



Cofinanziato dal  
programma Erasmus+  
dell'Unione europea



# diaLOG IN YOUTH WORK

## SUMMARY OF LOCAL RECOMMENDATIONS



**INSIGHT\_EPD**  
TAILORED LEARNING  
CREATIVITY SPACES



**cesie**  
the world is only one creature

duepunti

**giosef**  
giovani senza frontiere



**IDARE**  
for sustainable development



**apice**

Agenzia di Promozione Integrata  
per i Cittadini in Europa

**giosef**  
enna



Educare ai diritti umani



**C:E:T**  
Platform  
ITALIA



[www.giosef.it/dialog-in-youth-work](http://www.giosef.it/dialog-in-youth-work)



Youth work has been practiced in Italy for decades now, but its institutional definition suffers from a vacuum that prevents the entire sector and the professionals from obtaining that social, economical and political recognition that would allow the establishment of a guaranteed standard of quality, a clear professionalising course and an implementation strategy inserted with full rights in the frame of youth policies in Italy.

Similarly, non formal education, even though is widespread and well-known in connection with the methodologies used in the field of youth work, it isn't officially recognised as an educational methodology within the formal education system, it doesn't exist in Italy a systematic observation of the impact of non-formal education in the educational process of young people and that happening out of schools, sustained by the ERASMUS+ programme. A lot needs to be done in Italy in the application of the recommendation of the European Council of December 20th 2012 (2012/C 398/01), regarding the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

In such context the Ka3 Project Dialog IN Youth Work has been developed, to sustain the active involvement of networks within civil society and in the implementation of policies related with political, economical and social recognition of Youth Work, using the tool of dialogue between young people, youth workers and policy makers.

15 Italian organisations from 7 regions (Calabria, Campania, Lazio, Piemonte, Puglia, Sicilia e Toscana), 9 experts and 8 institutional bodies took part in the project.

210 people: young people, youth workers and decision makers, took part in the local dialogues, which happened between June 2021 and February 2022.

Following the 3rd European convention on youth work, which took place in December 2020, it was decided to adopt the final declaration of the convention as a blueprint for the local dialogues for the creation of the national recommendation, together with the 7 macro themes that were defined during the meeting.

The following recommendations are the result of such a journey.



# MACRO-THEMES



1

Local Offer  
(Community of Practice)  
and Financing of  
activities and  
organisations

2

Quality  
in  
Youth Work

3

Beyond  
the  
Community  
of Practice

4

Recognition  
(individual, social,  
political, economical  
and institutional level)

5

Innovations  
and  
Rising Challenges  
in Youth Work

6

Youth Work  
and  
Youth Policies

7

Developing  
Strategies  
for Youth Work



THEMES	RECOMMENDATIONS
1, 3, 4, 6, 7	Creating spaces to bring back life in unutilised spaces through youth work activities and active participation and artistic-cultural-sport expression of young people.
1, 3, 4, 6, 7	Valuing existing spaces like Youth Centres, recognising their potential and their value as resource centres for youth policies and focal points for networking through long-term entrusting, especially in rural and peripheral contexts.
1,5	Communicating and promoting the practice of Youth Work and its activities, in their local, national and international dimension.
1, 5, 7	<p>Permanently financing youth work, to overcome the project-based nature of work, thus ensuring the continuity of educational programmes and the valorisation of project making and actions of the european programmes "ERASMUS +" and European Solidarity Corps.</p> <p><i>A better economic sustainability would favor the professionalization of youth workers and of third sector bodies and it would allow strategic thinking of action and impact on the long term.</i></p>
2	Monitoring with adequate and transparent methodologies the organisations that receive fundings for Youth Work activities



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THEMES	RECOMMENDATIONS
2	<p>Recognising the peculiarity of Youth Work as a professional and growing dimension, both social and collective.</p> <p>The recognition of youth work could be based on exchanges, studies and analysis of the processes and tools (legislatory and others) adopted in other regions and countries of European Union, in a perspective of synergy and cooperation.</p>
2	<p>Promoting local initiatives and the professionalisation of the organisations through educational interventions.</p>
2,4	<p>Recognising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-youth workers in their educational role</li> <li>-non formal education</li> <li>-the competences developed through non formal and informal learning processes</li> <li>-the educational dimension of mobility for learning promoted through european programs.</li> </ul>
2,5	<p>Providing professional education and continuous updating for youth workers.</p>
3	<p>Strengthening logistical and communicational connections, infrastructures and spaces of aggregation in order to allow young people to stay, come back or move for the first time in rural and internal areas.</p>



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THEMES	RECOMMENDATIONS
3	Incrementing dialogue and connection between communities of youth workers and public institutions. Better application of private-public subsidiarity that would pass through municipalities and directly involve youth communities, informal groups and young people, also in non aggregated forms.
3	Facilitating the connection and cooperation with other educational bodies - formal, non formal and informal - for the creation of an educational community truly concerned about the needs that constantly arise at every level.
3	Developing and nurturing the co-programming and co-designing between third sector bodies and youth workers for the participation to decision making processes in local development.
3,4	Establishing an institutional figure of youth worker in a ministerial register that would be available for municipalities, starting from the smaller ones and from their unions, through transparent and meritocratic selection processes, by also valuing experiences of non formal education and the Youth Passes during the recruiting stage.
4	Establishing unified working and socio.economic protections for youth workers at national and European level, together with a more structured definition.



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THEMES	RECOMMENDATIONS
4	Guaranteeing the role of youth workers as trainers and facilitators for young people.
4,5	<p>Promoting the exchange of good practices, team building and recognition of soft skills, with the aim of institutional recognition through “Il Patentino” of youth workers, with a dedicated certificate of competences.</p> <p>Promoting peer learning and discussion connected with a local analysis comprehensive of its opportunities, in order to formulate proposals that are not only useful but also feasible.</p> <p>Listening and knowing local realities to activate grassroots processes, involving local young people and the whole community.</p>
5	Guaranteeing the right conditions for the community of youth workers to be inclusive, to be able to simplify practices, languages and tools in order to make the career accessible.
5	Implementing welcoming and engaging policies for young people who are not involved in organisations or in other structures with particular attention to internal areas susceptible to depopulation and (but not exclusively) school dropouts.



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THEMES	RECOMMENDATIONS
6	Boosting and strengthening youth policies at the administrative level.
6	<p>Identifying young people as active and transversal subjects adopting an intersectoral lens that could be provided by youth work.</p> <p><i>Overcoming the tendency of youth policy to consider and talk about young people either as a “problem” to solve or as subjects to consider solely in relation to work.</i></p>
6	<p>Fostering the intergenerational dialogue that would allow young people to have a decision making role in the spaces where leisure activities take place, such as circles.</p> <p>Going out from the dichotomy between municipalities-organisations for what concern the work and networking of young people to widen the network to different stakeholders (young people included)</p>
7	Promoting the creation at local level of a Registry for Popular Participation, an Organisations’ Registry and a Youth Workers Registry.
7	Recognising spaces for informal learning.
7	Encouraging a system planning that would involve large partnerships, in order to facilitate networking between realities that practice Youth Work.



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# GLOSSARY



## • YOUTH WORK

A multifaceted practice, powerful and polyvalent, ambivalent at the same time. It takes an ambivalent position between private aspirations and public expectations; for this reason it's impossible to impose a singular definition of youth work.

Youth work can have a local, regional, national, European or international dimension. It encloses a wide range of activities, of social, cultural, educational or political nature, organised by and for young people. Youth work belongs to the sphere of education "outside of schools", with activities specifically designed for recreational times and managed by professional youth workers, volunteers and youth leaders. It relies on non-formal education processes and on voluntary participation. The common trait between all these practices is the application of non-formal education methodologies (educational activities external to the formal education system), together with the emphasis on voluntary participation. These two characteristics differentiate youth work from other educational practices, from those coming from the private spheres of family as well as from those coming from formal institutions such as schools. Youth work is where young people are and it doesn't worry about following pre established programmes and educational objectives. At the same time , like Peter Lauritzen has stressed, youth work commits to foster social inclusion and integration of youth.

In some nations youth work is a relatively defined and framed practice. In others instead, the term is less known and a common and encompassing definition doesn't exist. What's certain is that in every nation there is a precise (but heterogeneous) sector, defined as that of the educational and social practices that form the so-called "third environment of socialization", next to schools and families.

## • COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

youth workers and youth leaders, youth workers and social-education entertainers managers, registered and independent organizations of youth work and social-educational entertainment, trainers, researchers, trainers of youth entertainers, municipalities and local communities, ERASMUS+ National Agencies for youth and European Solidarity Corps, youth representatives, young people, decision makers for the youth field at every level of government.



# GLOSSARY



## • FORMAL, INFORMAL/NON FORMAL EDUCATION

Complementary elements that compose the learning process of an individual

Non formal education is the sum of structured programs and personal and social educational processes for young people with the aim of strengthening their competences and capacities within diverse contexts with different procedures from those related with formal education. Results obtained thanks to non-formal education are often difficult to certify, even though the sector is now starting to have some social recognition.

Non formal education should be also:

- voluntary
- accessible to everyone (ideally)
- an organised process with educational objectives
- participatory
- learner-centred
- about learning life skills and preparing for active citizenship
- based on involving both individual and group learning with a collective approach
- holistic and process-oriented
- based on experience and action
- organised on the basis of the needs of the participants.

Informal education refers to a lifelong learning process, whereby each individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from the educational influences and resources in their own environment and from daily experience. People learn from family and neighbours, in the marketplace, at the library, at art exhibitions, at work and through playing, reading and sports activities. The mass media are a very important medium for informal education, for instance through plays and film, music and songs, televised debates and documentaries. Learning in this way is often unplanned and unstructured.

Formal education refers to the structured education system that runs from primary (and in some countries from nursery) school to university, and includes specialised programmes for vocational, technical and professional training. Formal education often comprises an assessment of the learners' acquired learning or competences and is based on a programme or curriculum which can be more or less closed to adaptation to individual needs and preferences. Formal education usually leads to recognition and certification.



# GLOSSARY



- **INTERSECTIONALITY**

Analytical tool to study, comprehend and face the way in which identity components are intertwined with other identities or personal characteristics, creating oppressive and discriminatory experiences that change in every individual. It comes from the assumption that people have multiple and stratified identities, generating from social relationships, history and power structures. The objective of intersectional analysis is to show such multiple identities, highlighting the different forms of multiple and intersectional discrimination, coming from the intersection between identity and other fields of experience

- **PROJECT BASED**

it's the condition of those organisations/bodies that are sustained exclusively and/or predominantly with fundings coming from public and/or private investments, connected to short and medium term projects.

