should be ways for people's voices to be amplified through to structures and systems.



"People's voices must be heard. Every opinion is welcome. In big cities, diversity is clear to see and recognise. In small towns, it's not obvious. Everyone has to learn how to speak to others who are different from them, and also to listen to the other" **Participant**

## Negotiation

Immigration and emigration are factors that have big impact on a country. Elements that were agreed upon before, now need to be reevaluated and re-negotiated. It's important to see what that impact is on our society, and we need to talk about it. The new situation can be negotiated, but not reversed.

## Adjustment

Structures, institutions and political cultures in a post-migrant society are adapted to the reality. There will be more upward mobility possible for newcomers to the country. Barriers need to be readjusted. For example, "why are my qualifications not valid in this country?" - barriers to transfer of qualifications need to be adjusted so that newcomers can access the job market.

## Conflictual spaces

In a society, some people have privileges and power. In a postmigrant society, there's newcomers who also want that. There can be distributional conflict - who is sharing what with whom? Who 'deserves' to receive things?

In negotiation processes in a postmigration society there can be conflictual spaces. They can be characterised by polarisation, ambivalences, antagonisms and new alliances. This means there can be a lot of discussion, often not friendly, because people want different things: Who has power in our society? What is our society as a whole now looking at? The aim is to focus on power relationships and struggles in society as a whole, not singling out migration / migrants specifically.

# 8. What is a society shaped by migration ?

## Introduction

The movement of people and goods, tied to globalisation, influences societies worldwide. This concept of a society shaped by migration was outlined by participants. Youth workers from across Europe shared their idea of what is a society shaped by migration. This thought process helps to process self-reflection on this, of what it means to each individual, and then to hear alternative perspectives that challenge or build on those thoughts. Different viewpoints were given, with some describing a possibly realistic situation and others a reality specific to only certain societies.

What came gave a mix of three areas: the current reality, characteristics to foster and associated challenges.

## The current picture

### Migration exists – what is the capacity of society to manage movement?

Migration is a fact. There should be greater recognition of the realities, roles and norms associated with migration. Accepting migration as a reality will help it to be managed more effectively, and promote better coexistence. Having responsive institutions and systems would make it possible to meet the diverse needs of a society that is constantly evolving with global movements.

### Fluid Identities, continuous creation and recreation

Individuals are not made up of only one identity. Often their identity has many layers, or they are made of different identities, depending on the role or the situation they are in. Embracing the fluidity of identities is a reality these days: being both Syrian and German, or being both citizen and ‘foreigner’ at the same time. This fluidity isn’t always easy for individuals to do, or for the host society to adapt to or be open for. It challenges societal norms. Therefore, societies must constantly reevaluate their own foundations to accommodate evolving identities and circumstances. Society is created and recreated all the time by its constituent parts. This ongoing fluidity and change has to be recognised by all.

### Power Dynamics

Who gains power, who holds power and how power is exercised has implications on a society. Ensuring representation across institutions, government and social services is vital. This includes having representation of migrant communities in civil society organisations, as face-to-face youth workers, as role models in youth work. Balancing power and incorporating diversity of gender, culture, socio-economic status etc. into decision-making processes are imperative for societal harmony. Having such diversity brings empowerment, and allows for co-creation. It can bring new opportunities and collective changes, by working together with diverse representatives of society. It also highlights the need for dialogue, adaptation, and increasing communication to develop understanding and counter problems.



## Characteristics to foster a constructive society shaped by migration



### Diversity as a Strength

Embracing diversity leads to a rich, multicultural society; fostering acceptance and a mix of cultures and communities. The metaphor of a colourful mosaic highlights the unique contributions of individuals coming together. This cultural richness encourages individuals to view their own culture from different perspectives, prompting self-reflection. It can help to overcome fears, increase self-knowledge and self-awareness and celebrate diversity, contrasting with nationalist tendencies.

### Lack of Fear

Citizens should not fear migrants. Creating diverse environments where citizens feel at ease contributes to societal cohesion. A sense of comfort and acceptance should be fostered.

### EU's Role in promoting mobility

The EU encourages its citizens to be mobile, through freedom of movement, removing barriers, and promoting flexibility and initiatives - like the movement possible in the Schengen area. Movement between EU nations contributes to peace and unity, creating a stronger, more interconnected society across national borders. Internal migration is encouraged by the EU. Legal realities should be adapted to accommodate the impact of migration and to emphasise constant reinvention and creativity in managing immigration challenges.

### Equality and Empowerment

In many cases, the problems in society stem from inequality, not from migration. If these problems are tackled at their source (lack of opportunity, long-term insecurity, 'brain drain' loss of people due to emigration etc), it can lead to greater equality and empowerment, for everyone. Understanding one's own culture and privileges from different perspectives is a key step in this process.

### Migrants as Active Contributors

Recognising migrants as active contributors is essential. Their valuable contributions should be acknowledged and celebrated by society. If they are part of society, their participation within it should be recognised.

### Anti-Racism and Anti-Capitalism

Promoting anti-racism and steering away from dependence on other countries' poverty for wealth are fundamental. There should be resource equality; addressing labour shortages through controlled migration are pivotal.

## Blockers and challenges

### Polarisation

Integration in a society must not be taken for granted. Polarisation can and does happen in EU societies. Constant dialogue and adaptation are needed to combat polarisation. Active participation in ongoing dialogue is necessary to counteract societal and communitarian divisions.

### Emigration Challenges

There are also societies where emigration is a challenge, more than immigration. Lack of opportunity and loss of value pose long-term insecurities. Very often it is the younger generation who leave. Addressing these issues is crucial for a more inclusive society.

### EU's Exterior Walls

Despite the will of having an internal unity, the EU still has strong external walls. This emphasises the fear of potential conflicts, polarisation and control of people's movement on the basis of nationality.

## Conclusion

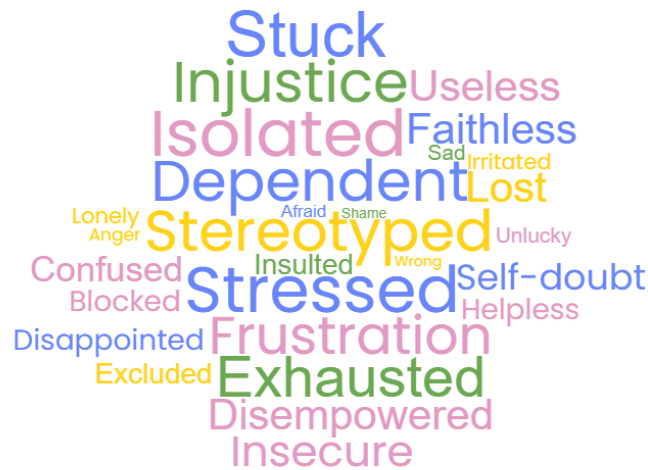
In conclusion, a society shaped by migration is a dynamic tapestry influenced by the acknowledgment of migration's existence, fluid identities, and power dynamics. It's crucial to navigate the complexities, embrace diversity as strength, recognise migrants as active contributors, and strive for equality and empowerment. To foster a constructive society shaped by migration, we need to dispel fear with the EU playing a pivotal role in safeguarding its citizens. However, challenges like polarisation, emigration issues, and external walls within the EU demand continuous dialogue, adaptation, and a commitment to dismantling barriers for a truly interconnected and harmonious society shaped by migration.



# THE CURRENT PICTURE

## 9. Barriers, challenges and needs

### How do barriers make you feel?



The trainers led the participants in the seminar on a reflection on barriers - how barriers make them feel, barriers in relation to youth work and young people, barriers in societies shaped by migration.

For many participants, emotions are at the heart of reactions to barriers. There are a lot of difficult emotions in relation to barriers, a lot of anger, frustration, disempowerment, feeling insulted, sad or alone. It feels quite explosive, with some kind of energy coming from those emotions - either inwardly inside the person, or outward towards others.

It's interesting to note which of these barriers connects more, or less to your reality, to the reality of your projects. We would like to see at which points we can take a step back, to look at things differently, and perhaps make a small change.

We grouped some of the barriers that came up from the discussions:

#### Personal barriers

Personal barriers, which are identified within yourself, something that holds you back. These include elements such as language, knowledge (understanding how something works), lack of initiative or motivation. It can also be something emotional or psychological.

#### Barriers from others

Stereotypes and discrimination by others, or others putting pressure on you, a lack of understanding, competition and a lack of empathy or solidarity.

#### Structural barriers

These include things such as resources and how they are distributed; cultural, that things are done differently; age; family; parents; a polarised society. socio-economic background.

#### System as barriers

Elements such as governments, laws, regulations, educational systems, patriarchy, or no representation within structures.

# Challenges and difficulties of youth work

Looking at youth work in different European countries today, there are many challenges. Here are some of them.

## Not enough money

There is lack of capacity and resources to implement the great ideas. There is competition between NGOs, and elitism, fighting for resources. Youth workers are not paid enough to make a living out of the profession - they also have to pay their rent and support families etc.

## Lack of cooperation cross-sectorially

Not enough cooperation with other services and organisations that provide assistance to refugees; absence of cooperation from families, schools, government (perhaps also power dynamics at play?); refusal of cooperation from parents.

## It's not always needs based

Who pays the bills owns the narrative; there's no flexibility in planning, everything is fixed; projects are dictated by the funders, not built bottom up by the needs of the participants; the format (structure) of youth work doesn't correspond to the needs of young people.

## Mental health of youth workers

It's a hard, challenging, relentless job, often involving trauma or difficult emotional stories; it's difficult to control your emotions in front of the young people; sometimes the work makes you feel helpless, because you feel that you have to save the whole world.

## Lack of representation

There's no place at the table for young people in decision-making.

## The challenging reality of young people these days

Social realities are blocking individual growth; there are many frustrations felt by young people (legal, status etc); discrimination against young people by older people, media etc; copying the behaviour of drill rappers; 'retreating parents', where children have too much responsibility; How to deal with violence & drugs, when they earn €500 for being on the watch for 15 mins, what can youth work do?

## Short-termism

There's no sustainability in projects; lack of consistent attendance for non-formal programme and activities; retention of individuals for a whole process is a challenge; balancing free-time with educational activities can be a challenge; when you offer free activities, you don't know how many people will come or what their needs are.

## Lack of recognition

Youth work is not considered important by many stakeholders; a lack of respect from other actors; teachers don't recognise the role and approach of non-formal education; a lack of understanding from the wider community; social work and youth work are often stereotyped; other people set the scale of 'what is success'?

## Lack of right outreach

youth work is not reaching all young people, and is not diverse enough; communication takes time and resource, and needs to be attractive to that audience; how to reach young people without stalking them?

# Challenges and difficulties of youth work with migrant youth

## Admin and legal framework

Those without status have fewer opportunities, less consideration of their needs, uncertainties about their next steps. There is not enough help in the asylum system for them, and not a clear structure. There is a big difference between asylum seekers and those with permission to stay (two different groups). Young people might not know the youth work organisations exist, or don't recognise they have a need for it. There are too many unessential services that divert the valuable resources (with high level of bureaucracy, admin etc).

## Stereotypes and prejudices

There is a negative migration narrative, especially in the media, as well as racism from many quarters. There is stigmatisation of the muslim community through the media and the politics: because of past terrorist attacks, there is a fear of people and fear of specific locations (where one terrorist event happened). The youth worker, not being a representative of that culture or community can cause distance and lack of connection (white, privileged, youth worker).

## Language / culture

It is hard to build a relationship with a young person without the same language. Some employees might refuse the young person because of the language barriers, or the 'unfamiliar' culture.

## Mental health of youth workers

it's a hard, challenging, relentless job, often involving trauma or difficult emotional stories; it's difficult to control your emotions in front of the young people; sometimes the work makes you feel helpless, because you feel that you have to save the whole world.

## Mental health

Young people sometimes face problems that the parents fail to deal with (because of their own problems). Young people arrive with Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSS) and different psychoses. There is a lack of psychological support for youth workers who deal with young people's trauma.

## Safe space

It takes time to build relationships and trust with young people. It's a challenge to open the space for dialogue; to value the different identities and values of the youngster. You have to intentionally create a safe(r) and brave(r) space to speak about trauma, and that takes time/capacity/resources - it doesn't always happen.

## Lack of resources / Quality of work

Young people have financial challenges, and can often choose a certain path that is not 'legally framed' (eg drugs, criminality, prostitution etc). It's a challenge to develop knowledge and understanding about the context we are working in, and the best ways to approach and get along with different culture and groups. The social realities need to be recognised, and they sometimes aren't. On the other hand, our own previous knowledge and experiences aren't always taken into account - sometimes we are 'othered' by colleagues. It takes time and resources to define individual needs. Avoiding an 'assistentialist' approach. There is a lack of preparation to deal with this target group by other support services.

# Overview of challenges in youth work with migrants

What do participants see and feel on a daily basis, in their youth work projects and activities with migrants? What challenges are there that need to be faced and dealt with? Here are a selection of them:



# 10. EU Youth Programmes

## European programmes supporting youth work shaped by migration

The Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes provide grant funding to do educational and social community projects. They have specific strands of funding for the youth field (as well as for schools, universities, vocational training, sport etc).

Some projects are international, working together with partner organisations from other countries, where young people get to travel abroad. Others are in-country, where young people can travel to another city or region in their own country to have an educational experience. Others are local, where groups of young people can work on something that they are passionate about to make a change in their community.

Some projects are short term (just a week or two), others are long term (up to one year abroad volunteering, for example).

## The different funded project formats

The European Programmes for youth can fund different types of projects. There are National Agencies in each country that help promote the Programmes, and process the grant funding. **Erasmus+** supports these options for the youth field:

### Professional development

Professional development of youth leaders (age 18+ including volunteers). Improve skills and competences through training, seminars, study visits, networking, community building. Project duration 3-24 months. Organise your own, or participate in other people's, listed on the [SALTO-YOUTH - European Training Calendar](#).

Known as: KA1 Youth Workers mobility

### Go abroad with a group of young people

Group exchanges for young people to be together, discussions, activities, workshops around a chosen topic. 5-21 days. Age 13-30, plus youth leaders age 18+.

Known as: KA1 Youth Exchanges

### Local Action projects

Group dialogue and discussion to make change on the local level – civic action and youth activism in parallel with other youth groups making a change in their community in other countries. Age 13-30. Duration 3-24 months.

Known as: KA1 Youth Participation projects

### Connect online with young people in other countries

Virtual exchanges – no physical mobility, online intercultural discussions and interaction with other young people. Duration 36 months.

Known as: KA1 Virtual Exchanges in Higher Education and youth

### Strategic long term networking projects

Capacity building, policy dialogue, international collaboration projects, on a topic that can help support youth work in Europe. Has outputs that can be used practically by others. Duration: 12, 24, 36 months.

Known as: KA2 Capacity building in Youth



Erasmus+ isn't the only European Programme that funds youth projects. The European Solidarity Corps funds volunteering projects for age 18+. The projects can be national or international, short term or long term, in groups or for individuals. It also funds local Solidarity projects for groups of young people to make a difference in their community. And there are other funding streams for Humanitarian Aid in case of crises and for Volunteering Teams in High Priority Areas.



The **European Solidarity Corps** helps young people grow, learn and travel through volunteering, supporting communities round Europe. There is grant funding for these kinds of projects:

### Individuals can volunteer

Individuals can volunteer, helping with social/community activity in another community. They travel elsewhere, are hosted by an organisation, and help deliver the activities of that organisation, having an impact on that other community. They receive a grant towards their accommodation, travel and subsistence costs. It can be short term (2 weeks to 2 months) or long term (2 - 12 months). It can be abroad in another country, or it can be another town in their own country.

### Groups of young people volunteer together

Groups of young people volunteer together, as a team. They work together on a shared project. This is 2 weeks - 2 months, 10-40 participants. It can be in another town in their country, or abroad in another country. They receive a grant towards their accommodation, travel and subsistence costs.

### Young people with ideas

Young people with a good idea, their own solidarity initiative can run their own project in their home country. At least 5 young people, between 2-12 months, full time or part-time. up to €500 per month towards the costs of developing / delivering / following up a project. Costs of a mentor/coach can be covered too.

### Volunteering teams in high-priority area

Volunteering teams in high-priority areas, following EU thematic priorities defined each year. And Humanitarian Aid Volunteering, usually related to disaster situations (earthquakes, war etc).

## Opportunities in EU Youth Programmes for asylum seekers and refugee participants

*During the seminar, the National Agencies gave some advice and insights for using European Programme funding when working specifically with young people with migrant background.*

Projects funded by these European Programmes usually involve travelling abroad, although some don't. If someone is legally registered, they can participate in any of the projects. If the young people are in a different legal position, or don't have their papers, or can't travel for other reasons (caring duties or disability, for example) then consider connecting them to incoming projects. Consider funding for national projects for your group of young people, or hosting an international group in your town. These types of projects still have a lot of potential. Young people can benefit from developing a project around their own needs and interests, developing participation skills, understanding more about their local opportunities, feeling the 'host' in a situation, enjoying the grant-funded activities, fun and learning content of the project etc. Here are some EU Youth Programme opportunities you could consider for incoming projects:

### Volunteer in your own country

Individual or team, short term or long term. This means the organisation applies, as part of the European Solidarity corps, to support the young person to have an experience in another town or region of the same country. They can do it on their own, or together in a team. It can be from 2 weeks+.

### Host a youth exchange (Erasmus+ KA1)

This is where your group of young people host a group from another country around a common theme / interest (e.g. music, sport, environment etc).

### Do local initiative projects

Try **Solidarity Projects**: this is where young people run their own project, around their own interests and initiative. They don't need to travel. It can be done in several weekly sessions, and the cost of a coach can be part of the grant.

### Host a volunteer through the Solidarity Corps

A young person from another country volunteers with you to support your organisation in the activities that you do with the community, while developing their own individual competences. To host a volunteer, you need to find a Coordinating Organisation from your country that already has a Quality Label, and then you could have that incoming volunteering project through them.

### Attend events, training or seminars

Attend national or international **training courses**, seminars, partnership-building opportunities run by your **National Agency**.

### Remember the Lump sums for inclusion support

Get extra money for your projects. In Volunteering projects, for example, you can get more money for better/closer mentoring of the young people.

### 'Funding of Real costs' extra grant

For costs directly linked to the needs of the participants and their accompanying persons.



## To be aware of...

- The grants from European Programmes are co-funding. They are not supposed to cover all the costs.
- Each country has a National Agency that promotes the programmes, and provides step-by-step onboarding path for newcomers.
- National Agency staff are human, please remember that you can approach them through email, phone or even have a chat over coffee - although this varies from country to country.
- Short term project experiences, or smaller local projects, can help lead to other opportunities. Understanding the learning potential and experiences available through the grant-funded opportunities can often lead to return participation in EU Youth Programmes.
- There are some funding rules in some EU countries about receiving grants combined with other state funding. It is worth checking about any limits in place.
- There are [training opportunities](#) to attend to learn more about how to create an international project, what is expected for a good quality application, how the funding works etc. This ranges from short online webinars, to information days, to weeks away in another country, with the accommodation and travel costs covered. If you are looking to build partnerships with other organisations from other countries, the residential activities are particularly beneficial for this. Contact your National Agency for more information.
- The Programmes change every year a little bit, so it's good to keep up with changes. Remember that if your project is funded in 2024, then it's the Programme Guide for 2024 that you have to follow for your project (application, grant funding, reporting etc).
- Be aware that for some young people, leaving their own private accommodation for a long time can cause challenges when they return. Think about how much time away is beneficial for them, and any impact on their local situation when they return.

## Quality Mobility Projects

If you are starting an international project for the first time, have a look at this [Quality Mobility website](#). It gives you step by step tips on how to build a quality project, and things to be aware of. If you're not sure how to do something in your project, you can search for the topic and see many resources, ideas and suggestions that is built from the experience of others.

[Click here for the Quality-Mobility Web App](#)

## SALTO ID Roadmap

European Programmes provide grant funding for many opportunities. These opportunities should be available for all young people in Programme countries. But unfortunately they aren't (yet). The organisations involved in delivering the programme have been working on the needs and barriers of people to get involved in the European Youth Programmes. Here's a summary of the barriers that should be reduced to allow more and different young people to get involved. It comes from a larger document, called the [ID Roadmap](#), that looks at how to implement the European Inclusion strategy for Erasmus+ in a practical way.

# 11. Study visits

Case Study projects can bring inspiration, and show the reality of organisations working today. Including connection to the local community adds understanding and context to an international project, as well as wider impact. Here are two example projects from Vienna, one working with girls & women, the other working with young men, all with migration background.

## Bandari

Bandari means ‘safe haven’. It’s a physical meeting place in Vienna, a community, for young boys\* and men\* with migration background aged between 15 and 25. They can choose to just ‘be’ there, to play table-football, to use the internet, to eat a sandwich or to have a coffee. Young people don’t get asked questions. When they want to connect they can. When they decide to talk, they can.

### Target group

Boys\* and young men\* with a history of asylum and migration aged between 15 and 25. No restrictions according to residence status. Services are provided in English, German, Arabic, Kurdish.

### Migrant worker role models

The ones leading this work at Bandari have migration history themselves. They understand what the young men have been through. It makes it easier for the young people to open up and engage, and then pursue what they want to do. There is a challenge though - it’s not possible to cover all languages and cultures. For example: the Afghan group come for sports and activities, but they don’t join the workshops - maybe because there isn’t an Afghan youth worker?

### Long-term support?

One of the challenges for Bandari is sustainability. There is a real need for this programme. But funding is dependent on government policy, which might change after the elections in October 2024. Workers have to spend time on core funding, which takes them away from the advice and workshop role.



“In this role, you have to think how to support people. You have to build a bridge, to find step by step how to support them. If they need specialised support, they will be referred. The staff here are not experts in all topics.” **Participant**

### What we do

Bandari offers advice, workshops and discussions, combining joint activities in the fields of sport, art and culture with reflection. If the young people have a problem, Bandari can help them. The workshops are related to masculinity, mental health, violence, insults to their dignity etc. The workshops are delivered to groups of young men, organised by language. There is a funded translator that helps the workshops be bilingual. The workshops give them tools to make them feel better and to handle situations better. Bandari uses these different formats to promote social interaction and create low-threshold access to information about health, Violence, the body, relationships and sexuality.

## \*Peppa



### Target group

The \*peppa girls' centre offers a safe space for girls and young women (girls, transgirls and non-binary persons). The target group is very diverse but most of the girls have a migration or flight background. Most of the girls' mother tongues are either Turkish, Arabic or Afghan. Many of the girls are in NEET (Not in education, employment or training) situations and looking for new perspectives.

The staff are all women or identify as women.

### What \*peppa offers

\*peppa supports girls and young women in their participation in society and contributes to promoting self-determination and equal opportunities. They promote mental and physical wellbeing, equal opportunities and participation in society. \*peppa supports the development of a positive gender and cultural identity, an appreciation of various cultures, nationalities and life projects and an understanding of social structural possibilities and boundaries. \*peppa encourages and strengthens self-determination and emancipation; creative potential and self-reflexivity as well as autonomy and participation. It offers a space to do homework, prepare for presentations and to use WiFi. Girls and young women with concerns will find a hearing and support at \*peppa. There are dance and creative workshops, self-defense classes, cooking together and much more.

### Key elements of the \*peppa project

The topics/issues addressed are often related to identity, sexuality and education.

There are several key elements to be named in the project:

- The importance of female role models is fundamental to the project. This may be the staff or external experts or guests (e.g. students from the «Technische Universität Wien» who give tuition in mathematics)
- Counselling function: \*peppa often takes on the bridging role to other entities such as schools, specialised organisations and authorities (e.g. child protection services). They refer the girls onwards to other services.
- \*peppa tries to open the perspective on different ways of living together. Many discussions with the girls are about children's/women's/human rights (e.g. that violence is not ok in families or relationships)
- Participation of the girls is key: the girls coming to \*peppa are actively involved in expressing their needs in deciding which topics should be addressed. The rules of the centre have been defined together with a group of 'regulars' during a sort of General Assembly meeting and are presented to newcomers once they arrive.

### International volunteering

The \*peppa Girls' Centre is participating in the European Solidarity Corps as a host project.



**A brighter future -  
we need more of...**



## 12. Adapting youth work in a society shaped by migration

*Many European countries are shaped by migration. Different sectors and actors have a responsibility to support that to be a more positive thing. Here are some proposals of how youth work could be adapted to better support communities shaped by migration.*

### Reach out

People with a migration background bring things to the table. By reaching out within different communities, different strengths, languages and experiences can be brought into youth work. Increasing recognition of the value of youth work and non-formal education in those communities will help with accepting involvement. People from the same community can act as role models. They can be hired as part of your organisation, to help deliver the projects and activities, based on their experience and expertise; not as a 'favour', but rather a professional offer. There should be programmes to train different people to become youth and social workers, not as volunteering, but as paid employment.

### Increase representation

Migrant youth should have representation in the staff of organisations, in the youth workers, in the policy makers team. Decisions should be made with the needs of their community in mind, more relevant to their every day reality. The Programmes that are delivered, or the approach within them, should be adapted to a different perspective. Only by owning the process, and co-creating it together, can those perspectives and needs be fully represented throughout.

### Work with diversity

Young people should be treated as individuals, not as a representative of a community or culture. Their needs will differ and vary according to their own situation and experiences.

### Increase knowledge

First and foremost, many people in the host society need to learn what migration is, and how it affects people. Knowledge and understanding of the reality of people's stories is vital, youth workers should be able to detect the experiences of people. Knowledge of the migration chain makes a difference too - migrants that come from similar places, or have similar experiences have similar push factors and similar needs. Communities of migrants often share knowledge between themselves, so use that communication system as a bonus.



"Youth workers should have an international history" **Participant**

Different experts from different sectors have alternative ways of seeing society, they look through a different lens. There should be a connection between specific specialists who know how to work with different groups of young people. Roles such as psychologists, social workers, employment office etc should be heard, and in turn they also need to understand the diversity of needs of different migrant youth.

Youth work should be open for a wider spectrum of people, languages and cultures. Diversity is the keyword for the youth work team; diversity of methods, diversity of approaches, diversity of experiences. Adapting methods and being open to innovation and new ways of working is vital. Having a diversity of languages in the team, a diversity of experiences that allows them to relate to more and different young people, will ensure a wider reach.

## Recognise acquired competence

Very often youth work projects aim for new competences, new experiences. However, many newly arrived migrants already have a lot of experience and learning, it just needs the right support and safe space for reflection and to be recognised - by the individual, and by others. Their biography and the challenges already faced are something to be appreciated, learned from, and built on. From there, new knowledge for their new situation can start to be built.

## Widen the curriculum

Youth work with migrants is often limited to language courses, legal training and social orientation. There are often not enough resources or capacity to do much more than that, even if the needs show that more and different topics should be covered. Youth workers would like to do more. If they could focus less of their time on administration and grant processes, they could spend more on needs-based pedagogical approaches.

## Lower the threshold

In some countries, it's not possible to provide youth work to young people unless they speak the national language. Access to the opportunities is limited, if language is limited. Youth work should be open to more communities of young people (see 'Reach out' and 'Representation').



## Connect to the local host community

A connection should be made between the needs of migrant youth and the needs of young people from the local community. A dialogue should be built, and projects that combine the needs, to allow for a mix of young people inside, who all identify with the objectives and want to work together for the aim. Don't start from the point: "we know what's good for them", but rather "let's talk, what shared needs are there?". Connect the need of the community with the need of migrant young people.

## Meet young people where they are

Have a mutual respectful approach, not a hierarchical or patronising one. Build positive relationships to increase trust, and respect difference and experience.



# 13. Some indicators for good projects with migrant youth

These best practices are based on ideas and experiences gathered from participants involved in youth work with young people from migration backgrounds. The exercise focused on determining the criteria for the success of a youth project and identifying the indicators that demonstrate this.

## Young people have a stake in the process

Success involves integrating young people's contribution at different levels, giving them the tools to make a meaningful contribution to the decision-making processes. For more info, see Hart's ladder of participation

## Motivation to participate

Motivation is a key indicator, that reflects young people's willingness, desire and enthusiasm to take part in the project.

## Meaningful participation

True success is achieved when young people do not simply participate, but actively help to shape and own the project. They own the space.

## Diverse group

The inclusivity and the diversity of the participant group are essential to contribute to a more enriching and representative project

## Respond to the direct needs of young people

The topic, activities and methods must relate to the interests and needs of young people: aligning the project with the preferences and requirements of the target audience guarantees its relevance and impact.

## Young people come back to do it again

Repeat participation means they had a positive experience and an environment that fosters the ambition to continue and be involved more.

## Awards and recognition

External validation can signify acknowledgment and appreciation for the project's achievements.

## Transferable outcomes

Success extends beyond the immediate project, with results that can be applied and adapted in different contexts.

## Young people are happy at the end

The satisfaction and happiness of the young participants is a subjective but crucial measure of success.

## Reduced dependency, Increased autonomy

Success is evident when participants demonstrate greater autonomy, independence and the ability to make informed decisions by themselves.

## Community impact

The project needs to extend beyond participants, to have a positive impact on the wider community as a whole, demonstrating its importance, value and sustainability.

## Participants become multipliers

Success is indicated when participants not only receive individual benefits, but also become advocates and disseminators of the project's content, approach and values. They live the learning.

## Something changed - impact

Success is marked by tangible, positive changes, demonstrating the project's significant impact on the lives of participants and the community.

## Learning and development of competences

Success is measured by the acquisition of new skills and knowledge among the youth, contributing to their personal and professional growth.

## Sufficient number of active participants

Success is marked by a high level of active participation, demonstrating it responds to the need and interest of young people.

## Outcomes, outputs are produced

Tangible results and deliverables demonstrate the effectiveness of the project in achieving its objectives.

## Get funding

Financial support shows recognition from funders of the quality. It helps sustain and develop the project. It enables more to be done, with and for more young people.

## Sustainable

Longevity and continuity are the key to success, indicating the ability of the project to endure and remain relevant over an extended period.

## Talking with - representation of the target group

Dialogue and representation ensure that the youth are actively involved and their voices are heard and acted upon.

# 14. Cheat sheet – Tips to overcome current challenges

Several challenges were brainstormed by participants. A self-directed process then led to some first ideas of how the challenges can be responded to. There are three different levels:

- **‘Tips/advice’**, giving some individual possibilities that could be replicated in many places. to help with some aspects of the challenge.
- The **‘Solutions’** are larger scale options that, if delivered, would make more of an impact in solving the problem.
- The **‘Recommendations’** are systemic changes that take more resource and would be instrumental in improving the difficulties listed.



Listed here are some first thoughts that came from just one session in a seminar. This list can be taken further and built on more in many different ways in the future. Each of these challenges can have much wider description and implication, and there are many other good practices and ideas that can help to deal with them.

We are sure you also have thoughts on these. When you read the title of the challenge, can you think of other elements related to it, to describe it? And when you read these first ideas for what to do, can you think of more? What other tips, solutions and recommendations would you have for each topic?

There are 8 different topics explored here:

|   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| The Challenging Reality of Young People | Mental Health of youth workers  |
| Language                                | Administration                  |
| Recognition - lack of representation    | Needs & Interest-Based Projects |
| Legal Frameworks (Law)                  | Safer Space                     |

**Problem/  
challenge/difficulty**

**The Challenging  
Reality of Young  
People**

Young people face a lot of challenges. Here are some:

- Short-termism
- Unpredictability
- Not enough money
- Discrimination
- Classism
- Racism
- Poverty
- Lack of representation
- Prejudgment
- Solutions aren't tailor-made
- Lack of support (community, parents)
- Low confidence
- Difficult adjustment to a new community
- Others don't understand
- Not able to tackle every subject...etc
- Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach.

**Tips/advice**

- Explore **diverse funding sources**, including local, regional, national, and international grants, along with company sponsorship aligned with ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) goals.
- Acknowledge and **recognise the talents** and experiences of each individual young person, fostering an environment that values diversity.
- Collaborate** with other actors and organisations to enhance support systems for young people.
- Encourage **reflection on personal stereotypes and prejudices** among youth workers to foster a more inclusive environment.
- Provide support and empowerment** to discriminated young people, promoting their resilience and self-esteem.
- Empower young people by supporting their ability to **voice their opinions and concerns**, and for those to be acted on by decision-makers.
- Offer young people **chances and opportunities** to showcase their abilities and potential.
- Be heard!** Engage in **public relations campaigns** led by young people; encourage **demonstrations** to raise awareness and advocate for change.
- Establish **youth councils** that mirror decision-making institutions, providing a direct channel for young people's input.

**Solution**

- Develop a **public relations campaign** explaining how and why support for young people is crucial to the well-being of society.
- Launch an **anti-discrimination campaign** to combat prejudice and stereotypes, promoting inclusivity.
- Position **youth workers as bridges** connecting young people to psychotherapists and other necessary support services.

**Recommendation**

- Advocate for EU and government-funded projects with a **minimum duration of five years** to allow for proper evaluation. Acknowledge that outcomes and impact may take time to manifest.
- Actively work to **build bridges and break down walls** that contribute to the challenges faced by young people. Focus on helping youth build bridges to the local community, fostering integration and mutual understanding.
- Raise awareness** about classism, poverty, prejudice, racism, and discrimination in society.

**Problem/challenge/difficulty**

**Mental Health of youth workers**

Youth work isn't a profession to get rich. There are many challenges, difficulties and barriers for those who want to do the support, projects and activities with migrant youth. It can be a traumatic and stressful role.

Care and support is needed to look after youth workers too.

**Tips/advice**

Encourage youth workers to **share their own emotions** with colleagues or a trusted person, fostering a supportive environment.

Establish fixed, regular **meetings with supervision** to provide a structured space for support and reflection.

Incorporate **breath exercises** into daily routines to promote mindfulness and stress relief.

**Solution**

Create a **sensory room** designed for both youth and youth workers to offer a therapeutic space.

Implement **group supervision** sessions around shared needs, allowing youth workers facing common challenges to share experiences and support each other.

Offer **individual supervision** for more personalised support and guidance. One-on-one supervision can help with processing challenging situations.

Establish a health department or designate someone **responsible** for the mental health of the youth work team.

Conduct **mental health training** specifically tailored for youth workers to equip them with coping strategies and stress management techniques.

Develop **explicit resources** focusing on mental health for youth workers, offering practical guidance and support.

**Recommendation**

Integrate psychological courses into youth work **programmes in universities** to prepare future youth workers to manage their mental health and wellbeing.

Explore and conduct **more research in mental health for youth workers**, providing evidence-based insights and recommendations.

**Problem/challenge/difficulty**

**Recognition - lack of representation**

**1. Terminology confusion:**

Public confusion and misunderstanding between the terms immigrant, refugee, and diaspora. The mix-up of these terms by the public, politicians, and media contributes to misinformation, stereotypes and prejudices.

**2. Stereotypes and lack of personal contact:**

Stereotypes and preconceived notions are a barrier to integration due to a lack of personal contact between local people and migrants. The absence of personal connections and the perpetuation of stereotypes make it difficult to bridge understanding and acceptance.

**Tips/advice**

**Media literacy and clear communication:** Clarify and differentiate terms through media work to enhance public understanding.

**Personal contact with politicians:** Encourage personal interactions between community members and politicians to foster understanding.

**Use case studies:** Utilise experiences to provide real stories and faces, making the situation relatable to different audiences.

**Organise community contact:** Facilitate interactions between local communities and migrants through initiatives like living libraries or potluck dinners.

**Solution**

**Raise local knowledge:** Increase awareness and understanding among local people about the realities of immigration and refugees - as individuals, not representatives of cultures or countries.

**Humanise through stories:** Use case studies and individual stories to humanise the experiences of migrants, allowing locals to relate on a personal level.

**Media sensitisation:** Conduct more media work to sensitise the public and evoke empathy towards the challenges faced by migrants.

**Recommendation**

**Enhance local knowledge:** Implement initiatives to improve knowledge and understanding in the local community regarding immigration and refugees.

**Community connection:** Strengthen links between the local and the migrant communities, fostering a sense of shared understanding and empathy.

**Politician involvement:** Systemise personal contact between politicians and young people, ensuring their voices are heard and needs represented, putting a human face on the issues faced by migrants.

**Problem/challenge/difficulty**

**Needs- and interest-based projects**

- 1. Lack of coordination and mismatch:** There are coordination issues and a misalignment between migrants and their specific needs in projects. Projects must include migrants from the beginning to hear their needs, and projects then tailored to address them.
- 2. Difficulty in outreach:** Some young people are hard to reach, making it challenging to engage with the intended target group. The difficulty in reaching the targeted youngsters may come from communication barriers or inadequate outreach strategies.
- 3. Undervaluation of youth work:** Youth work is not perceived as important in both the host and migrant societies. The undervaluation of youth work complicates efforts to establish and sustain meaningful projects.

**Tips/advice**

**Success stories and role models from the community:**

Contact key figures in the community who are respected, acting as role models or well-connected individuals.

**Hire paid community members for outreach:**

Employ individuals from the community part-time so that youth work is better understood by young people and the wider migrant community. Their linguistic and cultural skills are lacking but are essential for youth work.

**Utilise effective communication channels:**

Use appropriate channels to reach the target group, including less traditional forms of promotion, social media, and online platforms where young people are active.

**Solution**

**Inclusive programme preparation:**

Include young people and key community figures in the programme preparation process, ensuring their needs, motivations, and voices are integral to the project. (and engage them in the project : it's their baby).

**Community understanding through involvement:**

Gain a deeper understanding of services provided for specific communities by involving them in the creation process.

**Highlight Success Stories:**

Showcase success stories, featuring examples from the specific communities to inspire and engage others.

**Recommendation**

**Showcase outcomes to more people:** Show the impact of youth work to different actors in the migrant and local communities for more recognition.

**Ambassador Roles:** Systemise the development of individuals from the community sharing their personal stories, allowing new and different audiences to relate and envision their own potential success. Encourage the 'that could be me!' factor.

**Persistence and Adaptation:**

Persist in efforts to overcome challenges and adapt strategies to better meet the needs of the target audience.

**Problem/challenge/difficulty**

**Language**

- 1. Language and cultural barriers** pose difficulties for effective communication between minority communities and local inhabitants.
- 2. Forced Language learning:** Individuals should not be forced to learn a language against their will, neither minority communities or locals. Forced language learning by migrants or locals is wrong. Non-formal learning is voluntary, self-directed and based around needs, interest and motivations of the learner.
- 3. Insufficient language teachers** willing to teach in a practical and experiential manner for both locals and foreigners.
- 4. Communication barriers in public institutions:** Public institutions in the new host society are expected to take care of individuals, but communication becomes a significant barrier.

**Tips/advice**

Understand the **needs and motivations** of individuals, finding common ground for successful communication.

Include the target audience from the very beginning of the project. Allow their **needs and interests** to be expressed at many stages as the project develops.

**Utilise language apps** that assist in translation and language learning to overcome communication challenges.

**Solution**

Establish an **international cooperation of language teachers**, conducting regular online workshops using interactive and fun methodology for those interested in language learning.

Encourage **non-formal communication groups** involving both locals and foreigners, fostering experiential, interactive, and fun language learning.

Support different methods and **community building tools/practices** that facilitate communication between people speaking different languages. Think wider to connect to different parts of the community.

**Recommendation**

**Redesign the entire educational system** to promote positive language learning experiences.

Offer **English language teaching** for all individuals involved in working with the migrant community, creating a common ground for communication.

Normalise the use of **communication apps** for phones to facilitate multilingual communication.

Make it **obligatory for all public institutions** to provide multilingual services, ensuring accessibility.

**Multilingual environment:** Ensure that all city services, including libraries, theatres, bookstores, etc., have at least one worker proficient in more than one language.

**Problem/challenge/difficulty**

**Administration**

- 1. **Administrative workload**, funding challenges, and the pressure to prove project success, often overshadow meaningful pedagogical work.
- 2. **Insufficient institutions** or centers dedicated to providing support for the migrant community.
- 3. **Understaffed organisations** face time & resource limitations, leading to pressure to make projects successful.
- 4. **Balancing administrative tasks with pedagogical tasks**, and other human relation challenges as well as the need to care for individuals.

**Tips/advice**

- Create a **local area map** to understand which agencies provide support and services for migrants.
- Establish an online space for **peer support between workers** in organisations, fostering knowledge-sharing.
- Recognise self-applied pressure:** Identify areas of work with leeway to reduce workload, allowing for more flexible delivery times.

**Solution**

Create **integrated spaces** where services for migrants are provided under one roof, improving communication and streamlining pathways for young individuals.

**Recommendation**

- Cultivate trust in youth workers and organisations** working with migrants, recognising their expertise and commitment.
- Grant funding bodies to accept **diverse reporting methods** beyond numerical metrics, including qualitative reporting and case studies.
- Treat youth as a **distinct ministerial priority**: youth should be connected to, but ringfenced from, other areas like mental health or formal education.
- Consolidate **different types of service provision (including youth work and social care) in one building** to enhance collaboration and resource sharing.
- Advocate for **longer-term unconditional funding**, providing flexibility for organisations to address diverse needs without restrictive conditions.



**Problem/challenge/difficulty**

**Legal Frameworks**

- 1. Insufficient resources**, lack of understanding of backgrounds, and limited willingness to help due to language and cultural differences.
- 2. Not enough regulation from the government** to address the legal needs of youth, contributing to gaps in support.
- 3. Youth councils do not work effectively**, potentially due to various factors.

**Tips/advice**

Provide **clear and easily accessible information** on where to get advice and support regarding legal status.

**Solution**

Develop the needs and topics of youth work with **participation of representatives from the entire society**, ensuring inclusivity of background, history, culture, etc.

**Encourage or enforce participation in democracy** to ensure active engagement in addressing legal issues.

**Recommendation**

**Establish strong youth councils in every municipality** to enhance representation and effectiveness.

Implement youth work as a **governmental policy with funding** allocated from the government.

Execute youth work through **collaboration between governmental and nonprofit organisations** for a comprehensive and adaptative approach.

Organise youth workers into professional organisations, such as **lobby groups or unions**, to strengthen their voice and influence government policies.

**Problem/challenge/  
difficulty**

**Safer Space**

Many young people from migrant backgrounds have suffered traumatic experiences. The mental health of the young people, and the professionals and volunteers that work with them, is paramount. Providing a safer space for young individuals involves various challenges, and addressing them requires a thoughtful approach.

**Tips/advice**

Ensure your **actions align with the values you communicate**, creating consistency in the service provided.

**Obtain funding** to establish, staff, and appropriately furnish a safer space.

**Enhance safety for trauma sharing:** Foster a safe environment for drawing out and sharing traumatic experiences, encouraging individuals to express themselves bravely.

Learn and implement methods to **counter stereotypes** within the safer space.

**Solution**

Ensure that information about the safer space is **easily accessible** to all involved parties.

Establish the safer space as a **co-owned and co-organised** entity involving everyone participating in it.

Integrate the concept of a safer space as a **horizontal priority in every project**, emphasising its importance consistently.

**Amplify youth voices:** Allow young people to voice their concerns, needs, and ideas, giving them a say in the organisation and operation of the safer space.

**Empower young leaders:** Provide a platform for young people to take a leadership role in shaping the safer space according to their needs.

**Recommendation**

Research best practices: Conduct research on various ways to establish a safer space, providing youth workers with **information on effective approaches**.

Conduct **user consultations** to understand diverse realities and approaches, ensuring that the safer space meets the unique needs of the individuals it serves.

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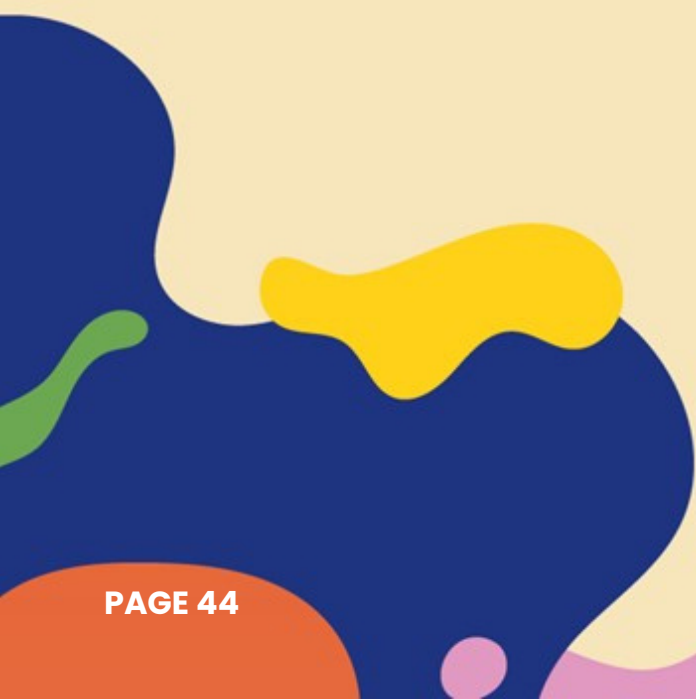


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# Migration shaping youth work

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