

**The history
of youth work in Europe**
**Relevance for today's
youth work policy**

Volume 4

*Edited by Marti Taru, Filip Coussée
and Howard Williamson*

Council of Europe Publishing

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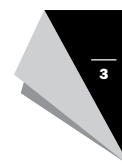
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Contents

	Preface	
1	by Hanjo Schild and Jan Vanhee	5
	Introduction: looking around and moving forward	
2	by <i>Edgar Schlümmer</i>	7
	Third sector trends	
3	by <i>Kristina Mänd</i>	11
	The history of youth work in Estonia	
4	by <i>Marti Taru, Eli Pilve and Peeter Kaasik</i>	15
	The history of youth work as a profession in Finland	
5	by <i>Juha Nieminen</i>	35
	Youth policy and participation in Sweden: a historical perspective	
6	by <i>Torbjörn Forkby</i>	45
	An overview of the history of youth work in Luxembourg	
7	by <i>Ralph Schroeder</i>	61
	History of youth work and youth policies in Portugal	
8	by <i>Jorge Orlando Queirós</i>	71
	The history of youth work in Romania	
9	by <i>Sorin Mitulescu</i>	81
	Youth work in Greece: a historical overview	
10	by <i>Dora Giannaki</i>	91
	A story of youth work in Lithuania	
11	by <i>Artūras Deltuva</i>	107
	A history of youth work in Armenia	
12	by <i>Areg Tadevosyan and Howard Williamson</i>	117
	Youth work in connection to policies and politics	
13	by <i>Marti Taru, Filip Coussée and Howard Williamson</i>	125
	About the authors	137



*by Hanjo Schild
and Jan Vanhee*

Preface

In 2008 and 2009, the Flemish Community of Belgium and the EU-CoE youth partnership co-organised two workshops on the history of youth work policy and practice in selected countries (Blankenberge I and II). In a bigger conference under the Belgian EU-presidency (held in Ghent in 2010) the discussion was enlarged by focusing on recurrent themes in youth work history in different European countries. In 2011, the Estonian authorities responsible for youth – in co-operation with Finland – offered to host a third workshop in Tallinn, on the history of youth work in countries that have not yet been the focus of discussion in the youth work sector, broadening knowledge of developments in Europe.

The histories of the following countries were presented during these workshops: Belgium (including its three communities), the Netherlands, England and Wales, Ireland, Germany, the Russian Federation, Finland, Hungary, Malta, France, Poland, Austria, Serbia and now – documented in this volume on the history of youth work – Estonia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Sweden, Armenia, Romania, Greece, Portugal and, once more, Finland.

The event in Estonia was organised by the EU-CoE youth partnership and the Estonian Ministry of Education and

Research and Estonian Youth Work Centre in co-operation with the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish Youth Research Network, City of Helsinki and the Division for Youth in the Agency for Socio-Cultural Work for Youth and Adults in Flanders (Belgium).

All seminars on the history of youth work focused not only on individual stories in different countries but through comparison aimed at revealing the social, pedagogical and political nature of youth work. In doing so the seminars broadened the current debate, wherein youth work is usually discussed in methodological terms that focus on questions of “reach” (how to reach young people, how to reach results with young people) or impact and efficiency. These are important questions, indeed, but if they are discussed separately from social, pedagogical and political contexts, we risk reinforcing paradoxes and dilemmas in youth work practice. Discussing the history of youth work and youth policy in diverse countries also introduced new perspectives, and focused on regional differences in terms of methodology and themes (for example, professionalisation, specific target groups, urban-rural).

Relevant documentation may be accessed on the thematic youth policy webpage of the EU-CoE youth partnership at http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/ekcyp/YP_YW.html. Country-specific histories are documented in the three previous volumes of the Youth Knowledge Series of the EU-CoE youth partnership:

- *The history of youth work in Europe. Relevance for today's youth work policy* (2009), edited by Filip Coussée, Howard Williamson and Griet Verschelden;
- *The history of youth work in Europe – Volume 2. Relevance for today's youth work policy* (2010), edited by Filip Coussée, Griet Verschelden, Tineke Van de Walle, Marta Mędlińska and Howard Williamson;
- *The history of youth work in Europe – Volume 3. Relevance for today's youth work policy* (2012), edited by Filip Coussée, Howard Williamson and Griet Verschelden.

These volumes can be downloaded at <http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/publications/Research/Publications>.

This publication, Volume 4 of the history of youth work, is edited by Marti Taru, Filip Coussée and Howard Williamson. It complements the earlier volumes and also provides a synthesis of what has been discussed in the past with regards to youth work policies and politics.

Discussions on the history of youth work will continue, and will thematically build on the earlier events and findings: what is the identity of youth work? Where is youth work placed between private and public spaces? Where is the balance between autonomy and dependencies? Where is youth work going?

Important in this ongoing analysis is to bring on board the history of different youth organisations and their support structures in Europe. For example, what is the history of the European Youth Forum, or of Fimcap, Waggs, Mijarc, United or Dynamo? Do their histories fit with or enrich our findings?

Readers are invited to actively contribute to these reflections.



Introduction: looking around and moving forward

by Edgar Schlümmer

The fourth seminar on the history of youth work in Europe and its relevance for today's youth work policy took place in the autumn of 2011 in Tallinn, Estonia. The seminar was hosted by the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research and the Estonian Youth Work Centre (the national youth work agency of the ministry). It was prepared in co-operation with the youth partnership between the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe. The event followed a series of seminars held first in Blankenberge, Belgium (in 2008 and 2009) and then in Ghent (in 2010) during the Belgian presidency of the EU.

The continuity of this work, bringing together at a European-level policy makers, researchers and practitioners in the youth field, is crucial. There is no doubt that effective youth policy and youth work have to be based on better knowledge of young people and historical experiences of policy and practice directed towards them. Grasping the unfolding of events within broader political contexts, and understanding the different situations, perspectives and challenges faced by young people provide a platform and an anchor for contemporary development in the youth field. Bringing the actors together

and learning from the different trends and realities all over Europe is a good basis for engaging in this kind of exercise.

Estonia is a meaningful place to speak about history, because it has been in the middle of socio-cultural and political changes in both relatively recent times and across a broader sweep of time (the past 100 years and well before). Its different histories are equally relevant for the discussion of youth work and policy development in general. Estonia is at the crossroads between East and West. It shows, almost in miniature, developments in society and the youth field from the Middle Ages, starting from parish schools and the first university, continuing with independence, democracy and youth participation, then totalitarianism under the Soviet Union and, most recently, “re-independence” and re-integration with Europe. Since then, development in the youth field in Estonia has been continuous and rapid. Estonia is also, therefore, a meaningful place to consider contemporary developments – to introduce knowledge about the roots of youth work and youth work policy and to discuss the meaning and purpose of youth work in the 21st century. Knowledge and quality are top priorities in current developments in Estonian youth work and youth policy. Examples of relevant recent work include implementing the youth monitoring and youth work quality assurance system; training and professionalisation of youth workers (for example implementing occupational standards); recognition of youth work’s role in supporting youth employability; combating exclusion and poverty; and the development of youth parliaments in all municipalities to empower young people’s voice on their situation.

During the seminar Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Luxembourg, Lithuania, Romania, Greece, Portugal and Armenia introduced their accounts of the history of youth work and policy. The commonalities across the countries represented were apparent in many historical aspects:

- the professionalism of youth workers and youth movements, and organisations as a starting point for professional youth work;
- the strategic importance of young people as a major target group for ideological renewal to guarantee the stability of regimes, though they have often been the first to strike back and call for democratic reforms;
- the demolition not only of ideology but also of youth work structures, and, in those countries that had totalitarian regimes, the rebuilding of the youth field, sometimes almost from scratch;
- the important influence of international organisations on national developments in the youth field;
- the transitions from leisure to social welfare, and indeed wider contexts and considerations, as legitimate territory for “youth work”.

There follows, then, in the chapters of this book, a broad mosaic of new histories of youth work and youth policy. They are sometimes identified explicitly, but it is also important for the reader to search for the links between the past and the youth policies we are formulating today. Though this is the fourth volume that has sought to capture these often forgotten, and certainly frequently overlooked, histories, the hope is that these seminars will continue with historical analyses of particular topics in the lives of young people and that this will provide a good basis to increase and ensure the further development of youth work at both European and national, and indeed municipal, levels. Each level of policy should thereby strengthen its commitment to the practice of youth work, using



prevailing knowledge and evidence – past and present – as a mechanism and methodology for promoting both young people’s voice and autonomy, and their integration and involvement in the different communities and societies to which they belong.



by Kristina Mänd

Third sector trends

The broader framework of service delivery

One aspect that affects our work is trends in civil society and how they are related to youth work. First we must recognise that voluntary organisations in general have experienced significant change in their role and influence in society and policy. They are major providers of essential services, influential advocates for marginalised groups and knowledgeable advisors on public policy. That, in turn, has led to greater scrutiny of their activities. This chapter will examine some trends that will influence youth work in the years to come, drawing on the National Council for Voluntary Organisations' Third Sector Foresight (<http://ncvoforesight.org/>).

→ Blurring boundaries between sectors

The boundaries between the not-for-profit sector, public sector and the business sector have become increasingly blurred. As government plans for a "deep and serious" reform of public services evolve, many not-for-profit organisations

are delivering public services traditionally undertaken by the state. At the same time, many not-for-profit organisations are involved in social entrepreneurship or business activities conventionally limited to businesses. This has all led to the evolution of hybrid organisations at the boundaries between sectors.

→ Collaborative working

This trend is driven both by increased pressure to achieve value for money and efficiency, and by the belief that shared working can achieve more effective or joined-up services. Collaborative working may take many forms, including mutual support of campaigns and events, jointly bidding for contracts or sharing of back office functions. There is also an increasing interest in mergers, which may be appropriate where organisations are sufficiently compatible in their aims and ethos. Although much of the literature focuses on collaborations between not-for-profit organisations, they may also be developed with public or private sector organisations.

→ The number of general not-for-profit organisations

It seems that the recession has had an impact on the number of not-for-profit organisations. While new ones may form, existing organisations are being encouraged to collaborate or merge in order to bid for contracts to deliver public services.

→ The commodification of membership

Some membership organisations increasingly treat membership as a commodity or product to be bought, not a value-based contribution to be given, and their marketing emphasises tangible benefits over “softer” intangible benefits for members. The two approaches may also be combined in a “free economy” model.

→ Trends in volunteering

The role and importance of community, social solidarity and citizenship are being recognised and the definition and value of volunteering varies from country to country. Time is an issue and it affects people’s availability, as they want volunteering opportunities that do not mean time away from friends and family, but allow them to mix and match with the reality of life pressures. Not-for-profit organisations are under pressure to use pluralistic approaches to recruit, engage and manage volunteers. Another interesting trend is that the ties of volunteers to their natural geographical communities are weakening and people are looking for options to volunteer away from home. Consumer culture plays an important role and volunteers are increasingly looking for the emotional and material benefits that volunteering can bring – such as new skills, new opportunities and recognition. Moreover, information technology plays an important role in volunteering and not-for-profit organisations need to use new networking and social media tools. This has also led to virtual and global awareness of the problems and challenges that the world is facing, and an increased interest in volunteering.

→ Legitimacy, transparency and accountability

The legitimacy, transparency and accountability of not-for-profit organisations are essential for the sustainability, effectiveness and protection of the sector and

are more important now than ever before. We must increase the public trust and the credibility of not-for-profit organisations and their activities through the enhancement of their accountability systems and structures. The freedom to operate and the ability to do so in a responsible manner is critical in ensuring that civil society actors are able to effectively represent their constituencies and support democratic decision making.

→ Information on not-for-profit organisations

There is more public information about not-for-profit organisations than ever before. As governments are increasingly expected to publish detailed data about how they spend public money, not-for-profit organisations will also come under pressure to publish open data in more detail. However, the focus of information about not-for-profit organisations is moving away from purely financial comparisons such as administration or fundraising costs. Instead, initiatives focus on how effective not-for-profit organisations are by looking at what they achieve – expectations of evidence.

→ Attitudes to participation

Reactions to authority are changing across society, in what can be termed a “decline in deference”. People – especially younger people, who are used to participating online and having their voices heard and opinions recognised at home and at work – have new, high expectations of participation in all areas of their lives. New technology is responding to, reinforcing and directing this change.

→ Professionalisation of campaigning

Campaigning is an area of not-for-profit work that long resisted professionalisation, but this is now changing and starting to become a career based on transferable skills rather than expertise on particular issues. This is resisted by some single-issue activists who do not want transferable skills or see themselves as part of the not-for-profit sector. The growth of non-violent direct action also runs contrary to “professionalisation”, but the marginalisation of dissent means that it is increasingly necessary to be organised to succeed in a difficult environment for campaigning.

→ Levels and sources of not-for-profit income

Following a decade of increasing income for not-for-profit organisations, future funding streams are uncertain. The main sources of funds are donations, legacies and fundraising from individuals and grants, and contracts for service delivery from statutory sources. During the recession, individual giving declined, but it is now growing again, although it has yet to reach previous levels. Constrained public spending means that funding from statutory sources will decline, especially grant funding, but other reforms mean that there may be more opportunities to bid for contracts.

→ Environment

Climate change affects us all and increasing numbers of people are concerned about ethical living and consumerism.

What is the future for youth work?

Youth organisations need to be aware of these trends and see how they can make use of the opportunities and work with the threats. Kumi Naidoo, International Executive Director of Greenpeace International, suggests that:

Civil society needs to find a “new way” in which we:

- always distinguish between access and influence (don't compromise to preserve access);
- engage those in power but keep questioning the quality of this engagement;
- build genuine constituencies and be able to demonstrate the power of those constituencies;
- propose solutions more clearly;
- stop competing with each other for air time (learn not to let small issues divide us).

These trends that I have touched upon in my look at civil society developments can easily be related to youth work. The rise in collaboration and blurring of boundaries between the sectors is a trend that youth work could benefit from. For youth work, this would mean increased intermingling of volunteer-based and professional strands and wider integration of the two alternatives into a united, supportive service offered to young people. It would open up additional opportunities for youth work compared to that which has been largely accessible to either volunteer-based youth work or professional youth work. Increased collaboration would encourage volunteers to bring their youth work ethos into professional youth work while accepting youth work quality standards. It would also lead to professional youth workers adopting a more youth-centred approach and treating all young persons as valuable members of society in their own right.

More and better collaboration between sectors is appropriate at a time of economic recession, as it will lead to more efficient usage of resources. More and better co-operation could also be useful considering the decreasing proportion of youth in European societies, with every young person even more valuable than before.

For more information, visit <http://ncvoforesight.org/>.



*by Marti Taru, Eli Pilve
and Peeter Kaasik*

The history of youth work in Estonia

Introduction

The main goal of this chapter is to chart briefly the most important moments in the development of youth work in Estonia, from the middle of the 19th century to the present day. As we move across the years we shall see how youth work transformed from voluntary and spontaneous activity to a state-controlled tool for ideological conditioning, and then to providing young people with the opportunity to acquire various (life) skills and competences.

Estonian history of the last 150 years can be divided into five fairly distinct periods, all of which have witnessed developments in the field of youth work:

- the national awakening before national independence, 1860s to 1918: prehistory of youth work;
- the democratic period of the first independence, 1918 to 1940: the beginning of organised youth work within the education system, the authoritarian period of the first independence and emergence of state-controlled youth work;
- the beginning of Soviet occupation, the Second World War and youth work under the German occupation, 1942 to 1944;

- the Soviet occupation, 1945 to 1989: explosive increase in youth work opportunities as a tool for ideological socialisation;
- the restoration of independence and independent statehood, 1990 onwards: youth work as developmental experience, and contemporary methods of youth work.

The prehistory of youth work: national awakening and civic activism

The second half of the 19th century, during which time Estonia was a part of the Russian Empire with local government run by a nobility of German background, witnessed the rise of Estonian societies, which were founded all over the country. This played an important role in national awakening. Choirs and orchestras were established in parishes, and literary, musical and theatrical societies, for instance, brought together Estonian intellectuals. Young people were attracted to these activities, and as the societies were often led by schoolteachers, the link between societal life and youth was straightforward.

→ Rural youth activism

In the mid-19th century, the village school was the institution which carried out the role of local cultural awakening. Village schoolteachers were responsible for local libraries, the distribution of newspapers and various activities in local societies which followed the German example. They were often motivated by the struggle for educational and cultural development, and they volunteered to found choirs and orchestras that existed in practically all schools. Rural youth – and in the 19th century Estonia was a rural country – joined societies that emerged in the process of national awakening: reading societies, discussion groups, study groups, and societies for theatre, singing, musical performance as well as farming and housekeeping. Quite often the societies were started and led by young people.

The activities of these societies were educational and supported the personal development of participants. While it is obvious that particular skills like singing, acting, reading, debating and playing an instrument were developed, the societies also played a significant role in developing national identity and creating contacts among people. Promoting temperance was also amongst the goals of many societies.

In the second half of the 19th century, the education provided in village schools was to a significant extent standardised, though practical arrangements depended on teachers' experience and skills. The societies were often led by teachers, but it cannot be said that they carried out professional youth work as they had no special training in non-formal education or youth-specific methods. In any case, the societies and grassroots activism groups were open to all people. The volunteers and young people who participated in the work did not have a pedagogical background. The societies involved people from a very early age – education at the time constituted only three years, usually between the ages of 10 and 13. So 13-year-olds, having already finished their schooling, had free time they could spend on other activities.

→ Urban youth activism

In towns, youth activism was motivated by national ideas as well as by the socialist movement, which played workers against capitalists and employers and had

connections with the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party as well as the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Illegal gymnasium pupils' groups emerged, led by more active fellow pupils who had no training in youth work. The groups were primarily places where the young could "let off steam" and realise their desire for nationally-motivated activism. Many such illegal pupils' organisations appeared in different places in the first decade of the 20th century. Some of the best-known were Taim, (A Plant), Amicitia (Friendship), Noorus.Õppurite Eneseharimise Rühm (Youth. Pupils' Self-development Group), and *Noorte Ühendus* (Youth Association). The neo-romantic Estonian literary group Noor Eesti (Young Estonia) devised the slogan "More European culture! Be Estonians but remain Europeans!", and was quite influential in society before 1918 (Järvesoo 2006; Vallikivi 2008).

→ Church congregations

In the 19th century, the Church was the only institution which could legitimately organise people. Various church congregations attempted to mobilise and organise youth around Christian values using a range of methods: Sunday school, boarding schools, special church services for youth, as well as societies for boys and girls. However, these attempts were rather unsuccessful, partly because of economic development and the development of science and a secular worldview among people (Meikop 1927:48-9). The Church was also strongly associated with oppression, so did not enjoy popularity among the Estonian people. Its role diminished further as the national awakening movement gained momentum.

Youth movements in independent Estonia

The independent Republic of Estonia was declared on 24 February 1918.

Legislative developments

We can locate the start of organised youth work as a set of activities and environments aimed at supporting the development of young individuals in the 1920s. Extra-curricular activities were perceived to be an important part of youth education from the very beginning of the establishment of the formal education system in Estonia. At that time a legal framework for the formal education system was created that also provided a legislative basis for extra-curricular activities. In 1921, the Ministry of Education adopted "template constitutions" for pupils' societies and associations. These foresaw activity areas for pupils' associations as well as how these were to be managed; the involvement of a teacher was mandatory and the school management board had control over pupils' associations. In 1922, the Public Gymnasiums Act was adopted. It had a central role in framing extra-curricular activities. The act stipulated that secondary school pupils had the right to establish student societies and groupings, which had to be registered with the school pedagogical management board. The act also stipulated that though pupils could participate in organisations active outside the school, they needed to obtain permission for participation from the school pedagogical management board. The act gave the board the right to ban pupils' participation in other organisations.

Several other acts were adopted until the early 1930s, and another significant wave of legal initiatives swept over Estonia in the latter half of the decade. An

important development affecting youth work was the military *coup d'état* of March 1934, which marked the beginning of the “silent era” of authoritarianism. This lasted until 1940, when Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Union.

In 1936, the Organising Youth Act was adopted. This act introduced several significant definitions. First, it defined youth as all individuals below 20 years of age. The act set out goals for youth organisation. The first goal was to support young people so that they could become strong, healthy and active citizens with a strong sense of national cultural identity, contributing to building Estonian statehood. The second goal was to provide young people with opportunities to learn new skills and develop their strengths. Third, youth organisation was meant to contribute to Estonia’s goals in the fields of national progress, national security and cultural development. The act defined youth organisations as entities which carried out activities that were compatible with the goals and values defined by the act; youth organisations had to follow regulations issued by the Ministry of Education. Organisations which met standards set forth by the ministry were eligible for state financial support. In 1938, the president issued a decree on the reorganisation of Estonian youth organisations into a new youth organisation called *Eesti Noored* (Estonian Youth). This new organisation was to be chaired by the Army’s Supreme Commander. However, plans to form a central youth organisation did not materialise. One of the probable reasons was that by that time, the independence of Estonia was under threat from the Soviet Union, so organising youth received less attention.

→ Youth work in schools: hobby rings

Following ministerial guidelines, hobby rings were established in schools, supervised and organised by teachers. Though the aim of the rings was to encourage pupils to pursue their interests, their initiatives and self-actualisation, they were actually controlled.

From 1923 to 1924, 65% of secondary school pupils and 10% of elementary school pupils took part in the activities of hobby rings. Thematically, there were more than 10 different types of hobby rings, with temperance, sports and literature rings being the most popular. Though the opportunities for school-based leisure time were meant to encourage youth activism and help youth become full members of society, pupils participated without great enthusiasm. These practices were also questioned by educational experts and practitioners themselves.

Fifteen years later, in 1937/38, 82% of schools had operating youth organisations and 43% of pupils were members of one. Compared to the beginning of the 1920s, the percentage of pupils taking part in youth organisations had increased notably. The list of rings and clubs that were operating in schools now comprised 71 different types of activities. The total number of rings in schools had reached 1 163, with a total of 48 127 participants. According to a ministerial report, the number of school-based youth organisations had reached 2 529 by the end of 1937.

→ Pupils’ Societies

The Pupils’ Societies movement grew out of illegal pupils’ groupings established already when Estonia was part of the Russian Empire. The movement’s heyday was between 1921 and 1922. Societies were active in many towns, and membership

in larger societies was counted in the hundreds. Organisationally, the movement was divided into thematic branches along the lines of the school-based hobby groups. Activities were carried out in the form of debates and meetings, discussion groups of literature reviews, working groups, and other similar group work formats; the movement also had its own libraries and held several public events.

The movement started to experience problems in 1922 when several chapters expressed a desire to become independent. Some of its individual members were involved in public unrest. The Ministry of Education had been sceptical about the movement from the start. The template constitution, which was mandatory for Pupils' Societies' groupings, downgraded autonomous organisations into hobby groups. As a result, the Pupils' Societies movement lost several of its local chapters. The movement also experienced conflict with its sports branches, which led to the establishment of an independent Pupils' Sports Society in 1923. Though the sports society vanished quietly after several years, it noticeably weakened the Pupils' Societies movement. In addition, a temperance movement established its own independent society in 1923. The new society also took with it a number of activities that formerly were part of the Pupils' Societies movement, and weakened it further. As a result of these negative developments, the Pupils' Societies movement gradually lost momentum and by 1927, it ceased to exist (Lenotammi 1929:9-34).

The movement did provide many young people with opportunities to participate in developmental experiences. As its activities were planned and implemented by young people for young people, and the role of adults was minimal, we might recognise here features of the contemporary concept of youth participation. The management of the national organisation, which consisted of several tiers and communication with external actors, was also the responsibility of young people.

→ **Countrywide Union of Estonian Youth Societies**

In 1919, the Countrywide Union of Estonian Youth Societies (CUEYS) was established. This organisation was an apolitical and non-religious youth movement. Its main goal was to support the personal development of young people through both relevant activities and contacts with other like-minded young people. It had its beginnings in rural areas, where young people found opportunities offered by the village school or by other societies (for adults) either inappropriate in terms of content or insufficiently youth oriented. They began to organise activities themselves. CUEYS was based on such youth activism, and as such it was clearly separate from societies for adults which also allowed the participation of young people.

CUEYS focused on activities which had potential for supporting personal growth and cultural development such as sports, music, literature, drama, Esperanto, chess, and activities in libraries and reading societies. A range of training courses was offered. There was a strong component of temperance, along with the promotion of patriotism and other human values (Meikop 1927:159-60, 197-98).

In the beginning, CUEYS was mainly a movement of school pupils, also involving some teachers, in the capital city of Tallinn and other towns. When in 1922 the Secondary Schools Act came into force, pupils' participation in organisations outside schools was more controlled. However, while the act controlled youth in the educational system, it did not apply to young people who had left school. The number of such young people was high in rural areas. Taking this

into consideration, the leaders of the movement decided to move CUEYS from urban to rural areas (Meikop 1927:194-97).

In 1919 CUEYS had seven local clubs, which increased to around 130 by 1927. In the second half of the 1920s, the total number of young people affiliated with CUEYS was between 5 000 and 10 000. In 1937, CUEYS reported 296 local clubs with around 15 000 participants aged 17 to 25 years, and altogether, 22 different types of rings.

Like the Pupils' Societies movement, CUEYS was a manifestation of youth activism rather than professional youth work. Its activities and organisation were led by young people themselves, schoolteachers and other active adults who had no special youth work training. Nevertheless, participation in clubs, rings and societies was probably a developmental experience for the participants, who would have acquired a range of personal qualities and skills, new knowledge, and new contacts.

→ **Countrywide Union of Rural Youth**

By the end of 1920s Estonia, like several other European countries, was facing rapid urbanisation. To slow the phenomenon, farmers established agricultural commercial associations in rural areas, beginning in 1926. Young people joined the associations, as the threshold age for entrance was 14, but most youth members were 17 to 18 years old. In 1931 the National Agricultural Association, which had 72 local conventions, started to establish youth groups. This resulted in the integration of all rural youth groups under a single roof. In the early 1930s, an umbrella organisation was established: the Countrywide Union of Rural Youth (CURY). Unlike the Pupils' Societies movement and CUEYS, this organisation was managed by adults and also employed paid instructors to carry out activities for young people. Its main activities were training courses in agricultural and farming skills, study trips and agricultural contests, as well as "summer days" and other leisure activities. Its members were mostly young people between 13 and 25 years of age who were interested in self-development. Participation in the activities of CURY groups provided good agricultural and vocational skills, too. The organisation published two journals (Nassar 2002:223-53).

In 1935, CURY had 99 local chapters with 3226 registered members. In 1937 it had 250 chapters and 7785 members, which had increased by 1939 to 446 chapters and 13 500 members (Martinson, Bruus and Sikk 2000:35-50).

→ **Noorte Punane Rist**

The Noorte Punane Rist (Estonian Youth Red Cross) was founded in 1923 by education activists. Its activities centred mainly on first aid, hygiene, health care and social care and as such, were not very attractive to young people. Youth did not have many opportunities to initiate activities they were keen on, therefore most Youth Red Cross members were primary school pupils. In 1924 the organisation had 3 310 members (Meikop 1927:190-91), which had increased by 1938 to approximately 9 000 (Roose 1939:52-63).

→ **Scouting**

As early as 1911, pupils of a gymnasium in Tallinn had attempted to establish a scouting group. But the first functioning scouting group was founded in 1912 in the city of Pärnu. Exact membership figures are not known but between 30 and

100 teenage boys were engaged in weekly meetings and a range of summer and winter activities.¹ The group's activities came to an end in 1917 because of the German occupation (Tilk 1991:23).² In the same year, however, two scouting groups were started in Tallinn (Rannap 2012:83), following which other groups were quickly set up in other localities even though they were banned during the German occupation that lasted until 1919 (Tilk 1991:24).³

The Estonian Scouting Union was established in 1921 (Rannap 2012:93). It was one of the 22 founding members of the World Organization of the Scout Movement. The statute of the Estonian Scouting Union was adopted in 1923; in the same year, the Union of Scoutmasters was established (Tilk 1991:25). The organisation developed into a strong youth organisation and in the 1930s several activity branches (such as senior-scouting for young men above 18 and sea-scouting), were active within the Estonian Scouting Movement (Tilk 1991:27).

In 1920 there were about 1000 Boy Scouts in Estonia. Numbers fluctuated over the years, but in 1937/38 there were between 3 528 (Roose 1939:55-56) and 5 314 (Tilk 1991:28) Boy Scouts. There were slightly more members in the towns, but a roughly equal number of groups were active in schools and outside schools. The Girl Guides movement – scouting for girls – emerged in 1919 in Tallinn with the establishment of the first Girl Guide group. In 1924, there were 292 Girl Guides and 70 Brownies in Estonia, and by 1937/38 the organisation had 2 189 members (Roose 1939:52-63).

Both Boy Scout and Girl Guide organisations were dissolved when the Soviet Union occupied Estonia in 1940.

→ Scouting-based organisations with an emphasis on patriotism

Young Blacksmiths

In 1920, the scouting movement split when a national movement emerged which accepted only Estonians as members. The movement was called *Noored Sepad* (Young Blacksmiths), and it also had a girls' chapter. The rationale for starting this new movement was dissatisfaction with the "cosmopolitan" nature of scouting and a wish to promote patriotism (Paalman 1929:64-69). The organisation had approximately 2 000 members (Tilk 1991:28).

Defence League Boys Corps

Young Blacksmiths was reorganised in 1930, when it was incorporated into the Estonian Defence League's own youth organisation, *Noored Kotkad* (Young Eagles) and it ceased to exist as an independent organisation.⁴ Young Eagles was a scouting-based organisation. It was supported by the defence league and rapidly gained popularity amongst young people. Membership consisted of two age groups: 8-to-12-year-olds and 13-to-18-year-olds. In 1937/38, with 15 632 members, the organisation was still growing. Most of its groups were active in rural areas and in schools.

1. *Skautluse ajalugu, Eesti Skautide Ühing*, www.skaut.ee/?jutt=10154, accessed 11 September 2013.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Anton Õunapuu liihike elulugu*, www.skaut.ee/?jutt=10156, accessed 11 September 2013.

4. See www.hot.ee/tsgkotkad/ajalugu1.htm, accessed 11 September 2013.

Defence League Girls Corps

The Defence League Girls Corps was set up in 1932. As with the boys corps, it was popular among girls, and recruited them in the same age groups. With just 1 820 members in 1933, the organisation grew to include 19 601 members by 1939, the majority members of units organised in rural schools.

The Defence League youth organisations were dismissed in 1940 with Soviet occupation.

→ Youth temperance movement

The Youth Temperance Union was founded in 1923. Its activities included organising congresses and meetings, training courses and essay competitions. This was a state-initiated movement, and did not meet with a very enthusiastic reception among young people.

The temperance movement was, in a sense, a “horizontal” organisation, as it was actually an umbrella organisation for groups from other movements such as scouting and CUEYS. But it also had its own chapters. Its organisational focus was on elementary and secondary schools. It had 7 620 members in 1923 (Elango 1925:168-76; Elango 1926:108-11), and a similar number in 1926/27 (Küing 1929:53-63). However, a decade on, membership had dropped to below 500 (Roose 1939:57), mainly because other youth associations offered similar opportunities for leisure and also included temperance as a principle (Meikop 1927:190).

→ Church congregations

In the 1920s, a number of religious youth organisations were active in Estonia. However, the emphasis here should be on religion rather than youth, as the pattern was for religious organisations to have youth chapters. These organisations carried out mainly social care and religious activities.

Youth-targeted activities in the sphere of social care were motivated by two concerns: first, to keep youth safe and help them stay away from trouble, and second, to offer support and assistance to youth already in trouble. Conservative values and attitudinal and behavioural patterns were encouraged.

In terms of religious activities for youth, the societies promoted a Christian lifestyle within small (closed) communities. The religious societies had several hundred youth members, and the age of participants could be well over 30 years, which at the time was considered middle age.

The Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Young Men/Women Christian Association (YMCA/YWCA) had the largest youth organisations. In the Lutheran Church, youth work started in 1929 (Täheväli 1938:228-30; Toplaan 1999:219-45). Their “summer days” were popular among Christian youth. The activities of YMCA/YWCA started in the early 1920s. From 1923 to 1940, popular summer youth camps were organised. YMCA also supported the development of youth sports in Estonia. It was limited to the three or four bigger towns in Estonia, and was not really considered a youth organisation since it was managed by senior members; it was also considered an organisation driven by American rather than Estonian

values (Meikop 1927:182-85; Kelder 2001:59-61). However, it was popular with youth because of wide spectrum of its activities, in addition to religious activities, including training, educational and cultural activities, hiking and other social activities (Martinson, Bruus and Sikk 2000:35-50).

In 1934, YMCA had 20 local chapters with 3 000 members; YWCA had 1 500 members in 15 chapters. In 1937 they had 2 375 and 1976 members respectively, mostly above school age.

YMCA/YWCA were disbanded in 1940.

→ Sports

It has been noted that sports were the most popular activity within the different youth organisations. Promoting the physical strength and good health of young people was identified as a significant or even central goal of youth work. At national level, youth sports were organised by the Central Union of Sports (CUS), which had been founded in 1922 and had a unit responsible for youth. At local level, the Tallinn Schools Sportsclub Union was active in the capital. Both organisations focused on preparing young people to compete and organised competitive sports events. The role of the youth unit in CUS was to organise sporting events and engage young people. CUS also trained youth trainers; in 1937, 459 people qualified as youth trainers. Under the auspices of CUS, well over 100 contests and scores of training courses were organised in 1937, and participation is estimated at around 19 000 (since some individuals took part in several events, the actual number of participants was significantly lower, but was still well over 10 000). These young people trained in the sports clubs of CUS. The Tallinn Schools Sportsclubs Union had 30 members with 1 249 individual members, of which 950 were competing athletes in 1936.

→ Student organisations

Estonian language higher education became available in 1919, when the University of Tartu was founded as a national university (it was originally established back in 1632, and operated mainly in German at first, and in Russian later). The number of students was relatively small – from 1919 to 1939, altogether 5 751 students graduated from the university but most of them were members of academic student unions (Hiio 2009; Ruus 2002).

All student unions were dissolved in 1940 (Piirimäe 2012:101-10).

Youth work during the Second World War

During the Second World War, Estonia was occupied twice: by Soviet troops from 1940 to 1941, then by German troops from 1941 to 1944. Organised youth work took place from late 1942 to early 1944. In October 1942, a youth organisation called Estonian Youth was founded. Its activities were mostly “work education”, or simply working in agriculture to support the wartime economy, but also involved leisure time opportunities and military training (unsurprisingly). The organisation was dissolved when Soviet troops invaded the country in 1944.

Youth work during the Soviet era

Estonia was forced to join the Soviet Union in 1940. In 1944, the Soviet administrative system was established on the territory of Estonia when German troops were pushed out of the country. The occupying power aimed at enforcing as much control as possible and centralised in all areas of society, including youth work. Virtually all youth organisations had already been dissolved before the war.⁵

→ Komsomol

From 1945, the organisation of young people's free time was the responsibility of the Communist Youth League or Komsomol, the Communist Party youth organisation. The main goals of Komsomol were to:

- support the Communist Party in the upbringing of a communist-minded young generation;
- involve young people in building a "new society";
- prepare young people to live in a communist society.

Communist youth organisation was divided into two large sections targeting different age groups:

- the Communist Youth League or Komsomol was an organisation for youth aged 14 to 28 years and
- the Pioneer Organisation was a children's organisation for the age group 10 to 15.

In addition, a special section for 6 to 10 year old children existed – pioneers were involved in organising leisure time for the children, who were called October Children.

The Pioneer Organisation was youth chapter of Komsomol and its main function was to carry out youth (political) socialisation in different age groups.

The Estonian Communist Youth League was actually a local branch of the all-Union Komsomol, not an independent organisation. Though it started as an independent socialist movement in 1917, it lost its independence in 1940 when it was integrated into the all-union organisation (Herodes 1940:14). Its activities began, officially, after the Second World War.

Following the regime change, the Estonian Communist Youth League became the central organisation responsible for the "proper socialisation" of young people into Soviet realities. Joining the organisation was voluntary, although not joining could become an obstacle in acquiring education (getting into secondary school and university), as well as in finding a job in one's professional field.⁶

Komsomol was present everywhere. As shaping children's and young people's understandings, beliefs and attitudes was considered very important in becoming

5. See Museum of Occupations, www.okupatsioon.ee/et/andmed-ja-nimekirjad/214-oiguse-vastu-ei-sa-uekski?start=4, accessed 11 September 2013.

6. See Estonica, www.estonica.org/en/Komsomol, accessed 11 September 2013.

a “homo sovieticus” or Soviet citizen, Komsomol put a strong emphasise on dissemination and on youth work. In schools, socialisation into socialist conscience and morality was considered as important as providing good knowledge on different subjects (Lentsmann 1963:5-28; Sarri 1975:5-21). Carefully designed messages were communicated through school textbooks, youth-targeted newspapers and other mass media channels, exhibitions, public places, and even the interior decorations of kindergartens (Herodes 1940:35-37). Often the information disseminated was an outright lie (Pilve 2010:54-71; Mõistlik 2007; Tilk 2011). The teaching of ideology was not limited to schools but was made accessible to wider audiences through folk universities and various lecture courses. For instance, in 1981, 536 lecturers were working in this way. They gave 11 870 lectures to 451 061 people on eight broad themes, including subjects directly linked to youth such as the history of the Pioneer Organisation, youth and the ideological struggle, international youth movements, and youth and law. At the end of 1970, Komsomol set up pedagogical study groups and by 1982, 290 such groups with more than 3 000 participants were operational. Folk universities gave lectures on a variety of themes, and around a third of their audiences were below 30 years of age. Folk universities also offered a programme called Youth ABC which gave youth a brief introduction to different professions and vocations and fulfilled the function of youth counselling.

At an everyday level, Komsomol influenced life through Komsomol committees which were established in universities and larger enterprises and in towns and rural municipalities. Between congresses at which representatives of Komsomol committees gathered, Komsomol was led by its Central Committee. It was part of and controlled by the Communist Party, but actually its role was ambivalent, depending on the reigning Soviet Union political leader. For instance, during the Khrushchev era of political thaw in the 1950s and 1960s, the Komsomol committees of universities started several initiatives which were positively received by society (Adamson and Titma 2009:2287-303). Youth “summer days”, started by the Estonian Komsomol Central Committee in the late 1950s to replace clerical customs, took place over 30 years.⁷

Komsomol had a notable influence on youth employment. Being an all-union organisation, it had the power to relocate young employees from one region to another. Thousands of members of the Estonian Communist League worked in other regions of the Soviet Union and hundreds of thousands of young people from other regions worked in Estonia.

Komsomol organised youth events like festivals, summer days and contests in various spheres ranging from sports to arts and music. These events and initiatives were rather popular among young people. Sputnik, Komsomol’s travel agency, provided tens of thousands of young people with travelling opportunities.

Membership of the Estonian Komsomol grew from 1 191 in 1945 to 162 260 in 1985. There were several factors behind this, including political pressure and fear, which compelled young people to join Komsomol: Soviet ethnic policy, which relocated approximately 1.1 million young people to Estonia (Tiit 2011:111-12); the prolonging of the educational path in general, which made more young people available for propaganda and agitation; and the change in university

7. See Eesti Rahva Muuseum, Nõukogulik lähetus ellu – noorte suvepäevad Eesti NSVs, www.erm.ee/UserFiles/enaitus/Suvepaevad, accessed 11 September 2013.

enrolment criteria in 1960, which required each applicant to obtain approval from Komsomol. Before 1950, membership of the Estonian Komsomol was dominated by non-Estonians, but this changed after 1950, with the share of young people of Estonian background at between 60% and 70%. At the beginning of 1989 this figure was 61%, though there were large differences across settlements and regions: in north-eastern towns Estonian membership was 2% while in the southern part of the country and on islands it reached 97%. Towns were industrial centres and heavily populated with non-Estonian immigrants, making the share of Estonians lower (45%) than in the countryside and rural areas where it was twice as high (89%). In 1990, the Estonian Communist Youth League had only 25 198 members. The Youth League was reorganised in March 1991 into an independent Estonian Youth League, but the new organisation decided to cease operating in October 1991. The all-Union organisation was disbanded in September 1991.

→ Pioneer Organisation

The Pioneer Organisation was responsible for providing pupils with opportunities for extra-curricular activities that also functioned as socialisation activities (Soon 1987:18-19). Socialising events on various themes were held on important dates from modern and folk history and proved popular with children.⁸ Pioneer camps were organised for youth aged 7 to 15 during the summer vacation. In 1946, 13 such camps were operational and in 1972 there were 35 permanent Pioneer camps (Aus 2010). The number of pioneers was 63 607 in 1960 and 69 843 in 1962. By the mid-1970s the number of pioneers is estimated to have exceeded 70 000 (Väljas 1975:22-48).

→ Pioneer centres and hobby rings

To replace the hobby rings that were disbanded along with the youth organisations, a new system of hobby rings was set up. Pupils were offered opportunities to participate in technical, agricultural and creative groups; the last group was the most popular. Pupils could participate in these activities in schools but also in Pioneer centres, which began to appear right after the Soviet occupation started. These organisations were set up to provide children and young people with opportunities to spend their leisure time productively. The first Pioneer centre was established in 1941. Between 1949 and 1959, 11 Pioneer centres were established throughout Estonia; in 1970 there were 16 Pioneer centres and by 1989 there were 27. Hobby ring teachers were school pedagogues and specialists working in enterprises: engineers, scientists, and so on. In addition to Pioneer centres several specialised organisations, such as the House of Young Technicians and the Children's Station of Excursions⁹ were operational. Children's and young people's hobby rings were also operated by cultural clubs.

→ Specialised schools for music and arts

After the Second World War, specialised schools of music and arts were set up. Children could learn particular skills or a musical instrument at a more advanced level: the schools provided in-depth skills in a particular field rather than general education. This appeared to be a continuation of the activities of various hobby rings. Some of the schools were reorganised from private schools

8. See <https://sites.google.com/site/pioneerimalevapaevik/8586>, accessed 11 September 2013.

9. Authors' translations of Noorte tehnikute maja and ENSV Laste Ekskursiooni ja Turismi Keskmaja.

that functioned before the Second World War, but most were newly founded. The number of schools grew over the decades and by 1970, 26 children's music schools were operating with 4 747 pupils; by 1989, there were 50 such schools with 8 128 pupils. The number of art schools was much lower: in 1970 only two schools were operating and by 1989 there were only eight, with 117 and 982 pupils respectively.

→ Sports

Sporting activities were to assist in the upbringing of a strong and healthy generation to be exploited in the interest of the state. Economic, social and educational welfare was demonstrated through success in sports. The third function of sports was to keep the young in active practice to prevent the forming of dissident minds. Additionally, sports in Estonia were also seen as a means of making the new generation capable of sustaining the nation.¹⁰

During the Soviet era, sports enjoyed considerable investment. In 1982 there were a total of 537 000 competitive athletes and physically active people in Estonia. They had access to hundreds of sports facilities and sites. The communist system provided sporting opportunities to all those interested, from "weekend warriors" to elite athletes participating in the Olympic Games and world championships. Mass sporting events were organised where hundreds of thousands of people took part. In parallel to specialised hobby education schools, children's schools of sports were established. In 1945 the first five such schools began to operate;¹¹ in 1946, 7 were operational. The number of sports schools increased gradually and by 1981 there were 61 with more than 30 000 pupils. In addition, in general education schools, there were classes specialising in sports. In 1988, there were 88 such classes with 1 650 pupils in attendance.¹²

→ Work education

There were three organisations for work education in Estonia, targeting groups of different ages and educational backgrounds.

Estonian Student Building Brigades

Eesti Üliõpilaste Ehitusmalev (The Estonian Student Building Brigades (ESBB)) was formed after the example of the all-Union Student Brigades, which used students to alleviate labour shortages in the Soviet Union. ESBB had its beginnings in 1964, when 125 students travelled to Kazakhstan to work on a construction project. From 1966 on the brigades worked mainly in Estonia, where they were employed in construction work in rural areas. In later years some of the brigades worked abroad, in other socialist countries. The heyday of ESBB was in the 1970s, when about 2 000 students, or 10% of all Estonian students, worked in ESBB each year. Up to the dissolution of the brigades in 1993, over 30 000 students had taken part.

10. See Museum of Occupations, www.okupatsioon.ee/en/overviews-1940-1991/15-sport, accessed 11 September 2013.

11. See Estonian Olympic Committee, http://vana.eok.ee/eesti_sportiliikumise_arengu_kronoloogia?sess_admin=c197b51049a69b9028ff9432e8d117c3, accessed 11 September 2013.

12. See Museum of Occupations, www.okupatsioon.ee/en/overviews-1940-1991/15-sport, accessed 11 September 2013.

ESBB worked as a springboard to a successful career along both professional and party tracks. Interestingly, ESBB participants were also very successful after the restoration of independence. Some brigade commanders became legendary figures in certain circles and the network of ESBB acquaintances remained crucial for success in business, party and public administration careers in independent Estonia.

ESBB participation was voluntary, although controlled by Komsomol, like all other youth activities. Commissars were installed in every brigade whose task was to carry out political instruction. Aside from instruction in communist ideology, ESBB gave young people the welcome opportunity to spend time together in the summer, have fun and earn some money as well. Therefore the brigades became hugely popular, and were characterised by a relatively liberal atmosphere. At the annual student brigades' get-togethers, young people repeatedly expressed their critical attitude towards the situation in the Soviet Union through artistic amateur performances, to which the authorities turned somewhat of a blind eye (Rennu 2007:116-46).

Estonian Pupils' Work Brigades

The tradition of Eesti Õpilasmalev (Estonian Pupils' Work Brigades (EPWB)), work brigades for secondary school students aged 15 to 18 years began in 1967 when the first seven brigades were set up (Toome 1986:381). The activity period of pupils' work brigades lasted six weeks. This time was divided into work and leisure. Work meant mainly elementary jobs in agriculture and forestry. At the end of the working period, summer days were also organised annually. As was the case with ESBB, Komsomol attempted to control life in the brigades but this was only partly successful (Adamson and Titma 2009). Pupils' work brigades became very popular among pupils since it meant they could spend time with peers and also earn some money during the summer vacation. The brigades were most popular at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, when the number of participating schoolchildren reached over 20 000. The brigades remained to a notable extent free of ideology; they were environments where youth worked and networked, had a good time and enjoyed their summer vacations (Kesküla 2006).

In the 1970s the Work and Vacation Camp was begun. It was intended to provide time for socialising and leisure activities as well as a working environment for children in elementary school between 12 and 15 years of age. As a "younger brother" of the pupils' work brigades, it put more emphasis on leisure and less on working.

Pupils' work brigades ceased to function at the end of the 1980s as a result of the economic hardships in the Soviet Union and the widening spectrum of opportunities to spend free time.

Contemporary youth work: 1990 to 2012

Estonian independence was restored on 20 August 1991, with a proclamation by the Estonian Supreme Soviet. The beginning of a new era in the statehood of Estonia brought about significant changes in the field of youth work. The centralised youth work system from the Soviet period ceased to exist, though not entirely, and not instantly. The building of a new system started in the 1990s, but

as much as possible youth work structures from the Soviet period were used. In the process of restructuring the youth work field, a variety of contemporary youth work institutions and organisations were established.

The Department of Youth Affairs was formed in 1990 in the Ministry of Education and Research. The department initiated and carried out a number of significant changes in the process of restructuring the field of youth work and youth work policy.

A number of legislative acts were adopted, including acts framing the functioning of different school types (of these, the Primary School and Gymnasium Act was adopted in 1993 and amended in 2010), the Hobby Schools Act of 1995 (a new version was adopted in 2007), and the Juvenile Sanctions Act of 1998. The Youth Work Act was first adopted in 1999, and was significantly amended in 2010. This last act defines a young person as “a natural person between 7 and 26 years of age” and states:

*Youth work is the creation of conditions to promote the diverse development of young persons which enable them to be active outside their families, formal education acquired within the adult education system, and work on the basis of their free will.*¹³

The adoption of the Youth Work Act turned local municipalities into major players in the youth field as they were responsible for implementing a significant part of youth work.

The year 1999, in fact, turned out to be a significant year for youth work and policy in Estonia, with the founding of the Estonian Youth Work Centre (EYWC), juvenile committees, the National Youth Policy Council, youth counselling, and the organisation of the First Youth Work Forum.

EYWC was founded as a national centre for youth work under the administrative authority of the Ministry of Education and Research. Its main objective is to develop and organise youth work in the framework of national youth policy, and it grew out of the National Youth Tourism House (1955 to 1994) and the National Youth Work Initiative Centre (1994 to 1999).

The system of juvenile committees that was launched sought to prevent young people from violating the law and reduce recidivism among youth. The number of juvenile committees increased from 34 in 1999 to 68 in 2009 (Kereme 2010). The National Youth Policy Council brings together representatives of major youth organisations, relevant ministries and other stakeholders. Its main role is to give advice to the Minister of Education and Research on youth matters. Youth counselling services, launched after the adoption of the Youth Work Act, are held in the counselling centres that exist in all county centres and other locations. Counselling is offered on a range of topics, including health, relationships with peers, studying and training, work and career planning, leisure time, and travelling abroad. The First Youth Work Forum is a major biannual event to discuss, evaluate and plan youth work and youth work policy. Meanwhile, the national agency of the European Commission civic education programme Youth in Europe was founded in 1997 and its first projects received support in 1998/99.

13. Youth Work Act, par. 4, <http://www.legaltext.ee/et/andmebaas/tekst.asp?loc=text&dok=XXXXXX07&eel=en>, accessed 27 October 2013.

Even before the restoration of independence, youth associations had emerged that were based on (youth) civic activism. Some organisations were the legal heirs of pre-war organisations (such as Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Defence League Boys and Girls Corps), while others were set up from scratch (such as political youth organisations, civic youth organisations). The umbrella organisation of youth associations, the National Youth Council, was established in 2002. The Federation of Estonian Students Unions was established in 1991, and the Estonian School Council Union in 2000. County and municipal youth councils were set up as well.

Open youth centres began to develop at the turn of the millennium when the first two centres were opened in different towns. By late 2012, approximately 250 open youth centres were operating.¹⁴ Today, opportunities to engage in hobbies are offered by a range of organisations. According to the National Education Information System, the number of organisations where one can follow an art- or music-related programme had reached 137 and the number of organisations offering sports training programmes was 239 in 2012.¹⁵ Many of the schools developed from Soviet-era specialised schools.

Finally, youth work in general has benefited from training programmes. Youth worker training was initiated in 1992, and by 2013, youth workers were being trained in three institutions of higher education: Tallinn University Pedagogical Seminar (since 1992), University of Tartu Viljandi Culture Academy (since 1995), and University of Tartu Narva College (since 2004).

Conclusion

Youth work in Estonia has followed a winding road. Until the 1920s, youth had to be satisfied with participation in adult organisations; their main motivation was education and self-improvement, framed by the endeavour to establish an independent state. During the first period of independence, youth associations and youth organisations became the means of spending leisure time meaningfully. Self-improvement, self-fulfilment, integration into society, opportunities to spend time with like-minded peers and be involved in one's favourite activities were the main motivations to participate in youth organisations. During the Soviet period, independent, youth activism-based activities were banned and replaced by centralised structures: specialised schools, Pioneer centres, clubs and other institutions. Virtually all youth work was converted into a tool for socialising young people into Soviet realities. Nevertheless, many children and young people did enjoy the opportunities offered by hobby rings, summer camps, and other youth work structures. During the Soviet period, significant resources were allocated to improve leisure time opportunities. After the restoration of independence, the youth work system was entirely restructured and modernised to meet the needs of an independent state. Formerly centralised structures ceased to exist and were replaced by structures based on civic initiative and perceived needs.

When searching for explanations of these developments, both internal and external factors need to be taken into account. These factors had varying influences in different

14. See Eesti Avatud Noortekeskuste Ühendus, www.ank.ee/?p=p_307&sName=kokkuv%F5te, accessed 11 September 2013.

15. See the Estonian Education Information System, www.ehis.ee, accessed 11 September 2013.

time periods. Between 1920 and 1940, decisions in the field of youth work were shaped by national leaders and ideas as well as by innovative practices “imported” from other countries. During the Soviet period, youth work was moulded after decisions taken outside Estonia by the central structures of the Communist Party and Communist Youth League. Republican structures too had a say, but Estonia was part of a large authoritarian system and needed to adapt to its rules. After the restoration of independence, youth work developments became influenced by national actors and also by international organisations such as the Council of Europe and EU, as well as by other friendly entities. At the beginning of the 21st century, young people in Estonia are viewed as a developmental resource and efforts are being made to provide them with additional developmental opportunities.

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The history of youth work as a profession in Finland

by Juha Nieminen

The aim of this chapter is to describe and analyse the history of youth work as a profession in Finland. Its theoretical background lies in the historical sociology of education and in the theory of professions. The study of the professions has a long tradition in the educational and social sciences, but the concepts are still obscure. At the international level it is challenging to use, for example, English, German, Swedish and Finnish terminology. Concepts such as “occupation”, “vocation”, “job”, “post”, “work” and “profession” carry cultural connotations which are difficult to translate and interpret. This chapter is the result of my historical and pedagogical research on the professionalisation of Finnish youth work (Nieminen 2000), and it is my hope that it will contribute to the debate on the history of youth work across different national and cultural contexts.

Theoretical background

According to Torstendahl (1990), there are three approaches to studying the professions. The first is the description of the professions, professionalism and professionalisation. The aim of the approach is to lay a foundation

for the classification of the professions; it helps us to identify professions. This “essential property” approach starts out from the properties which are thought to characterise professionalism and professionals. The essential approach asks questions like “What are the traits of a profession?”, “Which are the professions?”, and “Is this occupation a profession?”

The second approach analyses the relations and conflicts between different professions. It helps to identify the intentions and professional strategies of occupational groups. This “strategic approach” starts out from the types of collective action on which groups of professionals rely. It asks questions like “Which groups act professionally?” and “Why does this profession have this particular status in society?”

The third approach studies the relationships between a professional group and other social groups over a long historical period in order to observe changes within the profession or in the conditions for the profession in society. The aim of the approach is to clarify both the internal changes of the profession and the social changes of the status of the profession. This “temporal approach” aims to show how professional groups change.

Torstendahl (1990) also notes that these three approaches are not strongly linked to the metatheoretical schools of profession studies. Despite this claim, the essential property approach is linked with the functionalistic analysis of the professions and the strategy approach has some connections with the neo-Weberian paradigm.

The functionalistic paradigm sees professions as a useful part of society. It implies that the effect of professions on the development of society is positive. In other words, functional society needs altruistic professions to get things going and to help people have a good life. In contrast, the neo-Weberian paradigm sees professions more as a means for people to plead their own causes. In other words, professional people want a monopoly over their occupational field, they want to be respected people and they want an income that acknowledges their expertise. Professional strategies are ways to achieve these goals collectively.

This chapter is linked to Torstendahl’s temporal approach: it describes the internal and external changes of Finnish youth work as a profession. In every analysis – whatever approach or paradigm we have – we need criteria to identify the occupational groups in question. In profession theories there are several classifications of professional traits. The following list of professional attributes is a synthesis of several theories. A profession presupposes:

- a jurisdiction within the state and society: the status of the profession should be guaranteed by law and the law should define the qualifications of professionals. A profession also requires a permanent system of financing;
- a differentiated occupational field that can be separated from other fields: it includes a special sphere of activities;
- specialised knowledge and a scientific basis for work;
- an academic (university) education for an occupational field that needs specific scientific knowledge;
- professional autonomy: the profession controls the quality and ethos of the work by means of professional ethics;
- an occupational interest and pressure organisation.

There is a lively discussion going on concerning youth work as a profession. Sercombe (2010) has argued that youth work is a profession whether or not it is

recognised as one and whether or not it organises itself that way. He claims that a profession is not defined by a set of attributes or practices, but by a relationship. As a profession, youth work is constituted by a particular kind of relationship with the young people who are its clients. At a general level, these views are not completely contradictory. The professional attributes of youth work can be interpreted as signs of recognition and identification of youth work professionals' special relationship with young people. Correspondingly, professional strategies can be seen as ways to ensure that youth work based on the special relationship between youth workers and young people as clients can be carried out.

First phase: from voluntarism to occupation

In Finland modern youth work was born at the end of the 19th century. It was a time when traditional class society – based on the privileges of the estates – was being gradually replaced by modern civil society. During those days leading occupational groups – such as doctors, lawyers, military officers and even secondary school masters – were already developing as modern professions. A major, gradual change was taking place: earlier, the professions had been closely connected to the upper class of society, now modern professions had to gain their status themselves. It became possible for middle class people to become professionals within a profession. Expertise and education focused on a special discipline became a legitimating base of the professions (Konttinen 1993, 1998).

The status of youth work, however, was still incoherent. The concept of “youth work” or “youth worker” was not used very often. The earliest explicit definition of youth work I have come across is from 1910: it was formulated by a priest called A.W. Kuusisto in Helsinki. His definition of youth work was born in the context of the Lutheran State Church. However, it captured two sometimes inconsistent general features that have been peculiar to youth work for a century. Firstly, youth work was carried out by organisations and institutions usually led by adults. Secondly, youth work was also carried out and led by young people for the sake of young people (Kuusisto 1910).

During those early days youth work was usually done voluntarily, on a philanthropic basis, often by existing occupational groups such as teachers, priests and officers. But youth work was also carried out by undergraduates inspired by the idea of nationalistic popular education or enlightenment or Christian faith. In Finland, the first professional youth workers were employed by youth organisations like the Young Men's Christian Association, the Finnish Youth Movement (movement of rural youth) and the labour youth movement. In Church organisations and in the temperance movement there were employees who did youth work as part of their job. School clubs were usually led by teachers. From the very beginning, voluntary youth organisations engaged staff to organise voluntary-based youth work. The management of voluntary work was also a job right from the beginning. Early youth organisations and youth movements recruited employees from their own members and these paid workers were the forerunners of professional youth workers.

Though youth organisations and movements had received incidental state grants since the 1890s, there was no statutory financing system for youth work. Freedom of association and assembly, granted in 1906, was crucial for Finnish youth work

to function, but there was as yet no youth work legislation. Furthermore, there was no comprehensive vocational schooling for youth workers until the 1940s. Youth workers were trained differently in different youth organisations, if they were trained at all. Learning by doing and sharing experiences with (often very few) colleagues were still valuable methods of vocational education, but youth work did not have the base of a common discipline, even though some cultivated youth workers proposed that youth work should be based on the scientific knowledge of the day, drawing from pedagogy, psychology, theology and knowledge of society.

In certain historical and social situations, the preconditions for social innovation are in the air, only waiting for an appropriately idealistic and capable person to formulate the idea. In Finnish youth work the crucial moment was during the 1930s and the person was Guy von Weissenberg (Nieminen 1998). He was a Master of Science and a Boy Scout leader in the Swedish-speaking Boy Scout movement of Finland. He worked as a full-time head of youth work in the settlement of Kalliola in Helsinki and in the Finnish settlement movement. In his writings, Guy von Weissenberg outlined the basic features of Finnish youth work that would prevail for decades: a perception of youth organisations as the core of youth work; a claim to state support and grants; a demand for a special law for youth work; and a need for comprehensive schooling for youth workers. Weissenberg saw civic education as a main function of youth work, with group work as the leading social form of youth work. He defended the right of young people to be heard in youth work activities. Generally, Weissenberg felt that youth work should be a profession in its own right and that youth workers should earn their livelihood by doing youth work. His groundbreaking vision exceeded the intentions of individual youth organisations and movements.

Guy von Weissenberg was not just an idealist and theorist; he was also a man of administration and practice. Over the next few decades he tried – and in many cases succeeded – to realise his comprehensive vision of youth work. In the 1940s and 1950s he was a vice-president of the Finnish state youth work board and a chairman of its executive committee. Further, he was the president of the national youth council, the main editor of a youth work magazine and a lecturer in youth education at the Civic College, later the University of Tampere. He knew many languages well, travelled a lot and brought international influences to Finland. His abilities and knowledge of youth work were well known at the international level, too. In the 1950s Weissenberg worked as a youth work expert for the United Nations in India and Egypt. He was involved in many activities of the Unesco Youth Institute in Gauting, Germany.

There was no profession called youth work in Finland before the Second World War. Youth work was hardly a field that could provide a basis for paid occupational activities. Besides adequate social circumstances, youth work needed vigorous persons to take youth work forward as a profession. Guy von Weissenberg was such a person and I have named him the father of Finnish youth work.

Second phase: the age of professionalisation

The human catastrophe of the Second World War had an impact on the professionalisation of Finnish youth work. In wartime Finland, the *Nuorten Talkoot*

(Neighbourhood help of youth) movement involved about 200 000 to 300 000 children and young people. The word "Talkoot" is an old Finnish word which suggests mutual voluntary help, especially in agricultural work. The aim of the movement was to stimulate children and young people to engage in activities such as picking berries, collecting brushwood, recycling and helping out people facing difficulties at home and in the neighbourhood. The movement was led by the leaders of youth organisations. Through this movement youth work got a lot of publicity and respect on the home front, and youth work also proved its competence in working with youth. The other face of the movement was, of course, the mobilisation of children and young people in wartime.

The overall development of the professions after the Second World War is linked to the development of the welfare state. The idea that the state and public authorities will take care of many aspects of social life is connected with the division of labour, with employees working in strictly limited areas to produce state-based services. In the case of Finnish youth work this developmental aspect was also somewhat conflicted. There have been many – paid and voluntary – practitioners of youth work outside of the state and municipalities. There have also been intense discussions, even quarrels, about the role of the public administration in youth work.

From the 1940s to the late 1980s the professionalisation of Finnish youth work gained momentum. Youth work was increasingly differentiated as a field in its own right, various occupational interest groups emerged, higher education for youth workers was developed, legislation concerning youth work was enacted, and scientific research on youth work increased.

In the 1940s public opinion, politicians and state authorities supported the aspirations of youth organisations and youth workers to strengthen the status of youth work. The first post for youth work in the state administration was established in the Ministry of Education in 1944. The national youth work board was also launched. They became the channels through which the aims of youth work were pursued in public administration. The Ministry of Education and the national youth work board took on the establishment of municipal youth work boards as one of their first practical tasks. At the end of the 1940s, there were about 300 municipal youth work boards in Finland and in 1950 there were about 50 full-time youth workers in municipalities. Agrarian Finland also recognised youth work, even if the need and development were strongest in the few growing cities.

The professionalisation of Finnish youth work was advanced by the demarcation of the boundaries between youth work and school, popular education, social work, temperance work and sports. During the 1940s and 1950s the state youth work board made many statements regarding youth work's independent administrative place within municipalities. The board defended youth work's autonomy against local politicians and authorities in the countryside where they wanted to combine youth work with other administrative branches. Youth work people saw school as too inflexible and conservative, and popular education was more oriented towards adults. Social work had limited target groups, different ethos, different methods and it concentrated too much on individual problems. From youth work's view, temperance work was seen as too narrow and the competitiveness of sports was not suitable for youth work. Youth work had to be youth work.

The education of professional youth workers was therefore developed. The comprehensive education of youth workers began in 1945 in Civic College (later the

University of Tampere). The main subject, “youth education”, was taught for 24 years by Guy von Weissenberg. From the 1940s to the 1960s, youth education was the main discipline for the youth work profession. Also in the 1940s, youth workers founded their first professional association, but it did not succeed in attracting participants from different fields and levels of youth work. Youth workers, advisors of the young farmers’ clubs and the students of Civic College had their own associations already. Even today, youth workers have not been able to set up a unified professional association to promote their professional interests.

Alongside the deepening professionalisation of Finnish youth work, the co-operation of voluntary youth organisations was also developed. In 1945, the National Council of Finnish Youth Organisations was established, with Weissenberg as its president. After the World Federation of Democratic Youth was established in 1945 in London, the membership of the Finnish youth council in international youth bodies became a difficult question. The Finnish youth council was a member of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (“Eastern bloc”) but withdrew from it in 1948, though it did not join the World Assembly of Youth (“Western bloc”). Adopting this neutral position, the Finnish youth council succeeded in collecting together all the significant youth organisations in Finland. Finally, however, the Finnish youth council got into trouble because of its relations with the Soviet Union and the council collapsed at the beginning of the 1960s.

One of the most important tasks of the National Council of Finnish Youth Organisations was to organise the Cultural Performance Competitions of Finland’s Youth. The first competitions were organised in 1947 in Helsinki with 600 participants representing 16 youth organisations. The competitions featured drama, dance, music, literature, public speaking, art and photography, among others, and aimed to awaken the interest of young people in cultural activities as well as discover new artists. In the 1960s, after the collapse of the youth council, the Ministry of Education took responsibility for cultural competitions. Under the guidance of the ministry and local communities, competitions were opened up to all young people. Thus cultural youth work formed one of the professional tasks of Finnish youth work.

Regular financing for youth work was made available from the Ministry of Education in 1945. By 1947 there was enough money in the budget to give small state subsidies directly to youth organisations. The Finnish state has supported youth organisations ever since. The professionalisation of youth work reached a peak in the 1970s when legislation on youth work was finally prescribed, 40 years after Weissenberg’s proposal. Because of various disagreements, two separate laws were prescribed: one for municipal youth boards (1972), and one for state grants for national youth organisations (1974). Finally, these two laws were combined as the Youth Work Act in 1986. In the 1970s and 1980s there were defined qualifications for municipal youth workers in the legislation, but these were overruled in the 1990s. In all, however, youth work legislation laid the legal basis for the profession’s funding.

During the 1980s, municipal youth work obtained official permission to arrange youth activities independently of voluntary youth organisations. This tendency arose from the old observation that youth organisations did not reach all young people. Youth houses were the main resources for municipalities to arrange youth activities themselves. There was a growing criticism of what took place in these local youth houses – sometimes they were seen as “municipal rain shelters”

without serious content or pedagogical activities. As a result of this critique, youth houses were developed by means of community education and participatory projects. From the viewpoint of professionalisation this was problematic, because many youth house workers had no professional education. Many of them were part-time workers employed by means of government employment appropriation. On the other hand, the legitimation and growing number of municipal youth houses and field workers meant that the professionalisation of youth work was progressing.

During the era of professionalisation (from the 1940s to the 1980s), youth work used quite traditional professional strategies to strengthen its status. Youth work tended to distinguish itself from school, popular education, social work, temperance work and sports. Youth work got its own state and local administrative branches, university level education and legislation. All this demarcated the field of youth work and defined educated youth workers as a professional group. Youth work has also, since the 1960s, tried to extend its functions to new areas in the broader context of youth policy: youth work is trying to influence the growth environments and living conditions of young people in every sphere of their lives, including that outside of the control of youth work.

The process of youth work's professionalisation was evident, but youth work, ultimately, only achieved the status of a semi-profession. Its professional status was still far from the ideal, especially when compared to that of doctors, lawyers, teachers, psychologists or even social workers.

Third phase: the days of professional contradictions

In many interpretations the most recent period, starting in the early 1990s, is seen as a time of transition from traditional professionalism towards a new kind of expertise (see, for example, Duyvendak, Knijn and Kremer 2006; Konttinen 1998; Exworthy and Halford 1999). This period is arguably too close for serious historical analysis and general conclusions, but some tentative observations can be made. The social, structural and cultural changes of the late modern information society have undermined the platform of modern professionalism and expertise. These changes may be summarised as follows.

First, professions have finally lost their upper-class nature. Many service professions of the welfare state have been middle class from the very beginning. Professionalisation has also suffered from inflation because so many occupational groups have wanted to become recognised as professions. The "academic drift" of vocational education is evident in many occupational fields. The development of the education of youth workers in Finland is an example of this.

Second, the distance between professionals and ordinary people has diminished because of the increased levels of schooling. People are much more capable of evaluating the work of professionals; it is not so easy for them to hide behind jargon. This is also the case in youth work: everybody has been young and everybody seems to know how to interact with youth. It is a challenge to convince people of youth work's special ability to address young people's issues.

Third, modern professions have produced specialised expertise which can lead to inappropriate or even dangerous consequences for society. The complexity of post-modern society demands that professionals educate themselves continuously and evaluate, for example, the moral and ecological consequences of their work. It is not possible to gain valid professional schooling once and for all in a changing world.

Fourth, expertise nowadays derives not just from national contexts, but also local and global networks. To solve local, global and “multi-filament” individual tasks societies need new kinds of expert groups wherein the narrow cliques of professions are transcended. Experts cannot be tied to their professions in the same ways as before; they have to be capable of working in multi-professional teams or organisations. However, professions must identify what the expertise is that they will bring to such networks.

Fifth, there are social, economic and administrative developments challenging the power of professionalism. Accountability, bureaucracy, consumerism, managerialism and marketisation can restrict or guide the autonomy of independent professionals. This means that the ethical principles of youth work can be replaced for example by the principles of cost efficiency (Duyvendak et al. 2006; Exworthy and Halford 1999). The rise of performance management, professional leadership and evaluation studies are examples of these developments in youth work, too.

Some theorists even talk about de-professionalisation because they think that the status of the professions is weakening. But there is also a lot of evidence that the professions are still alive and well – or at least well enough. It is also possible to find signs of re-professionalisation.

In Finnish youth work we can see signs of both de-professionalisation and re-professionalisation. First, some features of de-professionalisation. During the last 20 years the specific area of youth work has become obscure. For example, since the reformation of the Youth Work Act in the 1990s, the municipal youth work boards are no longer obligatory. This means that authorities and politicians can arrange local youth work as they want. Youth work can be combined with or integrated into other administrative fields. So the boundaries between youth work and other fields are shifting. The qualifications for communal youth workers have also been removed from the Youth Work Act, or Youth Act, as it is now called. This means that it is possible to gain entry into youth work through many educational routes. Church-based youth work retains its own qualifications and independent youth organisations have autonomy in recruitment.

These days, there is a strong drive towards promoting multi-professional networks instead of sector-based youth work. The extension of the Youth Act in 2011 directs youth work towards multi-professional co-operation. Youth workers are also expected to work with more professionalised social occupations – chiefly with social workers, teachers, psychologists and the police. On the other hand, things have always been this way in youth work. Even during the era of professionalisation, many youth workers were employed simultaneously by several occupational branches. One could have been an official involved in, for example, youth work, temperance work and sports. In the countryside, in small municipalities, this was often an economic necessity.

These signs of de-professionalisation do not necessarily imply that the quality of youth work has weakened. Hopefully, they demonstrate that youth work has met new challenges or that youth work has not professionalised fully, whether this is desirable or not.

On the other hand, the last 20 years have thrown up trends in Finnish youth work that suggest strengthening professionalisation. The first is the development of the education of youth workers. While the courses at the University of Tampere ran into changes in the 1990s, the new form of education was established at poly-technic level, in universities of applied sciences. Now, youth work education has been re-started at the university level. University of applied sciences level and university level education mean that the training of youth workers is increasingly established at the tertiary level in the Finnish educational system.

A new professional association has also emerged hand in hand with the new educational system of youth workers. The association has marked its 10th anniversary and is trying to bring together those youth and sport workers who have obtained degrees at a higher level. The new professional association and the Finnish Youth Co-operation Allianssi – a national service and lobbying organisation for youth work – were involved in a project to define the ethical principles of youth work. The principles were published in spring 2012. In the history of Finnish youth work there had been some attempts to define general ethical principles, but they did not succeed because of the disunity of the field. Youth workers of the Established Lutheran Church already had their ethical principles.

Noteworthy also is the development of youth research during the last 20 years. With the support of the state administration, youth research has offered interpretations of young people that have proved useful for youth work. Altogether, the education of youth workers, a professional association, the preparation of ethical principles and the strengthening of youth knowledge through research are very classical means of strengthening the status of this profession.

Conclusions

To draw conclusions, we need only to look at the outlines of the professionalisation of Finnish youth work. Before the Second World War voluntary-based youth work developed as a paid occupation. From the 1940s to the 1980s the professionalisation process was at its strongest and youth work reached the status of a semi-profession. Late modern youth work has faced the contradictions of late modern professionalism, but nevertheless the process of professionalisation is still ongoing.

Finnish youth work reflects the classical strategies of professionalism. Many strategies represent the “soft closure of youth work markets” instead of hard association-based unionism. Educated and professional youth workers have gained some autonomy or have some advantages over other actors in the field, but they do not have a complete monopoly on working with youth. It is obvious, besides professional interests, that behind explicit or implicit professional strategies there has been the will to do youth work well enough. When we look at the history of Finnish youth work it is clear that professional discussions have paid serious attention to the different possibilities for young people to participate in youth work. Professionalisation seems to have had a positive effect on the accessibility of youth work.

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Youth policy and participation in Sweden: a historical perspective

by Torbjörn Forkby

In this chapter I will concentrate on youth policy development in Sweden in the last century, drawing mainly on reports from public committees and governmental agencies. A special focus will be directed towards youth leisure activities and participation. Much of the information here is also available in the Swedish Board of Youth Affairs publication series *Focus 10*. I will comment on the current situation in respect of youth clubs and discuss a model for youth work that can perhaps sum up the Swedish tradition.

First, I would like to define some concepts and signal the limitations and biases inherent to this chapter. Youth work is a broad concept: it is applied in different forms by different actors within as well as across countries. The welfare regimes in place in different countries indicate the extent of public engagement and the content of activities related to youth work. The scope of this chapter is oriented towards the characteristics of Sweden's large public sector and correspondingly high expectations as to what should be achieved within it. My research focuses on the public sector, so I will talk less about youth work in the voluntary sector, in sports clubs or in social movements and more about arrangements such as what in Sweden

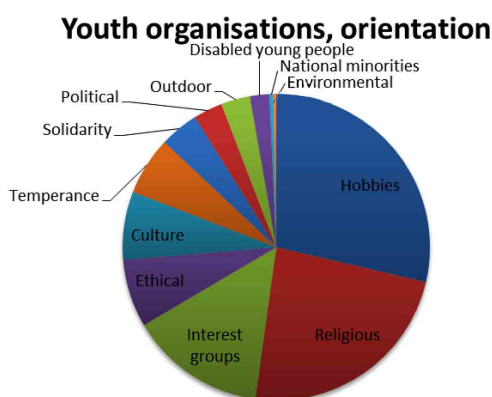
is called recreational centres (main target group young people in the age group 13-16) or youth (culture) houses (for older youth, often 16-25 years). These facilities show resemblance to what in other countries are called youth clubs or sometimes community centres depending on their specific orientation. The policy analyses will mainly address the facilities for the younger youth, that is the recreational centres. In talking about “recreational centres” and “youth clubs” as interchangeable concepts I am of course aware that traditions and practices vary across regions and countries. By these facilities I mean physical spaces such as a building, or spaces within a building, to which young people come on a voluntary basis. In Sweden, such spaces usually have municipality-employed staff. Their activities vary from one centre to another, but usually include opportunities to play games, participate in free sports activities, undergo musical training or simply socialise with friends.

In fact, the specific concept “youth work” is not often used to define the sector in Sweden, but the concept is used in this article since one can find great similarities to it in actual practice with young Swedish people.

Youth leisure: notes on the current situation

Even if recreational centres for young people are a part of the national youth policy towards young peoples’ leisure, this is mainly focused on participation in different associations. Government financial support is therefore mainly channelled to national leisure-oriented youth organisations. This support aims at promoting stimulating leisure activities, democracy, non-discrimination and gender equality. At least 60% of members must be between 16 and 29 years old for an association to receive government funds; about half of the young people in Sweden are members of an association. There are some funds that groups or even individuals can apply for within different programmes (for example for international exchange) or at local level to support young persons ideas (for example to make it possible to arrange certain activities, concerts etc).

Figure 1 – Youth organisations (other than sports clubs) by membership. In total 600 000 members divided into different orientations.



Source: Governmental report 2009.

The main organised activity among young people takes place in sports clubs, which involve about 30% of Swedish youth. Among other national youth organisations, the association for role-playing games is the largest with 80 000 members (receiving about €1.8 million in government support). Figure 1 compares youth organisations other than sports clubs by membership numbers (Governmental report 2009:259-264).

→ Recreational centres and youth clubs

Today there are about 1 350 recreational centres in Sweden's 290 municipalities. These resemble what are sometimes called youth clubs in other countries and are mainly targeted at youth between 13 to 16 years of age. The recreational centres attract about 5% to 10% of the targeted population. In addition there are about 150 "youth houses" (mainly for youth between 17 to 25 years of age). About two thirds of the recreational centres/youth houses fall under the responsibility of the public sector, with the rest being run by non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Most staff members working in these facilities are trained recreational leaders from the two-year vocational training programme at the "folk high schools", but there are great variations in the training received, and some workers lack formal training (Forkby, Johansson and Liljeholm Hansson 2008). Because of its low or uneven quality, the value of this education has been questioned.

There are about 3 700 recreational leaders in Sweden, with half employed in municipal leisure and culture departments, where most work at recreational centres and a minority at the youth houses. This occupational group is characterised by a relatively low mean age. Many are in temporary employment, have limited work experience, and are comparatively low paid. There is, in other words, room for improvement with respect to the competence and status of the occupation. The next section will trace the beginnings of the profession of youth work, as well as relevant youth policy.

The "social issue"

The year 1898 marked the starting point for the articulation of the Swedish state's responsibility towards children and young people (Lundström 1993). A governmental committee was set up to consider the "social issue". The committee was generally known as the "gang boys committee", a name that reveals a lot about its mission. Urbanisation and industrialisation processes had forced people to leave their homes in the countryside to look for a future in the growing cities. The working classes were about to be organised and socialist agitation inspired by class conflicts around Europe had led the elites to fear the masses, whose living standards were exceedingly low. There was no social welfare system, housing conditions were poor, and there were hardly any organised leisure activities for youth. Young people, habitually gathered at the street corners in their leisure time, were perceived as threats to the social order in a situation similar to what Whyte later wrote about in his famous book *Street corner society* (1943), about young people living in slums. The committee, therefore, in dealing with issues connected to the leisure sphere, addressed child neglect, rowdiness and criminality mainly from a moral perspective.

Leisure activities, if there were any, were up to social movements such as the temperance, religious and sports associations to organise. One example is

Birkagården in Stockholm, the first settlement/community centre in Sweden, established in 1912 by religious and socially committed people.

An expanded concept of youth emerges

We will now move from the first realisation of a more articulated public responsibility towards vulnerable and disruptive youth to a broader view on the youth situation. It took several decades for youth to be discussed as a social category in its own right, with the setting up in 1939 of a second governmental committee, namely the Youth Care Committee. The committee was a milestone in Sweden's history of youth policy, bringing as it did a more comprehensive, scientific approach to bear on the situation of youth. In this way it challenged the prevailing highly moral orientation of discussions on youth. The committee's proposals can be seen as an aspect of the Scandinavian (or social democratic) welfare state (Esping-Andersen 1990), which demanded extensive involvement on the part of public authorities not just in politics, but also in the economy and people's everyday lives. With youth, the underlying idea driving the committee was higher engagement from the state, both for preventive and rehabilitating measures. Despite the word "care" in the committee's title it looked broadly at youth-related questions. It considered young people's living and working conditions, leisure activities, sexual habits, and their need for psychiatric care. It reported on associations for youth, commercial entertainment and other sorts of leisure activities. The committee worked through the Second World War, which Sweden was not part of, though it was clearly affected. The experience of 1930s Germany, where the Nazi movement organised masses of youth, was a counterbalancing one. It was thought that too much governmental involvement in young people's leisure should be avoided. A balance was established wherein the state provided support while the actual responsibility for activities was taken on by local authorities and NGOs.

A motivation for the committee was to challenge the moral indignation involved in discussions about young people's behaviour. This was especially obvious when it came to the moral panic about public dances. In newspapers, young people were portrayed as erotic animals seduced by cheap American youth culture, indulging in public dances (Frykman 1988). The concern focused on unemployed youth and organised leisure activities (Governmental report 1951). The committee, being more scientifically oriented and empirically grounded, effectively countered the prevailing opinions on public dances by thoroughly investigating young people's leisure activities and showing that it was not the allegedly immoral unemployed and those who lacked organised leisure activities in youth associations who visited dance halls the most. On the contrary, it was those who were perceived as steady – those who were active in youth associations, had jobs or were studying (Governmental report 1945) – who were regular dance hall visitors. One explanation is that this group had the financial means to take advantage of the new youth culture. An expression of this scientific discourse can be seen in the desire for norms concerning habits and behaviour. The committee found it hard to dictate such a norm for young people's dancing and entertainment, but offered this calming judgment:

It would of course be beneficial to have some kind of objective norm telling how intense dancing can be and still be judged as normal ... However, on the ground of empirical evidence, [we can say] it is only a small part of young people who actually over-actively visits open-air dances or dance halls (Governmental report 1945:58)

Pedagogy and participation for youth

The Youth Care Committee discussed youth participation and influence even if these issues were not considered a top priority. On the contrary, the committee was preoccupied with how adult society could participate in, influence and gain knowledge of young people's lives. This included systematic collection of information in various areas. In a report on youth leisure activities, for example, the committee ponders state intervention and support to young people's leisure activities, asking the fundamental question: "How and by what means do we want to influence youth in its choice of leisure activity?" (Governmental report 1945:18). The answer furnished by the committee was that free time was a problem for (some) youth, particularly those living in low-quality cramped housing with parents who did not provide adequate social and emotional support and in occupations that did not allow them to develop their talents or competences or challenge their strengths. This was believed to lead to unstructured free time outside the family and away from adult supervision. To address this situation, the committee declared, youth should be educated and fostered so they could make better use of their free time. Leisure time should involve productive activity, the pursuit of hobbies and interests, and interaction with fellows in a spirit of companionship. In short, "the independent, active and societal engaged type of youth that here is told as exemplary, is to be fostered." (Governmental report 1945:20)

State-supported socialisation could achieve such a goal, it was believed, through pedagogical and voluntary means. Free-time socialisation would complement family life and preferably be organised through youth associations such as sports clubs, scout movements, and so on. The committee was nevertheless aware that organised leisure in youth associations was not attractive to everyone. Other measures were thereby needed to suit so-called "association-unattached" youth. One response was the expansion of "open activity" in recreational centres, youth clubs and cafes. Hans-Erik Olson (1992) argues that the perceived need to control a new youth generation was the driving force behind such youth policies. However, in reading the committee reports, one can find many instances of an openness to the new manifestations of youth culture. Morally charged debates about the youth generation, for instance in the case of public dances, were more prominent in the mass media (Frykman 1988).

It was proposed that youth clubs/recreational centres should look and feel like a home, so young people would gain from meeting their friends and being guided by leaders in a comfortable milieu. The inspiration for these centres came from the English youth clubs. In the clubs, young people were meant to engage themselves in study, research on a variety of topics, handicrafts, and activities such as table tennis and games. Fostering ambition had to be balanced against young people's own interests. Already in this early articulation of a policy for youth, one can find ideas of youth participation and influence. For example, the committee was sceptical about private interests behind youth meeting points, since they were suspected of being controlled by enterprises that were interested in publicity. Since many more young people started to work at an earlier age back then, this concerned a significant proportion of youth. The committee declared that it would be in the best interests of all parties if recreational centres set up by enterprises were left at young people's disposal (Author's translation. Governmental report 1945:29).

The committee underlined the importance of pedagogy in the public recreational centres. This had to avoid an authoritarian style, instead giving room to young

people to demonstrate their own strength, capacity and initiatives. Young people were expected to participate and take responsibility, especially if they had limited opportunity to do so in their occupations (Governmental report 1945). Young people had to be given the opportunity to participate and enjoy influence in the activities they took part in, rather than be invited to a ready-made table, and in the committee's words: "It's not from gratitude but from a feeling of loyalty and responsibility, that a living interest in and attachment to the clubs should grow". However, the committee was not interested in letting youth take full responsibility for running the clubs, and set limits to participation: "If the participants will benefit from the activity, feel comfortable and joy, a very competent leader is provided. It is far from satisfying to let young people look after themselves" (Governmental report 1945:45). The youth care committee mentions several times, however, that the participant or "guest" should enjoy active influence in the centre's activities, preferably through some kind of "user" association, and should also be given a place on the recreational centre board. The board had overall responsibility for activities and also employed staff members.

Suggestions were also made by the committee that some kind of new political board of youth affairs at the municipal level would be better qualified to deal with these issues, instead of the existing child welfare board. Such a board would not function satisfactorily without the participation of young people. It should be mentioned, however, that by "young people" the committee meant people who were younger than 35 years old, and participation would take place in the leisure time of these individuals, who were likely to be employed already.

One may conclude at this point that for the first time, a more comprehensive youth policy had been articulated in Sweden, and that there were proposals and attempts to establish forms of what we today call "user participation". User participation could be informal, in terms of visits and participation in activities, or formal, in terms of representation on boards and steering committees. Youth participation and influence on a broader scale was also under consideration, with proposals to include youth on other boards at a municipal level, that is to influence arrangements that were not specific to youth (these proposals were however not realised at that time).

Prevention reconsidered

Recreational centres were established in almost every city in Sweden, as well as in smaller towns, starting from the 1940s. The most impressive recreational centres were built in the newly built housing areas under the Million Programme in the 1960s and 1970s. These recreational centres included special rooms for sports, informal socialising, photography, and so on. They were usually still run within the ambit of the child welfare agency, which implied a socio-political angle since this agency had the responsibility to protect and support vulnerable children. Of special importance was preventive work with disruptive boys (Olson 2008a).

An ideological shift towards a different kind of youth work was formulated in a commission report from 1967 (Governmental report 1967). No longer would it be the risk of social maladjustment that would guide the programmes, but individual predispositions and prerequisites. In other words, the perspective was shifted from prevention to promotion, and instead of threats and risks, strengths and resources

came into focus. The report also emphasised the need for recreational centres to train and develop young people in democratic practices and decision making.

The ambitions articulated in the late 1960s to work on promotion at the youth clubs were, however, difficult to realise. One explanation could be resistance to change; another could be that social disturbances were becoming more common as a consequence of a loosening in the legislation on alcohol. Semi-strong beer, for a couple of years in the 1970s, was sold in ordinary groceries (an experiment in Sweden that was abolished some years later). This resulted in drunken youngsters visiting the youth clubs. Narcotics had also made their entrance, and the resulting situation led to an intense discussion among recreational leaders. While some wanted drug-free centres, others thought it was better if these young people continued to be welcomed into the fairly organised recreational centres so that they were off the streets. Some centres actually had rooms where young people could get high, preferably on marijuana or hashish (Olson 2008b). The situation soon got out of hand and the campaign for drug-free centres began in earnest. The focus on confronting the drugs problem, which was part of the liberalisation of the 1960s and 1970s, meant that to some extent youth policy stalled. Prevention of social problems was the most important goal, not capacity building.

Commercialistic dystopia

At the end of the 1970s an important report, "Not for sale", was published (Statens Ungdomsråd 1981). It captured the zeitgeist and heralded a new approach to youth policy in Sweden; it is perhaps the most pessimistic report on the situation of children and young people that have been published by a government agency in Sweden. Right from the beginning, one is invited to read about marginalised youth, abused or neglected by their parents. While some young people have a hard time coping with all that has to be done, the commission says, life for others is mere emptiness. A dystopian future is portrayed in its entirety. Children were said to be using media and just about "reveled in the science-fiction-like world that will become the future of tomorrow" (Author's translation. Statens ungdomsråd 1981:66).

The great threat to young people, according to the report, is commercialism. Youth tend to be consumers, not just of goods and material things, but also of lifestyles and identities. The debate on narcissistic culture, as expounded by theorists such as Christopher Lasch (1978), was clearly relevant. With leisure and participation, in particular, the question of whether youth are consumers or producers became central: how often were young people involved all the way from the articulation of ideas, planning for an activity and being responsible for enactment? Were they simply being allowed to choose from a ready-made array of activities? What is the role of the recreational leader – is it to promote the capacity and entrepreneurship of youth or is it to offer youth-friendly activities? The commission believed that commercialism had turned youth into consumers and generally created a tougher social climate, one in which children were removed from adults and rendered incapable of controlling their own lives. The report begins with this sobering assessment: "A society in fear of the future doesn't care much about the next generation. Ways to give the child love and a feeling of this importance doesn't liquidate the underlying feeling of coldness" (Statens ungdomsråd 1981:77).

The commission queried the very notion of "free time", bounded as it is by practical tasks such as travelling to work and back, and given that commercialism has

penetrated just about every inch of the life-world. The general role of people, it stated, has changed from being a part of production to being given a place in consumption. The commission turned against the developing service culture, in which municipalities had an array of leisure opportunities for young people to choose from as leisure consumers. It suggested that it would be better to direct public spending to voluntary organisations and programmes aimed at strengthening youth capacity to influence, and to self-organised groups. It also suggested that commercialism could be counteracted by supporting leisure activities in the local community – a kind of traditional “small village” idea. When youth participation is discussed in the report, in fact, it is primarily seen as a way to counteract the “service ideology”. The report concludes that young people must (together with persons of other ages) be given back the opportunity to take the responsibility that has been taken away from them:

A lot of the local opportunities of leisure today are too “ready-made”. Both children and youth are served leisure activities. The employed recreational leaders embrace the goal of offering as many activities as possible. The head of the municipality sees it as an obligation to offer as many and as expensive arenas as possible.

Children, young people and adults must be allowed participation, responsibility and belonging. The inhabitants in a neighbourhood must to a higher extent be given the responsibility of the local leisure- and culture-milieus. (Authors translation. Statens ungdomsråd 1981:521)

The issue of power

With the United Nation designating 1985 as International Youth Year, youth questions rose to the fore. The three goals stated for 1985 were participation, development and peace. Sweden chose to concentrate on participation, and also installed its first minister of youth (Ulf Lönnqvist). From here on, youth policy has sought to realise a comprehensive or holistic view on the situation of young people. In 1989, the second minister of youth, Margot Wallström, called in a committee to consider how democracy, participation and equality should be achieved and how international youth exchanges could be strengthened.

One of the commission’s reports, “Youth and Power” (Governmental report 1991), considered the possibility and inclination of young people to participate in and influence events in their free time. It notes in its introduction that though “participation has been a catchword in the debate on youth during the last ten years” (authors translation. Ibid:112), Swedish youth lacked substantial opportunities for real participation even with a relatively good knowledge of social affairs. The commission explained this partly in terms of barriers between generations, and partly by class differences that made it harder for certain groups to make their voices heard. In order to realise democracy for all groups of society, there had to be a more active and precise policy directing power, participation and youth questions. The committee proposed that a comprehensive youth policy be put in place, including a fuller view on the situation of youth, and a reformation of economic compensation to associations into a goal-oriented system. Funds were proposed to induce the political participation of youth and greater user participation in general. In discussing work at the recreational centres two goals were mentioned:

- the recreational centres have a responsibility to work for greater equality between the sexes;
- better collaboration between agents is called for to address multi-dimensional youth affairs.

In addressing leisure, the committee discussed how associations such as sports clubs could find new ways to encourage youth participation, for example by letting young persons join steering committees. To achieve this, adults had to be prepared to step back and make room for the younger generation, even to the extent of letting them make their own mistakes. The rationale behind this is that being responsible includes the right to make mistakes – and to learn from them. The culture of traditional youth associations wherein adults decide about activities and young people are activated had to be changed. Even timely and bureaucratic decision-making processes had to transform, if young people were to be engaged. Inspiration for this new *modus operandi* came from the social movement sphere, where organisations such as Greenpeace seemed to be more successful at attracting young people.

The youth committee also discussed recreational centres from the perspective of participation and influence. It was open to a greater influence from civil society in the recreational centres. It was proposed that all or at least parts of the activities should be decentralised to local managers in association with community groups and local associations and clubs. The committee was influenced by projects that were set up to develop “club democracy”. But there were potential hindrances, too, such as staff attitudes and habits, youth (dis)inclination to take greater responsibility, lack of training in giving voice to or even recognising one’s standpoint, rules and legislation, as well as commercialism and a prolonged period of time that defined youth.

Importantly, the committee report emphasised that youth had to be offered “real” participation. This meant that young people were to be permitted to be in positions of power, and through this, learn what influence is about and take responsibility. This kind of reasoning was influenced by what was called the “free zone” or “free room” debate. The German socialisation theorist Thomas Ziehe was an important figure in Sweden (along with theorists from the British subculture school), and influenced a number of youth culture researchers (see Sernhede 1984). A “free room” meant a space free of adults and commercialism, a place where young people could develop so-called unusual learning processes with friends. This line of thinking would later be realised through self-organised youth clubs.

A study from 1991 (Henriksson) recounted that 86% of experts asked about youth affairs thought that youth had a low level of influence in society as a whole and 80% that they did not have influence in school. In the report, participation, responsibility and the perspective on youth as resources were connected in a way that has been a recurring theme in Sweden’s youth policy to the present day.¹⁶ The shift in perspective demanded that young people’s right to give voice to their opinions and to experience a real sense of participation also meant to be able to change things – that is to have real power. Scarcity of apartments, lack of jobs and educational matters were seen as the most important areas in youth policy. But youth participation, responsibility and influence were not far behind. Schools were seen as the key arenas to achieve the latter goals, but activities in leisure time were also perceived as important. Participation in cultural activities such as music and theatre were seen as natural. Responsibility was also related to youth from a pedagogical perspective; the capacity to take on a responsibility is not a given from the start but must be given opportunities to grow. This includes the

16. During this period Sweden had its second youth minister, and later EU Commissioner, Margot Wallström.

right to make mistakes. If young people are given responsibility the inclination to serve them ready-made activities will be counteracted, it was felt. A central theme was a close connection between participation and responsibility:

[Y]outh need real participation, influence and responsibility. Perhaps it is even more important ... that one is allowed to make mistakes and that youth are going to make such mistakes. This is a good and natural way to learn. (Author's translation. Henriksson 1991:22)

One question arises when talking about responsibility – what is it for? The report suggested that young people should be able to organise their own meeting places, and that they should become leaders in associations and organise events, but also that they should be enabled to take more responsibility in their families, for instance by carrying out chores and voluntary work in social care. But this notion of responsibility also met with criticism from those who felt that adults were doling out tasks to young people, which they then took responsibility for completing. Young people, Henriksson notes, should instead be invited from the start to decide on what tasks needed to be accomplished and then become partners in the planning:

“Tasks?” This is the most ridiculous thing I’ve heard. It doesn’t have to do with distributing tasks here and there, but to give young people a place in society. If you do that, you don’t have to give them tasks. Then they take them. (Author’s translation. Henriksson 1991:25)

Participation and influence are elements of power. If young people are to gain power, others must agree to make room – to back off. Youth must be let into those arenas where agendas are made and decisions are taken. This has to do with a change in attitudes so as to transform distrust of youth into a sense of reliance and trust. But it also demands structural changes, such as a lowered voting age and the setting up of local youth councils.

Existing institutional systems and cultural norms have been identified as barriers to youth entering society as equals. Those who lack experience of associations and possess meagre social networks find it difficult to understand and deal with the structures already in place. The situation calls for organisations to become more youth friendly, and to come up with appropriate socialisation structures for youth.

Towards a holistic view in youth policy

The need for a holistic view on the youth situation has been a recurring theme since youth questions were first discussed. But it became a central theme in the first half of the 1990s (Governmental report 1992). This was spelled out in a government bill:

Youth politics can therefore not just be for example leisure politics or educational politics. The point of departure must instead be the accumulated picture of the reality young people live in and their needs, resources and problems. (Author’s translation. Governmental proposal 1993/94)

Youth participation and influence were still important questions, coupled to the need to provide room for youth initiatives and responsibility. It is through enhanced responsibility, after all, that democratic working methods can be instilled in youth. In the aforementioned government bill, state involvement in youth affairs was

strengthened by a reformulation of the assignment to the National Board of Youth Affairs. From this moment, the government started to talk about a comprehensive or holistic youth policy, instead of sectoral policies that pertained to different aspects of a young person's life. A primary goal was to enhance intersectoral collaboration, for example between schools, social services, the police and NGOs. In the same manner that new managerial ideas had influenced other parts of the public sector, it became obvious in youth politics that from now on these should be managed by objectives.¹⁷ In the government's opinion, the most important steps were to secure democratic schooling/socialisation and enhanced equality between sexes; counteract social maladjustment, giving more attention to migrant youth; and to develop opportunities for participation. These steps were broken down into subsidiary objectives that were meant to be followed up.

On culture, a national commission considering the policy in the culture sphere pointed out that youth culture and expression had to be respected to a higher degree (Governmental report 1995). Youth creativity and the desire to create had to be taken account of. To enhance this, changes were necessary in the often slow-moving traditional organisations. It was also seen as important for youth to join in cultural activities, because these involvements brought out the motivation, passion and engagement of youth.

In 1997, three goals were set out to guide state-formulated youth politics (Governmental report 1997). These goals are easily translated into ideas of promotion and capacity building:

- young people shall be provided with the opportunity to live independent lives (especially to do with employment and housing);
- young people shall be given the opportunity to exercise real power, influence and participation;
- youth shall be perceived as resources and the potential of their critical thinking taken account of.

It was further decided that youth policy was not to be caged in by any specific area or sector, but would be an integral part of all areas concerning young people. To make the policy more effective, several measurable goals were stipulated. The National Board of Youth Affairs was to be responsible for the follow-up of goals and reporting to the government. One conclusion was that girls still had fewer opportunities for real participation as a result of the fact that most youth institutions such as arenas and youth clubs had been to a great extent designed with special attention to boys' needs. Another conclusion was that societal institutions, in more recent times, had in fact improved in their inclusion of young persons' cultural expressions, and in preparing to allow them into decision-making processes (see also Ungdomsstyrelsen 1996). In the Governmental report (1997) it was also proposed that the municipalities be more attentive in promoting meeting points for young people where they could pursue their hobbies and interests and take part in cultural activities, and become involved in discussions with peers and adults. In sum, these meeting points would be places in which democracy would be realised. Leisure and cultural institutions had to be better aware of what young persons really wanted, and what they thought about

17. The ideas that became more influential from the 1990s on are often conceptualised as "New Public Management". In short, this is about letting the principle of the market influence management of the public sector. Objectives, auditing and decentralised responsibility are common aspects (Almqvist 2006).

existing choices. To gain this knowledge, regular surveys of leisure habits at the municipality level were suggested. The report also nurtured a hope that more agencies would develop real user-governed activities. They proposed a change in the funding system for youth activities so that young people could be given small amounts of support in a short time (i.e. in a non-bureaucratic manner) so they did not lose their motivation.

In the subsequent government bill, "On terms of Youth" (Government proposal 1998/99), most of the propositions from the Governmental report of 1997 were transformed into policies, especially management through objectives and the need for intersectoral youth work. It is also mentioned that participation and influence are at the very core of Swedish policy for youth, and that the point of departure should be to value young peoples' resources and sense of responsibility. Regarding leisure activities, the bill states that the most important thing is to support young people's own organising abilities and to reform traditional associations in a way that makes young people feel at home and motivated to contribute while promoting participation in the activities offered. Youth were also to be allowed greater influence in policies at the municipality level through youth councils and other forms of participation, as well as in governmental authorities and policies at the national level. The bill also introduced somewhat new themes, namely internationalisation and youth exchange.

Promotion of vulnerable youth

Six years later, another government bill on youth policy was presented, "Power to decide – the right to welfare (Government proposal 2004/05). The bill discusses opportunities for young people to participate and be included in society. A conclusion is that culture and leisure activities should be strengthened, especially for vulnerable youth living in poor suburbs. The so-called "open activities" at the recreational centres were said to have a strategic role in establishing local infrastructure to enhance youth participation and creativity at a local level. What the government called "the new national policy for youth" aimed to decrease differences in life circumstances in the youth group, raise awareness of problems, and support those young persons who had a harder time than others in accessing welfare and reaching real positions of power. The government stipulated renewed goals for the youth politics: a reform of the auditing system and new prioritisation, in which contributions to young persons' life circumstances were held as important. Two objectives were declared: youth should have the opportunity to access welfare and real power.

By welfare, it was meant that every young person should have a good material, cultural and social living standard. By power, it was meant that youth should have the chance both to engage in and affect societal change, to control their own lives, and be a part of the development of their local community. Four different perspectives were to guide youth policy:

- resource-perspective: youth should be seen as resources, focusing on their capacities and strengths;
- rights-perspective: every youth has an equal right to welfare and power;
- independence-perspective: youth have the right to live an independent life;
- diversity-perspective: youth are not a homogenous group but should be understood in terms of various backgrounds, traits and needs.

These four perspectives were meant to penetrate youth policy in different areas, and their impact was to be followed up yearly.

The (social-democratic) government of the time emphasised support and compensation to those groups which were the worst off economically, socially and culturally. The intention was that all young people would be given equal opportunities and rights. The need to strengthen the identities of young persons was underlined as well as the need for work that gave them tools to be involved in democratic processes, including the opportunity to have one's voice be heard and taken account of. There was a special emphasis on open leisure activities, which were seen to have a key role in the promotion of young persons' social development.

Similar goals as described in the previous sections are to be found in the 2009 declaration by the centre-right government of the time (Skrivelse 2009/10:53). One recurring goal is that youth must have the opportunity to access welfare and to participate. Subsidiary objectives cover education and learning, work and support, health and maladjustment, influence and representation, and culture and leisure. A greater focus on civil society and NGOs taking responsibility for youth leisure activities may also be noted. However, a major investment proposed by the former government in recreational centres was removed directly after the centre-right government came into power.

Highest on the agenda today (in 2012/13) in Sweden seems to be the reformation of schools and the educational system, youth unemployment and disturbances of social order in some suburbs. The promotion of young persons' leisure is relatively low on the political agenda.

Concluding remarks on youth participation

There are a few recurring themes in Swedish youth policy. Questions of participation and influence have been of interest ever since youth policies were formulated in the 1940s. In a historical review it is possible to broadly mark out three phases or periods, in respect to what were perceived as threatening and attractive goals for the situation of youth.

During the first period, as is clearly seen in the reports from the Youth Care Committee, state officials were involved in building a base of various arrangements in order to enhance young persons' growth into responsible citizens. But the state also acted as its own watchdog, withholding itself from being overly controlling of young people's lives, especially their leisure. State involvement was at this time two-faced; the state can be said to have been its own enemy. Youth participation, it was felt, should be protected from too much state intervention, as well as from private interests.

The second period is exemplified by the "Not for Sale" report from 1981. The expansion of the welfare state had led to a varied system of supporting measures, but one thing had been forgotten – peoples' lack of orientation in the newly built society. The welfare state had its black holes. Youth participation was perceived as a part of the struggle against the enemy of commercialism that was colonising young

people's life projects, dreams and hopes for the future. The enemies during this period were private interests and commercialism, which were perceived as letting the market transform human values and feelings into goods to be bought and sold.

During the third period, described in the report "Youth and Power" from 1991, the report targeted local authorities in order to stimulate them to reconsider their traditional way of looking at youth affairs. It called for a structure for youth participation to be built up through various forms of local youth councils, but also by letting youth access power in a more direct way, for instance through youth-organised meeting points. In this period, the municipality was not the enemy, but the counterpart that was challenged to become more involved.

Many of these lines of thought regarding youth participation are recurring. Still, there are some changes in what official policy underlines from one period to the next. For example, to what extent participation is to be understood as being in power to influence decisions or if it has more to do with being recognised and taken account of may depend on the official view of the day. The latter has often been seen as leading to greater control of one's own life – to be in power regarding one's own circumstances or self. But perhaps views on youth participation and influence reflect the ever-changing relation between generations. They may therefore be seen as a symbol of the hopes and anxieties of both adults and young people.

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An overview of the history of youth work in Luxembourg

by Ralph Schroeder

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of the history and development of youth work in Luxembourg.

Youth work, in Luxembourg as much as anywhere else, can only exist if youth exists. In Luxembourg, again, like in most other places, the category “youth” began to exist with the industrialisation of the country. This industrialisation took place quite late, in the second half of the 19th century. Within 10 to 20 years, Luxembourg transformed from being a very rural country to one in the midst of industrialisation through the mining and steel industry. Until 1870, Luxembourg was a country of emigration. Poverty and famine in the rural areas compelled many people to leave the country for better opportunities. After 1870, with the beginning of industrialisation, the movement of people slowly reversed and Luxembourg became a country of immigrants. This development took place mainly in the south and the centre of the country. Thus, the conditions for emerging youth work only began to exist in the beginning of the 20th century.

Another important thing to understand is that Luxembourg society of that period was polarised into two

ideological camps. The liberals and socialists formed a left-wing ensemble of progressive forces opposed to the conservative, clerical, Catholic part of Luxembourg. The Catholic Church was a very powerful organisation that deeply influenced social life in Luxembourg. This division played an important role in the birth of the youth movements, which were all on one side or the other.

The youth movements, at a time when youth were emerging as a social category, for the first time seen as important for the future of society, wanted to give youth a place for self-organisation. But they were also part of a wider context where ideologies wanted to attract young people to their side. The progressive movement wanted young people to be part of a movement of individual and mass liberation, whereas the more conservative movement wanted to make sure young people stayed on the path of God and the Church. The main concern of this period seemed to be: to whom does youth belong?

There were contradictory aims present at the birth of youth organisations and youth work, between young people in the organisations who might have seen their youth work as spaces for self-organisation within the larger social context, and probably the adults in the organisations, who wanted to give young people the opportunity and a path to grow into society. Today's youth policy, too, exhibits that tension between giving space to young people's self-development and effectively integrating them into society. Indeed, when we look at the government's position on the Luxembourg national youth report from 2011, we see two main objectives to youth policy. On the one hand, youth policy should "accompany young people through these transitions, facilitate them, and must propose measures that allow adolescents to successfully see through their passage to adulthood". On the other hand, "youth policy will, therefore, place the concept of participation at its centre. It is a question of the social and political participation of individuals and the means placed at their disposal for them to assure their role in society, to influence their environment, and play a part in the future of our society." There we have a very similar dichotomy between integration and participation, similar to what we find at the birth of youth work and youth organisations.

The earliest youth organisations were student organisations. On the Catholic side there was the Katholischer Akademikerverein, or Catholic Organisation of Luxembourg Students, founded in 1910. On the left the Association Générale des Etudiants du Luxembourg, the so-called ASSOSS, was founded in 1912, bringing together students from liberal families in Luxembourg city.

The scout movement also started its existence quite early in Luxembourg. A teacher of English called Joseph Tockert, upon his return from England, introduced scouting during a conference of ASSOSS in 1913. Several scout groups began their activities thereafter.

It is interesting to note that not only scouting, but also football and tennis, were brought to Luxembourg from England in this way. The Football and Lawn Tennis Club, still running under the name of CS FOLA, was founded by another teacher of English after his return from England in 1906.

The first scout groups founded the National Federation of Luxembourg Scouts in 1916. By that time, the Catholic elite had understood that the scouting movement was attracting many young people. While at first scouting was considered with suspicion by the Catholic Church because of its Protestant roots and non-religious

leaders, local scout groups soon began to be founded within the Catholic youth organisations (Jünglingsvereine) and then in parishes throughout Luxembourg. These groups were later brought together in the Luxembourg Scouts Federation. The Association of Luxembourg Girl Guides was founded in 1915, whereas the Catholic Luxembourg Guides were founded in 1938.

After the First World War, and especially in the 1930s, a number of other organisations developed youth sections. It is interesting to note that in the Catholic movement particularly, an important number of organisations were founded for all sorts of groups. Examples include the young farmers group, and the Jeunesse Etudiante Chrétienne (JEC) for young Catholic students and then later young Catholic workers. After the Second World War, groups were developed for girls as well, which led to an impressive number of Catholic youth organisations in Luxembourg. The 1930s also saw the beginning of the youth hostel movement in Luxembourg with the opening of the first youth hostel and the establishment of the national federation of youth hostels. Like other youth movements, it had its roots in an international movement.

In the post-war years, a new way of considering young people slowly emerged. Luxembourg was not occupied during the Second World War, but it was integrated into the administrative and territorial organisation of the Third Reich. A significant number of young people in Luxembourg were incorporated into the Wehrmacht and sent to the eastern front, deported to work in Germany, or sent to concentration camps. Young people, especially in the secondary schools, played a role in resisting the Nazi administration. The scout movement in particular played an important role in resisting the occupation and later contributing to the rebuilding of the country. Membership in youth organisations peaked immediately after the end of the war, from 1945 to 1946. This important contribution of young people to the sacrifices of the war led to the consideration, during the post-war decades, that young people had to be given more space and more voice in policy. Some young people themselves, feeling that they had suffered hardship during the war, felt that the generation that had been leading the youth organisations before the war had to make more room for the younger generation.

During the 1950s, the first attempts were made to bring 40 youth organisations under one Luxembourg council of youth movements. But these attempts failed because of the deep division between progressive and Catholic organisations. This council being dominated by left-wing organisations, conservative groups either never joined or left in the very early stages. This council of youth movements never ceased to exist, but it was never prominent or active. In 1960, members of the World Assembly of Youth (WAY) approached Luxembourg youth organisations in order to found a local chapter. This should have led to a new council of youth organisations, but the initiative was unsuccessful because it coincided with a government initiative to found a national youth council.

Indeed, in 1960, for the first time, the government consulted the youth organisations on the foundation of a Conférence Générale de la Jeunesse Luxembourgeoise. The name was chosen, it seems, to avoid association with the unsuccessful attempt to bring about a national council of youth movements in 1951. In October 1960, the Conférence Générale was founded by ministerial decree. But even before the end of the consultation process, divisions formed and a number of organisations refused to participate. This time, it was the left-wing organisations that opposed the proposed mode of operation of the council. Indeed, Catholic organisations

dominated those invited to work on the new structure. This was partly due to the fact that a number of sub-organisations had been founded within the movement from the 1930s onwards. It marked the beginning of 20 difficult years for this top-down youth council.

Another development during the 1950s and 1960s was the emergence of the central theme of leisure time for young people. This had to be taken into consideration by policy makers, and is probably linked to the development of the mass consumption society.

In this context, the Ministry for Education created the Service National de la Jeunesse, (National Youth Board) in 1964, with the explicit aim of proposing activities for young people who were not members of youth organisations. For the first time, public authorities created a separate body for youth work, within the Ministry of Education. According to its mission, Service National de la jeunesse (SNJ), as it was commonly known in Luxembourg, had to collaborate closely with youth movements. It was to build up an impressive programme of activities and also invest a lot of energy into the training of youth leaders and volunteer youth workers. However, from the beginning, and for a very long time, the youth organisations were not enthusiastic about the idea of a government youth work office. In the 1990s even, the leaders of the national youth council (Conférence Générale de La Jeunesse Luxembourgeoise) still demanded the dissolution of the SNJ and the reallocation of the support directly to youth organisations.

Another sign of the growing importance of leisure time in youth work was the appearance of so-called “youth clubs”, especially in the rural areas of Luxembourg, in the 1970s. These youth clubs were self-organised groups of young people, with no particular ideological or philosophical background, whose first aim was the organisation of leisure time activities for their members. Unlike a number of other, older youth movements, the “youth clubs” still have an important basis today, with approximately 120 existing throughout Luxembourg.

Generally speaking, the events of the late 1960s played an important role in youth work and youth organisations in Luxembourg. Especially for the student movement, it was a time of profound changes. ASSOSS, the progressive student movement, had a diverse membership of liberal and socialist students. But growing tensions between the different currents meant that this organisation did not survive the events of 1968 in Luxembourg. Catholic students also quit the National Union of Luxembourg Students, founded in 1919, which during the 1970s had become increasingly left wing. Indeed, organisations of Catholic persuasion appeared to lose importance after 1970. This may be linked to a general downward trend for all-encompassing ideologies and is to be seen in parallel with the rise of leisure time youth organisations such as the youth clubs.

The scout movement, on the other hand, came out of the 1960s in rather good condition. The reason for this seems to be that it succeeded in integrating its own internal protest movements by always adapting itself to changing times. Co-management with young people, co-education, abandonment of paramilitary habits, and the changing role and practice of religion were important developments within the scout movement during the 1960s and 1970s.

The 1970s also brought into existence more specific youth organisations closely linked to the rise of environmentalism. Out of Youth and Environment, founded

in 1969, would later rise Mouvement écologique, a major environmental lobby group today. While Youth and Environment later became the youth section of Mouvement écologique, other members eventually split away from Mouvement écologique to found Life – the eco-creative platform for young people.

Self-organised youth centres also began to appear in urban areas in the 1970s. They were part of the legacy of 1968 and provided space for young people to spend time with peers, organising their own activities. Policy makers felt that through self-organisation, young people would learn to take responsibility within society. These first open youth centres, however, quickly acquired a bad reputation with neighbours because of noise, and with the police because of drug use. They also suffered from the deteriorating quality of facilities and infrastructures. This led indirectly to the growing professionalisation of youth work in Luxembourg during the 1980s and 1990s.

Indeed, professionalisation had begun in the 1970s in Luxembourg in the social work sector. In 1973, the Service d'Éducation différenciée (office for differentiated education) was created within the Ministry for Education at the same time as compulsory education for disabled children was introduced (the law on fundamental schooling from 1912 excluded disabled children from the school system). To support teachers in the newly created centres for differentiated education, the new profession of *moniteur d'éducation différenciée* was created – professional educators. Religious organisations made room for professional organisations in the management of child and youth care structures and members of religious congregations were progressively replaced by professional educators. New developments in the social field had created the need for more professional work. Poverty, the need for counselling services, the rise in female employment and the need for day care structures for children, for example, led to more services being supported by public authorities. The profession of educator, originally created to help teachers with disabled children, quickly developed into a more diverse profession.

At the beginning of the 1980s, the Service National de la Jeunesse was given the status of a public organisation. Its constituting laws defined its mission as developing open youth work in Luxembourg, and stated that it could contribute to the development of meeting places for young people and youth centres. This contribution was to take the form of financial support, assistance and counselling, and training youth workers. As SNJ was still dependent on the Ministry of Education, the centres were staffed with teachers with an interest in youth work and the time to spare.

These new professional youth centres, and their youth workers, had four missions. Firstly, the youth workers were meant to develop activity programmes for young people in close collaboration with youth organisations and local authorities. The second mission for youth workers was to be a resource for the youth centres. These youth workers were, as stated, working under the direct authority of SNJ. The concept of a resource person here shows that young people were meant to be the main actors in these youth centres and youth workers, active at regional level and responsible for possibly more than one youth centre, would assist young people in developing initiatives. The third mission was that of counselling. A youth worker had to be a person that young people could approach with all sorts of issues, and someone who could help in locating other services or information. The fourth mission for youth workers was to stay in close contact with the field of formal education.

However, these teacher youth workers failed to reach young people aside from those that traditionally participated in the activities organised by SNJ, specifically young people with immigrant backgrounds. In addition, the time they were allowed to spend on youth work was limited to eight hours a week by the Ministry of Education. The limits of this model of youth centres run by teacher youth workers were clear.

Also, specifically in the youth field, the European programme “Youth for Europe” created new opportunities for development that went beyond the possibilities of the teacher youth workers who ran regional youth work in the 1980s. This led to the founding of a national resource centre in 1987, the Youth Information Centre (CIJ). This followed a government decision to use the structure of a private organisation for a new resource centre.

This is the general context in which professionalisation took place in the youth field, beginning in the 1980s.

After the 1989 general elections, when a state secretariat for youth was created (upgraded into a Ministry of Youth after the 1994 general elections), a movement to create local youth centres took place. They were staffed with professional educators and run by small local organisations, with the costs shared by the government and the local authorities. The local authorities were quite interested in these centres staffed with professionals, perhaps because of the lessons learned from the self-administered youth centres of the 1970s and early 1980s.

Youth information was to be the main mission of these youth centres. But quickly, other missions took up more space. The wave of immigration from Portugal to Luxembourg that took place in the 1970s created challenges unlike that with previous waves of immigration, as integration did not happen as naturally. Immigrant youth formed a significant proportion of the clients of these new youth centres, necessitating something of a switch from information provision to that of providing meeting places where integration issues could be addressed.

Youth work therefore moved away from a focus on education, with the creation of a Ministry for Youth. Professionalisation also contributed to this trend with the creation of “educators”, who were working in the field of child and youth care, administered by the Ministry for the Family. Youth workers were part of a professional field the salaries of which were defined in a collective agreement between trade unions and social work employers, thus allowing for numerous opportunities for mobility within the field of social work. After the 1999 elections, the government’s competence for youth policy and youth work was integrated into the Ministry for the Family. This ministry is a “generational” ministry, being also responsible for policies pertaining to children, young people, elderly people and disabled people. Youth work policy was thus closer than ever to social work policy, yet still seen as in between education, social security and employment policies.

The movement of professionalisation led in 2011 to a professional youth work field with about 130 professional youth workers in some 50 local youth centres, up from 24 professional youth workers in local youth centres in 1995. Public financial support grew by 200% between 2001 and 2011. A number of national resource centres have been built around this network, for example for youth information or legal questions for young people.

The latest development is that as a consequence of this professionalisation, youth organisations are increasingly hiring professional youth workers. This is the case not only for the scout movements, but also for example the Conférence Générale de la Jeunesse Luxembourgeoise, the national youth council.

As noted earlier, the *Conférence Générale* that was founded in 1961 had difficulties right from the beginning due to ideological divisions between youth organisations. During most of the 1960s, left-wing youth organisations stayed out of the national youth council. During the second part of the 1960s and the first part of the 1970s, the council appeared to be inactive, with the left-wing organisations even founding their own “confederation of the youth organisations of the left”. In 1974/75, an attempt by SNJ to reunite the youth organisations into an NGO that would work as a youth council was unsuccessful, despite several meetings. Another attempt was made by SNJ under a new director in 1977, and this led to the establishment of a renewed national youth council on the basis of the 1960 ministerial decree on establishing a national youth council. This organisation survived, even though it was still avoided by a number of left-wing youth organisations that felt this council was projecting an illusion of generational solidarity while circumventing the more important questions of social and class solidarity. During the late 1970s and the 1980s, the *Conférence Générale*, accompanied by the national youth work administration, developed a number of activities in co-operation with SNJ, represented Luxembourg youth on an international level, and took up positions on political issues in Luxembourg.

In 1987, the *Conférence Générale de la Jeunesse Luxembourgeoise* was transformed into a private organisation, structurally independent from the government. At the same time, a consultative body composed both of youth organisations and government representatives was established. Though the internal tensions between youth organisations still existed, they appeared to be less divisive than in previous decades. After the foundation of the youth council as an NGO, gradually, the left-wing youth organisations began to join.

Since 2000, the national youth council has developed a role closer to that of “citizenship education”. Indeed, it had an important consultative role in the drafting of the European Commission White Paper, among other developments related to youth policy. With the professionalisation of its staff, this focus on citizenship education has grown. Today, the national youth council is certainly the most active organisation in the youth field in citizenship education. Political lobbying has become less important, and this represents a shift in the agenda of the youth council and youth organisations in general. Recent developments within the *Conférence Générale*, however, tend to indicate that the youth council wants to create a new balance between citizenship education and political lobbying.

Nevertheless, the general trend in youth work in Luxembourg over the last few decades is that of movement from a political role to a more educational and social work role, due to professionalisation and growing public support for youth organisations. While youth work has always had this double identity, it is probably important to keep a balance between these elements today.

We will now move to a more personal view on the challenges that lie ahead of us in youth work in Luxembourg, both internal and external.

We now actually have two almost separate youth work fields in Luxembourg – the youth organisations and the professional youth centres, or what is commonly known as open youth work. These two fields work with different groups of young people and it is probably important to bring them into closer contact. When the professional youth centres were founded, they met significant resistance from local youth organisations who saw them as illegitimate and a threat to their own existence because they were seen to be drawing from their own membership. The founders of the local youth centres did not feel that they were competing, as they believed they would be able to act as bridges for young people to find their way into youth organisations. In general, this bridging role of youth centres has not materialised. Considering how separate these two fields of youth work are today, one might almost wish that there actually had been competition between professional youth centres and youth organisations, for it would have led to interaction, with the same young people to be found in both formats.

The open youth centres work a lot with young people from immigrant backgrounds, including those from Portuguese backgrounds and those from later waves of immigration, particularly the former Yugoslavia. The challenge that these youth centres face is to increase participation of these young people in Luxembourg society, and make them more visible as social actors. It is to help them go from participation in youth work initiatives to participation in society. In other words, youth centres have to find a way to not only carry out social work to help young people with immigrant backgrounds, but also perform the political role of helping young immigrants integrate themselves into Luxembourg society. Critical opinions on the youth centres and the population they attract state that these centres are creating islands from where the clients of youth work don't depart. In terms of equal access to infrastructure and equal opportunity policies, however, the open youth centres are a good tool. There is evidence that young people from immigrant backgrounds, especially boys, participate less in Luxembourg's society, be it in education, employment, youth organisations, or culture. The open youth centres attract just these people and can work from there.

The youth organisations, on the other hand, mainly work with young people whose parents are from Luxembourg. This is a dangerous situation in a country where at present, about 50% of the young population does not have roots in Luxembourg. Their challenge is to open up more to young people from other communities. A number of initiatives developed lately show that youth organisations are conscious of this challenge and are willing to act. This is not an easy task though and needs further reflection and action.

Furthermore, a recent law on youth policy has deepened the differentiation among actors in the youth field. In 2008, the Luxembourg Parliament adopted the so-called Youth Act, which is actually more a law on youth policy because it states the aims and instruments of youth policy in Luxembourg, as well as the mechanisms through which the youth policy of the government should be developed. This law had first been suggested by the youth department of the Ministry for the Family in its 2004 concept paper "Youth and Society". This document itself was part of an evolution that had been influenced by the European Commission's White Paper process as well as an international review of Luxembourg's youth policy conducted by the Council of Europe.

The Youth Act is an attempt to strengthen the triangular relationship between youth policy making, youth research and youth work. Indeed the act states in its second

article that youth policy is transversal, and that it has to be evidence-based and take into account the opinions of young people. Specifically, the government has to produce a report on the situation of young people in Luxembourg every five years. This report is to be the basis for a governmental action plan on youth. The act also created a national assembly of young people, with the role of voicing young people's opinions on all questions related to youth. The government gave the national youth council the mandate to work on the concept and later implement the youth assembly, today called the youth parliament.

So when we look at today's youth work landscape in Luxembourg, we actually see three sub-ensembles. Professional open youth-work centres are close to educational and social work in so far as they help young people, especially those with fewer opportunities, to find their way into society. The traditional youth organisations are mainly active in the field of leisure time opportunities for young people. The youth parliament covers the more political side of youth work. But it is also a citizenship education project run by the national youth council, with a project officer whose role it is to assist, support and guide the youth parliament. This creates tension within the project between its political and educational aspects. These elements have to be in balance in order for the parliament to be a success. Besides these private actors in the youth field, the public body, SNJ, is now a full-fledged youth work administration active on all these three levels, with a focus on the educational and leisure time aspects.

A challenge for the future will probably be to bring these sub-fields closer together. Attempts are being made to connect young people in open youth centres with the youth parliament through a mobile youth information unit. This is certainly an important tool for the future. But it is not only young people in youth centres that have to be reached. The same holds for professional youth workers, among which a number do not recognise the use of political youth work for "their" clients. In the same way, local youth centres and youth organisations could be better connected on a local level. There have been efforts to this end, and they need to be continued and deepened. In 1995, in a dossier on open youth work published in the magazine *Forum*, the then chairman of the network of open youth centres expressed the following opinion: "I don't want to define the general objectives of youth policy [meaning this was of course just what he was going to do], but I still want to develop some ideas that would be helpful for the work of our youth centres. It would be good if young people could participate in local elections at the age of 16, and if there were permanent representations of young people like the local youth consultative bodies, which need to have more influence on local policy making. That way, there could in the future be local youth centres that would not only see their mission as organising dance evenings." The youth work field has developed since then, but the chairman of the youth centres still felt obliged to qualify a statement on youth policy. Today, such a statement would be even more unlikely.

The external challenge to youth work is linked to the current gradual integration of the fields of youth work and work with children. Within the Ministry for the Family, these two fields have been integrated and current discussions are leading to closer co-operation and integration of these policy fields. This is useful, as children are of course the future beneficiaries of youth work and better linking the objectives and tools of these fields can have large benefits. The direction taken recently with a legal act initiative highlights the non-formal education aspect in youth work and work with children. This will have the benefit of better

demonstrating the work that is done in open youth centres. Still, public opinion too often holds that the main objective of youth centres is to get young people off the streets. It seems important, today, to be able to legitimate youth work by underlining its educational aspects. There are, however, also risks. The field of out-of-school care for children is, in quantitative terms, much larger than the youth work field. The aims and objectives also differ, from being more education driven in the field of child care to more political in terms of participation and citizenship in the youth field. It will be important to keep this focus on citizenship in youth work, especially when co-operating with a field that is much larger and more reliant on political pressure and lobbying.

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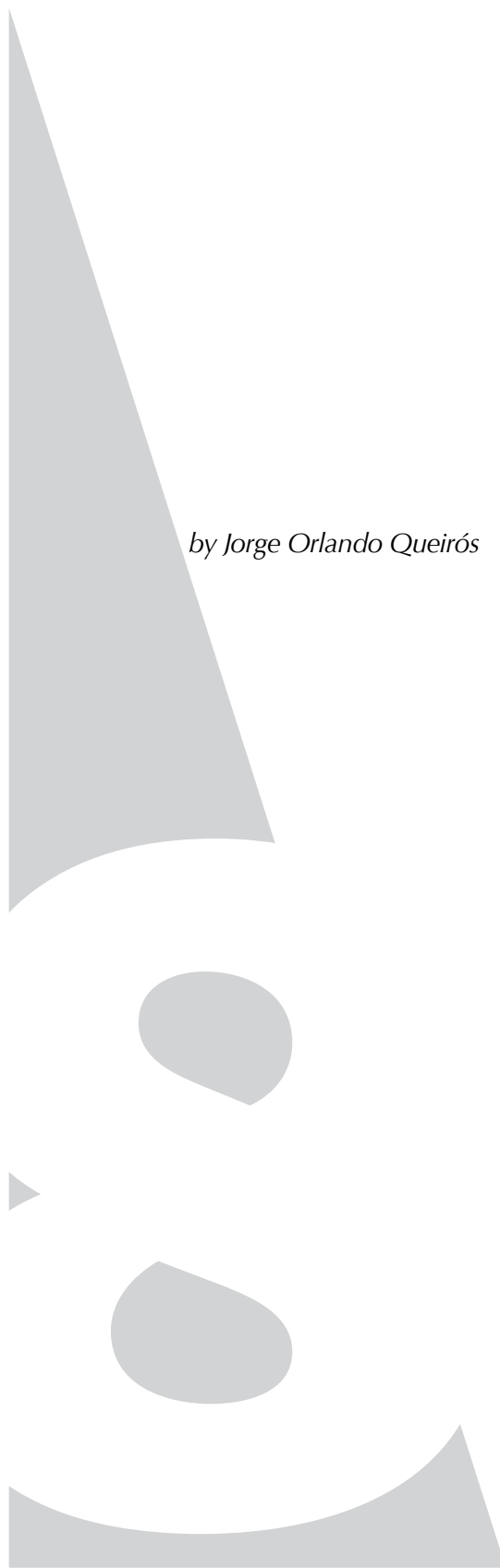
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by Jorge Orlando Queirós

History of youth work and youth policies in Portugal

Introduction

Shortly after the landmark 1st European Youth Work Convention held in Ghent in 2010, which interrogated and transformed many perspectives on the concept of “youth work”, I was invited to contribute to the translation of the concept into Portuguese. We, at the Portuguese Youth Institute, were asked by the Portuguese language interpretation services from the European Commission to say what we understood by “youth work”, in order to start using the expression in the official translation/interpretation of documents.

In the Portuguese version of official EU documents and in the national legal order itself, the concept of “youth work” is not referred to. Rather, the reference is to “*animação sócio-educativa de jovens*” (socio-educational animation of young people or juvenile socio-education). Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union refers to “socio-educational animators”.

In the English version of the treaty, the term that is used is “exchanges of socio-educational instructors”, and there is nothing about “youth work” in line with

the concept debated in Ghent in 2010 (both at the 1st European Conference on the History of Youth Work and the 1st European Youth Work Convention). Both the conference and the convention were based on work supported by scientific research, seminars and the testimony of youth workers themselves, with reference to the Blankenberge seminars organised by the Flemish Community of Belgium and the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth.

In the text of the Council of the European Union's Resolution of 27 November 2009, the Portuguese translation is, in my opinion, very narrow, since it refers to work for, with and about youth as "juvenile animation". This terminology certainly needs to be updated, in line with changes to the youth sector that have taken place under national governments, at the EU, the Council of Europe, the Ibero-American Youth Organisation and the United Nations, particularly after the last decade of the last century.

In this regard, and following the views expressed at the Conference on the History of Youth Work and the Youth Work Convention, the activity of the Portuguese Youth Institute and the work of many youth organisations in Portugal is more closely identified with the concept of "youth work" or "work in the youth field" than the concept of "youth animator". Furthermore, when discussing the professionalisation of "youth work", we are going much further than "youth animation", with all due respect to "youth animators".

On the other hand, when we became aware of the request for co-operation to interpret the concept of youth work into Portuguese, with a view to its inclusion in the official documents of the EU, we contacted Spanish and French colleagues who are in this situation too (due to Latin language relations) and concluded that the preference was in Castilian for "*trabajo de juventud*" and in French for "*travail de jeunesse*".

Reporting to the Council Resolution of 27 November 2009, the translations into Portuguese, French and Castilian corresponding to "youth work" and "youth workers" vary:

- Portuguese: "*animação de jovens*", "*animação de juventude*" and "*animadores juvenis*";
- French: "*l'animation socio-éducative*", "*animateurs professionnels*";
- Castilian: "*trabajo en materia de juventud*", "*personas que trabajan en el ámbito de la juventud*", "*profesionales en el ámbito de la juventud*", "*trabajadores em el ámbito de la juventud*".

It is not my goal here to get into a debate about nuances and techniques in translation/interpretation. But the concept itself is certainly important, as well as the dimensions it touches and the range of its applications. Languages, like societies, are live and dynamic entities that evolve with time. Then why not the terms we use when referring to certain realities?

This episode suggested that little is known about youth work in Portugal but, at the same time, that there is a lot yet to be done in this regard, namely when we enter the field of recognition of the activity, which implies a clear definition of the concept, the activity it applies to, its methodologies, the training that underpins it, and so on.

In 2010, at the 1.º Congresso Nacional de Animação Sociocultural (1st Socio-Cultural Animation National Congress), a definition was agreed upon:

Socio-cultural animation is a set of practices developed from the knowledge of a certain reality, which aims to encourage individuals to participate in order to become agents of their own development process and of their communities. Socio-cultural animation is a key instrument for the development of an integrated multidisciplinary approach towards individuals and groups. The socio-cultural animator is one who, with adequate training, can develop and implement an intervention plan, in a community, institution or body, using cultural, social, educational, sports, recreation and leisure techniques. (Free translation)

It would certainly be interesting to analyse and compare the results of the 1st National Congress and the conclusions of the Ghent events, though that is not the purpose of this chapter.

Youth work and history: from the 1st Republic to the 1974 Carnation Revolution

The origins of what is called in Portugal Animação Sociocultural goes back to the 19th century, and the creation of the Associação de Escolas Móveis pelo Método de João de Deus (Mobile Schools by the João de Deus Method) in 1882, by Casimiro Freire. In 1908 this Association would be renamed Associação de Jardins-Escola João de Deus (Association of Nursery Schools João de Deus), and it is still in existence. Basically, the project used the new methods proposed by João de Deus in his *Cartilha Maternal*, published in 1876, to train teachers and send them out to teach the working classes how to read, according to a “system deeply practical”, that would rescue children “from the scourge of the traditional textbook.” We see here elements and attitudes that also characterise youth work nowadays, particularly regarding the sense of mobility (do not wait for young people come to you, but go and meet them in their own environment), the priority given to the most marginalised groups, and a reaction to the formal and traditional ways of teaching and outreach.

The 1908 assassination of King D. Carlos I and his son and heir, Prince D. Luís Filipe, opened the gates to the revolution that, in 1910, would make Portugal a republic. The new ideas that spread all over the country made it possible for society to start looking at itself in a totally different way and recognise that there was no point looking to the monarchy, or the state, to solve all its problems, namely those related to the education of the people.

Based on the principle that “culture can and must be a tool of the individual and collective emancipation of man”, several initiatives within community interventions focused on increasing the culture level and literacy of the working classes. But it is with men like Jaime Cortesão, and the *Homens da Renascença* (Renaissance Men) or the *Renascença Portuguesa* (Portuguese Renaissance),¹⁸ that

18. *Renascença Portuguesa* was an intellectual movement emerged in Portugal shortly after the establishment of the republic (1910), which aimed to promote the “reconstruction of Portuguese society” through cultural intervention. Gained expression with the appearance of magazines such as *Águia* (1910), and *Vida Portuguesa* (1912), influenced, among others, by Jaime Cortesão.

the Universidade Livre (Free University) and the Universidade Popular Portuguesa (Portuguese Popular University) came to light, as a result of the assumption that the political revolution is not enough and that room must be given to a cultural revolution through the education of the people:

Instruction was not only defended in the most progressive thoughts that considered it as one way to create a civic conscience. In some conservative circles that purpose was also to fight against illiteracy to unite all Portuguese both patriotically and orderly.

Apart from his intense cultural activity, which put him at the centre of intellectual life in the first quarter of the 20th century in Portugal, Jaime Cortesão was a man of strong political convictions. He took part in the republican conspiracy that would lead to establishment of the republic (1910), and was also in the very heart of the political turmoil that followed and ended with the arrival into power of Salazar, in 1926. He was forced into exile in Spain, France and Brazil. He returned to Portugal only in 1957, but even then he contributed to the Programa para a Democratização da República (Programme for the Democratisation of the Republic), re-assuming his opposition to the regime. This was meant to be a political guiding document to the opposition to the regime and was finally made public in 1961. He died in 1960.

Alongside these movements, and in line with the international phenomenon that had begun a few years earlier in England, in 1911 the scouts showed up in Portugal, with the creation of the Associação dos Escuteiros de Portugal in 1913. The founders were a group of people who had initiated the first scouting activities in Macau, 1911 (then under Portuguese administration). In 1923, the Corpo Nacional de Escutas, of Catholic inspiration, was set up in the city of Braga.

The Salazar regime, too, saw itself as modern. Therefore it was inspired by what it considered as avant-garde practices in “friendly” countries like Mussolini’s Italy and Hitler’s Germany. The creation of FNAT, the Federação Nacional para a Alegria no Trabalho (National Federation for Joy at Work), drew on the principles behind Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro, in Italy (1925) and Kraft durch Freude (1933), in Germany. FNAT was founded in 1935 with the intention of helping workers make good use of their free time, by organising recreational activities.

These references are made in order to illustrate just how much the regime, and civil society, became increasingly influenced by external ideas and experiences. This sent a misleading message of openness to the world, because the regime’s motivation was only to find the most appropriate means and tools to ensure full control of society at all levels.

→ What to do with young people?

Once again finding inspiration in friendly states like Germany, Italy and Franco’s Spain, the state created Mocidade Portuguesa (Portugese Youth) in 1936, which was open to all males, in or out of school. Membership was mandatory between the ages 7 to 14 and voluntary up to the limit of 18 years of age. This organisation was meant to promote the moral, civic and political education of all young people through physical and pre-military education that was meant to instil respect for authority, order, discipline and military value.

Mocidade Portuguesa Feminina (Female Portuguese Youth) was founded in 1937 as the female counterpart to Mocidade Portuguesa, and sought to develop in young women “wisdom, collective work, a taste for domestic life and various forms of the gender social spirit, guiding the full performance of women’s role in the family, in their communities and in the life of the state.”

The trinity of *Deus, Pátria e Família* (God, Motherland and Family) loomed over those living under the Salazar regime. There was a strong connection to the Church, formalised in the *Concordata*,¹⁹ the family was seen as the core unit of society, and the celebration of national heroes and past glories was at the centre of nationalistic propaganda, creating the Portuguese version of contemporary fascist systems in Germany, Italy, Spain and, to a certain extent, Brazil.²⁰

The state assumed the responsibility for guiding and controlling all youth empowerment, namely by positioning all NGOs in a dependent relationship with Mocidade Portuguesa. To that end, it became mandatory that NGO statutes be approved by the Alto Comissário para a Mocidade Portuguesa (High Commissioner for Portuguese Youth). The first two high commissioners, Francisco José Nobre Guedes (1936-40), and Marcello Caetano (1940-44), had a very important role in shaping the organisation. If Nobre Guedes sympathised with the Third Reich in Germany and the Hitler Youth, Marcello Caetano made major reforms, turning the organisation away from its initial militaristic tendencies and forming closer links with the Catholic Church and the scouts.

Prior to that, however, and especially before 1940, the relationship with the scouts (and among themselves) was far from peaceful. In fact, some factions within the system tried to discredit the (Catholic) Corpo Nacional de Escutas, accusing them, for instance, of having a military purpose and for pursuing “ends a little dark”. The (Republican and secular) Associação dos Escuteiros de Portugal joined the chorus, stating that no confessional scouts movement should be allowed to exist. This situation created some discomfort, to say the least, between the Church and the government, because at a given moment even within the Corpo Nacional de Escutas membership doubts were raised regarding the viability of the organisation. There were growing numbers of defections to Mocidade Portuguesa, although some declared that this organisation might not have the most “morally equipped educators”. The Catholic Church engaged in a confrontation with government officials, identifying contradictions between what Mocidade Portuguesa was meant to be, and what it was in fact. At one moment it was noted that it was not acceptable for Portugal to be strengthening its relationships with the Hitler Youth, who considered the Portuguese an inferior people, and, at another moment, it criticised the fact that at some instruction sites, young people were obliged to take part in military trainings on Sundays (Kuin 1993:555-58).

19. Although the constitution allowed for freedom of worship and religion while claiming that Catholicism was the religion of the Portuguese people, in 1940 the Portuguese state signed a treaty (Concordata) with the Holy See giving the Catholic Church a set of rights not allowed to other religions, like the right to teach its religion at schools and tax exemptions.

20. For example the Movimento Integralista (Integralist Movement), founded by Plínio Salgado, in 1932.

From 1936 to 1974: between colonial war and the revolution

From the end of the 1950s, the colonial wars began, affecting mainly Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and India, where Portugal still had the Goa, Damão and Diu possessions. Troops were mobilised, the regime had to face fighting on the ground, and also struggled with growing hostility from states and international organisations like the United Nations.

The Portuguese regime was not ready for the changing times. Humberto Delgado dared to run for president in 1958, and during an interview he was asked what he would do with Salazar once he was elected. He replied with the famous "*Óbviamente demito-o!*" ("Obviously I will dismiss him!"), which led people to see him as the person who could change the situation. However, the "*General sem medo*" ("Fearless General"), was assassinated in 1965.

Internal discontent was manifested in some bold acts of resistance, like the hijacking of the Santa Maria cruise liner; the first commercial flight hijacking, co-ordinated by Palma Inácio, which took over a plane that was flying from Casablanca to Lisbon and scattered leaflets over the city; and students demonstrating at universities.

Concluding that the model of government as applied in Portugal was not working, the regime initiated a process of reform in 1966: pre-military instruction was abandoned and educational programmes no longer relied only on sports activities. Special attention was given to the school population, mainly by supporting extra-curricular initiatives, particularly for leisure time occupation.

Following Salazar's death in 1970, Mocidade Portuguesa was abolished and the Secretariado para Juventude (Secretariat for Youth) was created. The perspective adopted was that youth empowerment could be achieved both by the state and organisations from civil society; "pluralism in intervention" was the key rather than "concentration"; youth centres were created; and all efforts were made to establish appropriate contacts and to give proper support to private youth movements and organisations.

The regime itself entered a process of reform, with youth policies becoming more cultural, and less political; the state assumed a more administrative/promotional role and the Acção Nacional de Juventude (Youth National Action), linked to the main political party, União Nacional/Acção Nacional Popular, was created. In March 1974 the head of the government, Marcelo Caetano, became an "honorary member" of the Acção Nacional de Juventude. On April 25 the following year, the Revolução dos Cravos (Carnation Revolution) took place. This heralded the end of an era – the end of the longest dictatorial regime western Europe experienced in the 20th century.

From 1974 to today: the notion of youth work (socio-cultural animation) emerges

Right after the revolution, the youth sector was given priority by the new government, with the formation of the Movimento das Forças Armadas²¹ (Movement of the Armed Forces). On the very day of the revolution, 25 April 1974, the Secretariado para a Juventude was abolished. Only a few days later, on 30 April, the Fundo de Apoio aos Organismos Juvenis (FAOJ, the Support Fund for Youth Organisations) was created. The revolution made it possible for the new ideas related to “socio-cultural animation” (SCA), strongly influenced by the “May 68” movement in France, to emerge in Portugal, in six distinct phases (Lopes 2006).

→ Phase 1 – The revolutionary period (1974-76)

Starting with the revolution, SCA was assumed by those in power to be an efficient method of intervention in communities. Therefore the Comissão Interministerial para a Animação Sociocultural (Inter-ministerial Commission for Socio-cultural Animation) was created. Special attention was dedicated to women, through the creation of the Socio-cultural Project for Rural Women.

Youth rights were defined in a particular article in the 1976 constitution, Article 70, by which:

1. Young people enjoy special protection in their economic, social and cultural rights, including:
 - a) In education, vocational training and culture;
 - b) Access to a first job, work and social security;
 - c) To have access to housing;
 - d) Physical education and sport;
 - e) Use of leisure time.
2. Youth policy should have as its primary objectives the development of the personality of young people, the taste for free creativity and the notion of community service.
3. The State, in collaboration with schools, businesses, grassroots organisations and culture and recreation communities, encourages and assists youth organisations in pursuit of those objectives, as well as all forms of international youth exchange. (Constitution of the Republic of Portugal, Article 70, 1976)

As mentioned above, FAOJ was created only a few days after the revolution (through the Decreto-Lei n.º 179/74 de 30 de Abril), in order to “adjust the youth initiative support structures to the new realities in the domain of leisure time occupation.” Through the publication of the Decreto-Lei n.º 106/76 de 6 de Fevereiro, FAOJ was reformulated, and one of its missions was “to promote the training of animators, monitors and other technical staff” – of, arguably, youth workers. This very same competence would be maintained in the 1986 reform of FAOJ and in the creation of the Instituto da Juventude (Youth Institute), in 1988. Efforts were made to develop better knowledge about the reality of SCA in Portugal, and the first measures were taken to create the *estatuto do animador* (animator status).

21. The Movimento das Forças Armadas was the organisation of the lower-ranked, left-leaning military officers responsible for the revolution, who retained political power through the Junta de Salvação Nacional until 1976.

In order to bring these activities closer to the public, FAOJ Regional Delegations and Municipal Houses of Culture were created.

→ Phase 2 – The constitutional period (1977-80)

All activities related to youth continued to be determined by institutions in a very centralised way. The notion of a “youth organisation” was defined in order to allow a positive differentiation of youth associations as such from other organisations. Youth organisations had to have, for instance, a majority of members between 15 and 24 years old; the managing bodies had to incorporate members under 30 years of age; no commercial purposes could be pursued; and the promotion of socio-cultural and/or socio-educational animation had to take place from the perspective of leisure time occupation.

→ Phase 3 – The patrimonial period (1981-85)

Priority was given during this period to the preservation and recovery of cultural heritage.

In 1983, the 1st Inter-Ministerial Commission for Youth was created to follow the evolution of young people’s aspirations and needs; to produce cross-sectoral projects; to give advice on all youth-related issues; and to develop an integrated youth policy. In 1984, the first National Registration of Youth Organisations was implemented, with the intention of better knowing the actors in the field and better managing support for the activities of youth organisations.

For many reasons, 1985 could be seen as the year that youth, and youth policies, were repositioned within the political and societal framework.

The United Nations declared 1985 the International Year of Youth. This event triggered a major dynamic around youth issues in the country, with several bodies, even at government level, willing to play a leading role. The National Youth Council was created, as a non-governmental youth association/platform representing youth organisations in their relations with the official bodies. The government created the Secretary of State for Youth, no longer as a body inside the structure of the Ministry of Education, but reporting to the Portuguese Prime Minister.

In Europe, in 1985, the Council of Europe organised its 1st Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth, under the theme “Participation of young people in society”. Youth became global, no longer associated with only an educational/cultural dimension. This social globalisation of youth policies inspired, amongst others, by the Council of Europe, led to the creation of ministries/youth services and national youth councils in many other countries.

→ Phase 4 – Transfer of SCA from central to local bodies (1986-90)

This period was marked by the decentralisation of SCA. It had not been really been recognised by the state, but a new impulse came from local authorities, who began to take a leading role in cultural initiatives at local level. Moreover, the first higher education courses were finally implemented, and many professional animators’ training courses were created.

With the establishment of the Instituto da Juventude, in 1988, several programmes aimed at the training of young youth leaders and youth workers were created. The Programa de Animadores Juvenis (Young Animators Programme) and the Plano Nacional de Formação (National Training Programme), are examples of the government's responses to the needs expressed by a system tending to support and promote the creation of youth organisations and local development agents (Gabinete do Ministros Adjunto e da Juventude 1990):

- the Programa de Animadores Juvenis aimed at providing young people with basic training for them to become youth workers in socio-cultural and educational areas. From 1987 to 1989, 551 young people participated in the training;
- the Plano Nacional de Formação aimed at making available to youth leaders and youth workers training in specific areas such as communication techniques and leisure time occupations. From 1986 to 1989, 7983 young people attended these training sessions.

→ Phase 5 – The multicultural and intercultural period (1991-95)

This period is marked by efforts to demonstrate the value of SCA in multicultural societies. In the case of Portugal, the intervention of SCA organisations in African Portuguese-speaking countries assumed a prominent role, not only through aid projects but also in the training of local youth workers.

At the same time, marking recognition of SCA, the 1.º Congresso Internacional de Animação Sociocultural (1st International Congress of Socio-Cultural Animation) took place at the city of Vila Real, Portugal, in 1995.

→ Phase 6 – The globalisation period (1996 onwards)

From 1996, SCA was seen as a means of promoting participation as well as social and personal development. SCA reinforced its connection to local development, earning social and institutional recognition.

This is where we now stand, not only in Portugal, but also at European level. Although SCA is getting more and more institutional recognition, in practical terms not so much has been achieved, for instance in terms of the professionalisation of youth work, a core aspiration of many youth workers. Questions remain to be answered: what might be the implications of such a professionalisation regarding the role and relationship of persons voluntarily involved in the activities of NGOs, namely youth associations, and in not-for-profit projects? Will not these people, and those who develop such projects, start being “accused” of using people other than professionals in such projects? This is a central debate for SCA and therefore for “youth work”.

Challenges for youth work in Portugal

Youth work is so far a discipline within the broader field of SCA. In fact, youth work shows up as a discipline or sub-area of intervention in the diverse courses provided at Portuguese universities

The investment in bringing SCA into higher education has produced results. The number of higher education institutions offering this kind of training has increased

the opportunities for young people to assume SCA as an option for their careers, creating professionals who are of utmost importance for organisations, public or private, active in social affairs.

Moreover, many other organisations are now influenced by these young professionals in SCA, who have been active themselves in pursuing their careers through local project development, international exchanges, non-formal education training, and so on. As far as it is known, however, there are no data available on the impact of the professionalisation of SCA on youth movements/associations, voluntary-based projects, and others.

In 2010, socio-cultural animators gathered at the Aveiro Professionalising Social-Animation Workers' Congress, and approved proposals for statutes and a code of ethics, which were sent to the appropriate authorities with the objective of getting official recognition of their profession. They are still waiting for a decision.

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The history of youth work in Romania

by Sorin Mitulescu

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of several meaningful moments in the history of youth work and youth policy in Romania. In the last 200 years various actors have carried out initiatives to support children and young people. Youth care and informal education have been closely connected to each other. In youth work, like in many other sectors, Romania sometimes copied models from other countries, and sometimes rejected those models and developed its own solutions. Romanian youth work practice and policy was sometimes substantively different from standard definitions of youth work. Sometimes policy and practice have been subordinated to values which would be firmly rejected by current youth workers: nationalism, authoritarianism or formalism. Of course these periods are also relevant to our history, because they help to better understand the difficulties that youth work has to confront in contemporary Romanian society.

Romania does not have much of a tradition in what is today called “youth work”, in other words “the technique of creating a favourable environment for young people by involving them (voluntarily) in non-formal learning”(Smith 1988). Even today, the term “youth

work” has no equivalent in the Romanian language. Most Romanian people have no clue about the meaning of “youth work”. Recent Romanian books about school practices have focused on the relationship between formal and non-formal education (for example, Costea 2009). Costea uses the term “youth activities”, drawing on a document from the European Youth Forum and describing youth activities “as actions, activities, projects developed by the youngsters themselves or for the youngsters, in order to increase their status or to assure a better level of representation or participation” (2009:65). Unfortunately, the author does not try to develop a job profile for a professional youth worker. Costea focuses only on youth NGOs and their relationship with formal institutions such as libraries or schools.

There have certainly been moments in our history when Romanian society has paid special attention to young people, focusing on the provision of an adequate living environment to bridge the gaps in the socialisation process of young people, in the strong belief that such an approach would have good effects on their development. Could we call these moments youth work *avant la lettre*? Discovering these moments arguably has its own importance for the successful introduction of new methods of youth work today. It is important for Romanian youth policy makers and youth leaders to understand that their efforts take place in a long historical, cultural and national tradition. It is also important for any youth worker to avoid the excesses and mistakes that were committed in the more or less distant past of our society. There is yet another advantage of discovering our history: other youth workers and youth researchers from all over Europe can learn from Romanian youth work history and compare the Romanian situation to other places and contexts.

Young people in the traditional Romanian village

Young people in traditional Romanian society only episodically received public attention, which was focused on supporting their transition to adulthood. From ancient times up to the present day, however, youth have exercised forms of self-organisation in Romanian villages. During the winter holidays, groups of carol singers (children but also teenagers and unmarried young people) would frequent in the streets of their village, collecting small sums of money or sweets which they shared amongst themselves. In some periods groups of young boys engaged in a military-type form of organisation, and practiced initiation rituals. Adults encouraged and appreciated these informal learning processes in peer groups.

The 1848 revolutionary generation

In 1848 Europe witnessed a wave of revolutions which altered the political landscape in many countries. In the mid-19th century we see the first signs of a consistent public youth policy. The revolutionary generation of 1848 was especially valued, not particularly because its members were young, but because they had studied in Paris. In Romanian society France was, for a long period, considered the nest of democracy and progress. These young people were called by locals, somewhat sarcastically, *Bonjourists*.²² This new generation of young people distinguished

22. Refers to those young people with progressive ideas who returned from their studies in France and who were wont to greet people with *bonjour*.

itself from previous generations in fashion, too, being the first to adopt the western European style of clothing. Coming from the local aristocracy, they became the representatives of the Romanian political elite for the next half-century. They helped to achieve state independence and began the modernisation of Romanian society. It was this elite youth, educated and trained in western Europe, that established the first youth clubs in Romania, beginning in Bucharest in 1870. Their aim was to facilitate cultural development and social contacts. Admission was conditional upon one's level of education and financial situation (Iltu 1981:184).

Educational reform

Towards the end of the 19th century Romanian society became increasingly aware that its lower classes were lagging behind seriously. The situation was similar in other countries, but compared to western Europe Romanian society did not invest very much in the edification of the lower classes. In rural areas especially this deprivation was manifested very strongly in illiteracy, lack of hygiene and a perceived moral crisis. Therefore, for a long period to come, concerns about young people blended in with developments in the field of schooling and training. Efforts were made to set up schools in villages, including schools for adults. Educational institutions were obliged to abandon the old selective practices and reach out to all people. This was an advancement in the efficiency of teaching but it also reinforced the public belief that education could only take place in schools.

Spiru Haret, a professor in mathematics who had studied in Paris and who was Minister for Education between 1897 and 1910 (with short interruptions), marked this period with his ideas of educational reform oriented towards raising the standards of the rural population (Schifirnet 1997). His basic aim was to establish applied, practical education, adapted to the child's needs and to the community. Students were encouraged to explore, make observations and experiment on agricultural plots distributed to schools. With his first attempt to impose the practice of school trips, another new educational method was introduced. Haret framed his reforms in terms of what he called the concept of "extra-curricular education". This was not a completely out-of-school education, but he did create a series of institutions parallel to school – like courses for adults, cultural clubs, and public libraries. He also encouraged publications with a popular character. He promoted the idea of moving the emphasis in education from the accumulation of knowledge to the formation of civic consciousness:

It is perhaps acceptable for a good citizen and father of family to live without knowing the history of Alexander the Great's helmet, but someone who does not love his family and country and does not show energy, honesty, civic and military courage, diligence and a sense of justice cannot be a useful citizen
(as cited in Schifirnet 1997:29, free translation).

Teachers were the social and educational agents stimulating these extensive activities of literacy and adult enlightenment in the villages. It can be said that the rural teacher who had to deal not only with children but also with adults (especially young adults who did not have the chance to go to school at the right time) became a kind of youth worker *avant la lettre*. Teachers did not restrict their educational efforts to the transmission of theoretical knowledge, but also introduced "physical and military exercises". Haret's Ministry of Education published (in 1900) a volume of methods for teachers, *Teaching the people*, a

real tool kit for adult education (Istoria invatamantului 1993). For the first time in Romanian pedagogy, interactive methods and even the projection of photos or films were recommended.

Youth movements in the first half of the 20th century

In the years preceding and immediately after the First World War, the modernisation of Romanian society, supported by the political elite (and the royal family), consisted also in encouraging the emergence of successful western European youth movements: scouting and YMCA received official recognition. Other initiatives such as the Zionist youth movement were, however, suppressed, due probably to the fear at that time of the spread of communism (Ofir 2011).²³

The scout movement started in Romania in 1912, drawing on the initiative of a group of teachers, scientists and officers of the Royal Army. The scouts organised periodic "Sunday trips" for pupils from Bucharest high schools. In 1914 Baden-Powell's manual *Scouting for boys* was translated into Romanian and the National Scouting Organisation was established. Romanian scouts received congratulations from Baden-Powell himself, who added some advice on the adaptation of scouting to the local environment. In 1930 the Boy Scouts already had 45 000 members in Scout Romania and there were 14 000 Girl Guides. At the beginning, scouting was seen as a powerful instrument for promoting the values of democracy, tolerance and peace. In that sense it was seen as an antidote to the fascist and communist movements that were also interested in attracting children and young people. The royal dictatorship in the late 1930s tried to subordinate and use scouting for the purposes of education and nation-building. The autonomy of scouting was severely restricted and in 1937 the movement was transformed into an official governmental organisation called the Youth Guard (Străjerii), supporting the royal dictatorship.

In a much more spontaneous way and despite some restrictions imposed by government officials, the Legionary Movement developed. This youth movement attracted a good part of educated youth, who were encouraged to assert themselves as a moral force of the new society. Legionnaires tried to attract young people with work camps and marches. Their nationalist, Christian and anti-Semitic rhetoric was a sharp protest against the so-called "democratic" authorities. Between 1924 and 1937, the Legionnaires organised many voluntary work camps in order to restore churches, hermitages or monasteries, and build shelters for the poor, mountain roads, barrages and bridges.

The national "social service"

The 1930s were marked by a major offensive by ideas coming from the Third Reich. Some democratic intellectuals, such as Professor Radulescu Motru, a philosopher and politician, objected to the adoption of laws inspired by the

23. From the perspective of the authorities any idea coming from Russia could generate Bolshevik propaganda.

German National Socialist Party encouraging education through work. Motru argued that such an organisation would not fit the psychological specificities of the Romanian people (Schifirnet 2003:145).

In the meantime the social-pedagogical framework initiated by Spiru Haret was continued through the commitment of the sociologist Dimitrie Gusti (1880-1955), Minister for Education at the beginning of the 1930s. Gusti was also concerned with rural schools. He wanted to stop young people's migration from the villages to the cities and wanted to achieve the long-term stabilisation of Romanian rural society. Gusti's policy attracted significant political support as it was perceived to be a barrage against the influence of right-wing organisations (such as the so-called Iron Guard) on young people.

Inspired by the Danish educational model, Gusti wanted schools to educate pupils in rural areas about hygiene and health. He also favoured cultural education and wanted schools to foster co-operation as an essential value for young people. Reading, singing and dancing in the Romanian style were also viewed as important. All of this was framed in a climate of religiosity. Like Haret, Gusti was in favour of experiential learning. He asked schools to take their pupils on trips and study visits, teaching them new skills that they could practice and apply back in their villages. Gusti also facilitated the functioning around schools of "work communities". He saw this as a means of social education and training and at the same time a means for the selection of political leaders. In this work community the student was to come as a volunteer. On Gusti's initiative, the first "peasant schools" were established in 1933. Gradually their number increased so that by 1945/46 there were a total of 43 schools with nearly 1 000 students.

Gusti considered that the university did not exhaust the creative possibilities of young people and did not satisfy their aspiration for social action. Therefore he proposed complementary preparation and participation for young people: a social service. Young professionals (fresh graduates) were asked to support, voluntarily, the functioning of cultural centres (foyers) in the villages. Later the social service became mandatory for graduates who were interested in social promotion.

In 1938 the social service trained more than 3 200 youngsters, working in 128 villages. This ambitious programme included the improvement of the roads, the prevention of diseases, the optimisation of agricultural techniques, the reduction of illiteracy and the establishment of foyers, dispensaries and baths. This was all in order to elevate the social condition of the peasant classes. However, due to the unfavourable international events in 1939, only a few months after the formation of many teams of young people, the activity of the social service was suspended (Badina and Neamtu 1970).

Work camps, communist style

Communists did not consider age differences very relevant. They promoted a concept of "flat evolutionism". Therefore refining methods of education or social assistance specific to age stages was not deemed necessary. Communist propaganda attracted young people to certain activities applying training methods to cultivate the "new type of man".

The beginning of the communist regime was characterised by the need to restore the country after the war. Young people were attracted with the promise of a better life and they were asked (frequently forced) to join the reconstruction efforts. In line with this policy, Soviet-style pedagogy praised the educational role of (manual) work. Under these conditions, one of the most advertised forms of youth work in the early years of communism was represented by “youth yards”.

Romania copied the model of the Soviet Union that had been initiated two or three decades earlier, during the Russian Civil War. During the first Soviet Five Year Plan the youth yards worked on the construction of the Baltic-White Sea Channel. This was not a completely new experience for Romanian youth, as the method had already been used by the right-wing opposition during the old regime (the Legionnaires or Iron Guard).

In opposition to the objectives of the Legionnaires, which had a greater symbolic meaning reflecting their ideology, governmental projects were thought out more pragmatically, and more focused on economic aspects. In late January 1948, the Ministerial Commission for Economic Recovery and Monetary Stabilisation announced the opening of six major yards of “national interest” that would work alongside other projects that were smaller and more of local interest. They focused on the construction of two main railway lines that crossed the mountains and on the restoration of those cities affected by the war. The recruiting of volunteers was done by the local organisations of the Youth Labourers Union. On the 1 April 1948, when the sites were opened, each county organisation had to send a group of 150 to 220 volunteers to the “labour front”. Departures were staggered. Each group of volunteers was to stay on-site for two months, before being replaced by another shift. Students arrived on-site in the summer months, once the holidays started.

During the economic crisis of the regime in the 1980s, the ruling Communist Party propagandists tried to revive this appeal to the revolutionary spirit of young people, resuming (or rather trying to resume) the tradition of youth yards; these were the same as work camps, but with a much more important economic dimension. At the beginning of the summer of 1984, in a festive setting, the Danube-Black Sea Channel was inaugurated. Part of the work had been carried out by members of the Communist Youth Union and students. Three months after the opening, the efforts of young people were once again rewarded: a day in August was dedicated to honouring the so-called “Brigadieri”,²⁴ the young people who had literally built up the structure of the socialist homeland.

In the last years of the communist regime, groups of students from all counties were going to the work yards again. Organising their departure was handled by the local organisations of the Communist Youth Union, together with secondary- and higher education institutions. A letter from the management of the yard sent to the high schools from where the young workers came assessed the students' work as “very good for its contribution to the achievement of the plan tasks of the site, to communist, revolutionary education, through labour and for labour, of the young workers” (Popa 1978).

24. “Brigadieri” were appointed in the 1950s. These were youngsters who more or less enlisted voluntarily for reconstruction activities organised by the communist authorities. Most of the work was manual labour, digging or carrying construction materials. Some of these youngsters also received certain qualifications or were politically promoted at the end of training.

A sociological research study conducted in the 1980s (Cinca 1982), beyond a mandatory laudatory tribute to official youth policy, had the courage to also mention the dissatisfaction of young participants in such work yards. The author commented especially on the conditions for leisure time during the work yard internships in the work yards, which were deemed unsatisfactory. Cinca also pointed out that the educational effects of working on such a site were very limited. It contributed to some elements that supported the functionalist social integration of young people: discipline, a sense of responsibility, honesty, mutual aid and interest for work. Other features, at least as important, such as creativity and a sense of initiative or citizenship, were not promoted through the work yards (Cinca 1982:45).

An official from that period claimed that by “fighting drawbacks, shortcomings and difficulties young people become stronger, providing for themselves at the same time a better life, dignified, civilised” (Popa 1978:126). In other words, he justified the poor organisation and poor living conditions offered to the young people through the positive role model of material shortcomings for their education and development.

Youth clubs in the 1980s

Another attempt by communist educators to foster the correct development of young people involved attracting them to leisure clubs for youth. The communist youth organisation managed a youth club in nearly every major city. But despite the relatively large investments to build such institutions, not many young people were interested in participating in the proposed activities. The author of an analysis conducted during those years on the leisure behaviour of young people tried to explain the extremely low rate of youth participation in youth clubs in terms of the lack of such a tradition. He argued that young people in the 1980s remained attached to classical sources of information and learning: school, family, books, theatre and cinema, avoiding stronger ideologically controlled channels such as youth clubs (Schifirnet 1987:76-7).

Youth work since 1989

The main trend since the fall of the communist regime in Romania in 1989 has been to destroy everything to do with the old regime – both the bad and sometimes the good provisions made for young people. Thus, youth clubs started up by the communist regime, instead of being reorganised, were simply excluded from public funding. Most of them closed down. The educators were fired, and their work was considered useless. Some years went by before the belief grew again that young people needed specific services.

At the beginning of the 1990s the lack of trained staff for youth work was noted and criticised. Some youth organisations benefited from exchanges with experienced western European youth workers. They were initiated by a number of French associations as facilitators or animators (*animateurs* in French) for holiday camps or for local communities. The results were not as expected, despite the passion and talent of many Romanian trainees, because

the authorities failed to create a favourable setting for the implementation of new skills and methods in summer camps or in local communities. It took some time before youth work in Romania started to attract the public recognition it deserved. As in other post-Soviet countries, Romanian society was focused on other priorities.

The situation in Romania, however, was even worse than in other former communist countries. In countries like Hungary and Slovakia, the new authorities inherited youth clubs or entrusted them to local authorities, while in Romania these clubs were offered to private foundations (organisations for youth concerned with taking over assets of the former communist youth organisation). Between these foundations and the authorities (either central or local) there was no collaboration, and neither was a common pedagogical strategy developed, so a large part of the former resources have been wasted. On the other hand, a Ministry of Youth was set up, which tried in the late 1990s to create its own network of youth clubs (after the German model). But this project was also gradually abandoned. Therefore, so far no one can say that there has been serious and effective involvement of local or central authorities in supporting youth work.

The only notable achievements may be said to be the small youth organisations or student organisations that have tried to develop their own methods of working with youth, though youngsters have only limited access to them. As for disadvantaged youngsters (especially in villages, or from the Roma minority), who Haret once wanted to upgrade in cultural and material terms, they have remained completely unaffected by any kind of youth policy, and suffer from an acute lack of non-formal education.

Some conclusions

This review of important moments in the history of youth work in Romania seems disappointing from the perspective of contemporary youth work in Europe. Most of the developments in the field of youth work and youth policy do not fit well with current definitions and frameworks for youth work in terms of voluntary participation, equal treatment of participants, and professional youth workers.

It is difficult to find in more than 100 years of “Romanian youth work” any experience related to “girls’ work” (except in the case of Girl Guides). Youth work has been almost exclusively a business concerned with boys.

There has not been much interest either in distinguishing different groups, classes or categories in Romanian youth work. The only dividing line within “Romanian youth work” was focused on rural youth. Even such tradition was lost after the Second World War. Ethnic minorities – such as Jews – were not encouraged to develop their own initiatives.

There have also been some attempts to professionalise informal learning, but all have been abandoned too early, before results were obtained.

Romania needs to take all these experiences into consideration as it continues to develop and implement “youth work” reform.

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Youth work in Greece: a historical overview

by Dora Giannaki

Introduction

There is no doubt that any attempt to study the history of youth work always presents a vexing challenge as the subject under consideration cannot be accurately described. As Coussée has very pertinently put it:

Youth work is a polyvalent and multifaceted practice. It takes place in a wide range of settings, it varies from unstructured activities to fairly structured programmes, it reaches a large diversity of young people, touches a lot of different themes and is on the interface with many other disciplines and practices. (Coussée 2009:7)

The aforementioned complexity of youth work is precisely what determines the kind of methodology that has to be employed in every study of its history: we will thus move simultaneously in time and space, along different levels and heterogeneous social contexts, focusing sometimes on state institutions (for example, education, welfare foundations, the army) and the policies they produce so as to manipulate or to emancipate younger generations, and sometimes on civil society practices (such as charity and its voluntary initiatives) and the activities of youth organisations.

However, we should make clear from the outset that the aim of this chapter is to provide a general outline rather than an exhaustive account of the history of youth work in Greece. Moreover, the field of youth work in the country has not managed as yet to emerge as an autonomous subject of research, which also explains the nearly total lack of relevant literature which could render this account more adequate and comprehensive.

In this respect, I will try to show that although there is to date no official definition or comprehensive legal framework concerning youth work in Greece, youth work has existed as a social practice in the country since the 19th century and acquired relatively stable characteristics at least since 1900.

My analysis will be divided into three parts.

In the first, I will delineate very briefly the main characteristics of youth work in Greece from the 19th century to 1974. This is when the first forms of social services for young people were introduced by the state and some charitable organisations.

In the second part, I will refer to the most important moments in the development of youth work following the restoration of democracy (1974) by giving special emphasis to the creation of the General Secretariat for Youth (1983); I will also examine how these developments affected national youth policy and the character of youth work in the coming years.

Finally, in the third part, I will present the state of youth work today (from 2000 onwards): what the main fields of action are, what the basic structures and actors are and what the current legal framework is. I will also try to highlight the basic problems and challenges for Greek youth work under conditions of severe economic crisis.

The first phase: birth and development of youth work – 1900-1974

The history of youth work in Greece begins with the foundation of the Greek state in the 19th century (1830). The basic concerns of the time comprised the accommodation of orphans from the War of Independence and the moral education of the younger generations.²⁵ During this period no organised state service for young people existed; nevertheless, there were some stuttering steps towards state funding and involvement in youth work, as well as a variety of youth work activities mainly emanating from civil society for the social welfare of the orphan children of war, such as charities for needy young people, orphanages and vocational training schools.

The most important orphanages of the 19th century were founded between 1850 and 1920 in the urban centres of Greece, mainly by private charities. The provision for orphans included not only accommodation and food, but also literacy

25. Greece was under the occupation of the Ottoman Empire for four centuries. The War of Independence lasted almost nine years, from 1821 to 1830.

classes, vocational training and religious teaching. Other charitable institutions were responsible for the development of a variety of vocational training services for young males: for instance, in 1837, the first technical school was founded. This was the so-called “Polytechniko Scholeion”, later the Polytechnic University, where young people from the working classes had the opportunity to be trained to become architects or craftsmen (Riginos 1995:76). During the same period, the literary society Parnassos – the oldest cultural organisation in Greece – established in Athens the “Scholi Aporon Paidon” (School for Poor Boys), encouraging at the same time the foundation of other branches in the rest of the country (Korasidou 1995:109, 155). In addition, by the beginning of the 20th century, several schools of engineering – mainly in the port of Piraeus and the city of Athens – as well as other technical schools were established all over Greece (Riginos 1995:79-80).

It is worth noting at this stage that the foundation of the aforementioned institutions targeting young boys followed a series of public order incidents that proliferated during the 1860s. In particular, increases in the number of burglaries, especially during the night, became associated with the emergence of young *magkes* (a culturally specific vagabond figure). In other words, the idea that young boys constituted a threat to society became a widespread view. In that sense, one should interpret the foundations of the aforementioned schools not only in reference to educational policy, but also within the framework of emerging mechanisms of control, obedience and discipline.

Given this overall picture affecting boys, what was the situation as far as girls were concerned?

Literacy campaigns and the vocational education of girls were also a focus of charitable activity, especially within women’s organisations. Hence, in 1872, the “Laboratory of Poor Women” was founded, where women and especially girls were trained in skills such as sewing, embroidery, and weaving (Korasidou 1995:183, 187, 192). Similar schools, the so-called “Sunday Schools for Poor Women and Girls of the People”, were created in 1890 in many cities of Greece, in which girls had the opportunity to learn reading, writing, numerical calculations, domestic economy and hygiene (Kokkinakis 2010:221). Some of these schools also included in their training programmes lessons in sewing, cutting and hairdressing. Another vocational training school for women was the “Professional and Housekeeping School” established in 1896 where poor girls were trained to become seamstresses, cooks, cashiers, accountant assistants, typists, stenographers, and so on. Such schools functioned in many regions of the country with the same objectives. It must be stressed at this point that many of these girls would end up being employed as maids in bourgeois households.

Gradually, and especially during the first decades of the 20th century, the state acquired a more active role, putting forward important initiatives. Among them, one could mention the following:

- the founding of the Patriotic Institution of Social Protection and Custody (PIKPA in Greek), in 1915, which among its obligations included the protection of mothers, children and the youth;
- the establishment of four social welfare institutions, in 1922, following the mass influx of Greek refugees expelled from Asia Minor: the National Orphanage, the Nursery School, the National Rural Kindergarten and the Rural Housekeeping Schools;
- the founding of the first School of Special Education, in 1937, offering education and care to children with special needs;

- the establishment of the Free School of Social Welfare, in 1937, providing education to young girls desirous of engaging in social work;
- the adoption by the state of the institution of summer youth camps which after 1929 were organised under the auspices of the Ministry of Education (Pantazis 2007).

During the same period the state started regulating child labour, strengthening at the same time the obligatory nature of education (Riginos 1995:21, 94; Dikaïos 2010:287).

In parallel with the above state measures and initiatives from private bodies for the social welfare and vocational training of the homeless and poor children and youth, this period also witnessed the development of other forms of youth work, such as youth sport clubs, scouting groups and other youth organisations (student, political, religious, etc.) (Liakos 1988:11).

At this point it is worth describing the most important of youth organisations active during this first phase.

→ Religious youth organisations

In this period – but also throughout the 20th century – religious youth organisations played a significant role, seeking to regulate the social behaviour of young people through the control and management of their leisure time. Their aim was to “shape the features of the Greek Christian citizen and, by extension, to create a Christian political leadership” (Karamouzis 2010:117). In other words, their role was essentially conservative, serving the entrenchment and the reproduction of the dominant state-religious political ideology (Karamouzis 2010:119). The most important religious youth organisations during the period were the Young Men’s Christian Association-YMCA (HEN in Greek) and the Young Women’s Christian Association-YWCA (HAN in Greek).

YMCA began its activities in Thessaloniki, a multicultural city and economic hub of the Balkans, and the theatre of many military confrontations at least until the First World War. Initially, it was active in the Greek Army with the so-called “Soldier’s Houses”. The Soldier’s Houses had been created in 1918 by the Military Mission of the American YMCA in co-operation with the Greek Government to boost the morale of Greek soldiers, offering them a range of services during their rest and leisure time (HANTh 1924:36). In this context, Soldier’s Houses operated canteens, restaurants, libraries, reading rooms, cinemas, and activities such as board games and sports. They also organised lectures on national-religious themes and excursions to archaeological sites (Gourlis 1997:15; HANTh 1924:38-42).

However, from 1920, YMCA entered a new phase of activity, formally establishing two annexes, one in Athens in 1920 and another in Thessaloniki in 1921. According to the charter of the organisation, its basic mission was the “balanced development of the soul, the spirit and the body, and the smooth socialisation of young people” (Gourlis 1997:13). To that end the organisation expanded its activities, offering young males education, entertainment (mainly through sports, cultural events and youth camps), youth hostels and material support (an important initiative, in this respect, was the establishment of the Committee for the Protection and Support of Young Vagrants – Epitropi Prostatias Alitopaidos – in 1924) (Gourlis 1997:55).

YWCA was established immediately after the Turkish defeat of the Greek Army and the disaster in Asia Minor, which led to a vast influx of Greek refugees from Izmir (Smirni). It became active first in Athens (1923) and then in Thessaloniki (1925), and its activities were organised around four sectors: education (night schools, domestic economy schools, professional education programmes, etc.), entertainment, social welfare (providing accommodation and catering to young students and working women), and camping.

The two religious organisations endeavoured, in effect, to horizontally pervade Greek society, but they managed, in the end, to exert a greater influence on young people coming from lower social strata.

→ Scouting youth organisations

Scouting was first introduced to Greece in 1910 with the establishment of the first Greek scouting group by Athanasios Lefkaditis. The official establishment of the Scouts of Greece (SEP in Greek) followed a while later, with the ratification of its charter.

According to its 1912 charter, the aim of the organisation is “the moral and physical development of the Greek youth, the production of good citizens and soldiers” (Isaias 1949:36; Kourkouris 2009:17). The means to this end was the “entrenchment of moral principles, the transmission of hygienic knowledge, shooting exercises, games and appropriate excursions, which can lead the scouts to love country life and to develop their natural capacities” (Isaias 1949:36; Kourkouris 2009:17-18).

The activity of scouts was embraced from the beginning by the state. It is characteristic that King Constantine himself received, in July 1914, the title of the general leader of the Scouts of Greece, while the then Prime Minister, Eleftherios Venizelos, supported financially the organisation with personal donations in 1915 and 1916.

The connection between scouting and the state became evident also with the Royal Decree of 21 January 1915, which imposed the mandatory introduction of scouting into schools. However, as the abolition of the voluntary nature of scouting triggered a series of negative reactions, not only among the directors of the Scouts of Greece but across Greek society, the decree was withdrawn a month later (Isaias 1949:100).

The activities developed by the Scouts of Greece during this period can be summed up as follows: organisation of athletic games, demonstrations, parades, camping, tree planting, and so on. Furthermore, the contribution of the scouts was considerable during the Balkan Wars (1912-13) through the provision of nursing services to the wounded in the war (Kourkouris 2009:29).

The relations between scouting and the state became even more intimate in 1917 when the Venizelos Government introduced Law No. 1066/1917 whereby the Scouts of Greece were officially acknowledged as a state institution. This law was supplemented later on with the Royal Decree of 31 March 1919. More specifically, Article 3 of this particular decree stipulated that the Scouts of Greece was under the tutelage of the state, and that it was to be funded annually by the

state – that is, by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Military Affairs – while the composition of its board of directors was to be determined following the recommendations of the Minister for Education (Isaias 1949:156).

The Greek Guiding Association was established in 1932, in this overly positive climate for scouting. According to the charter of the organisation, its aim was “the moral and physical formation of the Greek woman and her preparation to become a good citizen and mother” (Isaias 1949:114). In this context, the organisation provided girls and young women with a series of services, mainly to do with practical help, entertainment and education (in the fields of hygiene, domestic economy, baby nursing, etc.).

In general, scouting resonated widely with Greek youth, constituting the most popular youth structure, at least until 1939. Its success lay in the fact that it managed to develop a flexible system of education and leisure activities which combined, at the same time, progress and tradition, service and entertainment.

→ The National Youth Organisation (EON)

It is worth recounting at this point an interesting story indicative of the ambivalent development of youth organisations. On 4 August 1936 the dictatorship of Ioannis Metaxas, an authoritarian regime that lasted for four years, began. This period witnessed the founding of the National Youth Organisation (EON), which came to play a significant role as an extra-curricular provider of education as well as source of propaganda, especially after November 1938 when the dictator himself assumed the position of Minister for Education. The goals of the organisation comprised the productive spending of free time by young people, “the promotion of physical and psychological well-being thereof, the cultivation of the national values and the faith, the creation of a military spirit” (Petridis 2000:33). Within two years from the first march of EON in Athens (1937), the organisation numbered almost 500 000 members (1939), making it one of the biggest youth organisations in Greek history. Some of the most prominent members of the organisation were Crown Prince Paul, who also served as the titular head of the organisation for a short time, as well as other members of the Greek royal family. Membership of the organisation was not mandatory, but there was widespread and successful campaigning by the Metaxas regime to include most young people in EON. In the founding document of the organisation, it is mentioned that “the inclusion of the entire Greek youth into EON is everyone’s responsibility” (Petridis 2000:88).

The organisation later took over the Scouts of Greece and other such organisations, although – officially – membership still remained voluntary. More specifically, with the introduction of Law No. 1798 of 1939 “On the national and moral education of youth”, Metaxas’ regime enforced the mandatory merger of all existing youth organisations into EON. Any organisation that would not comply would be considered illegal and dissolved (Petridis 2000:271; Machaira 1987:97).

It has been observed that schoolteachers were ordered to bring the youth to EON *en masse*, while workers in the public sector were forced to enlist their children (Petridis 2000:284; Varon-Vassard 2009:63). Some of the activities that EON members were involved in included military training, athletic events, imposing parades and marches, reforestation, trips, community service, and so on.

What is most striking is that the official educational process and school life would be fully subordinated to the needs and the objectives of EON (Machaira 1987:89, 93-4). It is characteristic that, according to a circular letter of the Ministry of Education in 1939, Wednesday was designated as “EON day” in schools (Petridis 2000:282).

Although enjoying a membership in the hundreds of thousands, EON did not really resonate with the youth. As Varon-Vassard states, “the framework it had invented stifled the adolescent, always interfering with his leisure time, from Sundays to his summer holidays” (Varon-Vassard 2009:66). It was not a proper school, it was not a Sunday religious school, it was not scouting: “It was a political organisation which levelled down everyone” (Margaritis in Varon-Vassard 2009:65). And exactly because it never functioned as a real ground for conviviality and emancipation of human relations – as happens in youth organisations with real voluntary membership – it did not exert any effective influence on the young people of that time. This is confirmed by the short life of the organisation, which was dissolved soon afterwards, during the German Occupation, in June 1941.

→ The United Panhellenic Organisation of Youth

The Second World War and later the Greek Civil War (1944-49) cost Greece dearly, both in terms of human lives and in terms of material damage. At any rate, Greek youth played a prominent role in resistance efforts and in the liberation struggle that ensued, through the activity of a number of resistance youth organisations. The most well known of those was the United Panhellenic Organisation of Youth (EPON), the youth wing of the National Liberation Front, which was established on 23 February 1943 after the merger of 10 earlier political and resistance youth organisations.

EPON functioned as a youth organisation clearly associated with the political left, and yet it did achieve a very large social and geographical expansion, incorporating into its ranks the largest part of Greek youth, with up to 600 000 members after the end of the Second World War.

Although the main aim of the organisation was to resist the German Occupation and liberate the country, EPON wanted to focus on young people in various ways, not only in wartime but also in peacetime, and for this reason the organisation anticipated its post-liberation life from the beginning of its activities (Varon-Vassard 2009:271).

It is worth noting that, during the war, EPON did not confine its action solely to military engagements but was also involved in organising a variety of cultural events across Greece. These activities included the staging of theatrical performances, sport events, lectures and talks on literature, musical concerts, and so on. This practice of EPON had great impact because it initiated a large number of young people – mainly from lower social strata and geographically isolated regions of Greece – into the experience of a cultural event.

EPON's contribution to the process of rebuilding the country immediately after the war was also considerable. Nevertheless, the organisation was dissolved in 1946 by the then right-wing government, although it would go underground and continue its activities until 1958, when it finally ceased its activities.

Following the war, and in order to deal with the enormous war damage, Greece received help from international organisations, like the United Nations, as well as from individual countries like the United States (within the scope of the Marshall Plan). At the same time the government tried to help the population through various programmes in order to overcome this emergency situation. In this context, the Royal National Foundation was founded in order to help deal with educational needs. However, the greatest amount of help in social welfare was provided by two other institutions: the National Welfare Organisation (initially Royal Welfare) and the Northern Provinces' Welfare. The National Welfare Organisation put initial emphasis on children who were vulnerable after the war. Around 40 000 children were reached through child centres of the organisation. In the 1950s the organisation maintained 263 institutions in northern Greece, the "Children's Homes" (Paidopoleis), which were later renamed "Social Centres" (Pantazis 2009). The same period – 1947, specifically – witnessed the establishment of the National Youth Foundation, whose main task was to provide accommodation and material support to poor students.

The following period, up until the establishment of the Colonels' Junta in April 1967, was a period of deep organisational shifts for the country, in which the new developments in trade unionism and the youth occupied centre stage. As far as the youth is concerned, we can observe the following.

A particularly active student movement developed, which fought in support of democracy, the increase of state spending on education to 15% of the GDP, the enshrinement of university asylum and, more generally, the defence of academic liberties.

New youth organisations were created, mainly political, the most important of which was the Democratic Youth Movement Grigoris Lambrakis set up in 1963. What set apart the Lambrakis Youth Movement was "the qualitative range of the actions" it undertook with "campaigns in the countryside, cultural clubs, the cultivation of alternative entertainment habits and patterns" (Seferiadis 2010:12-13). This organisation would play a vital part in the political affairs of the time, while later on it would provide the main pool for the recruitment of members for youth organisations against the dictatorship.

The second phase: further institutionalisation and integration of youth work – 1947-2000

Let me now make a historical jump to the mid-1970s and, more specifically, to the period after the fall of the dictatorship (1974) and the restoration of democracy in Greece.²⁶

26. The Greek military junta ruled Greece from 1967 to 1974. During this period political oppression and censorship was at all times heavy-handed, especially in areas deemed sensitive by the junta, such as political activities and politically flavoured art, literature, film and music, as well as education. The youth work of this period served the propaganda aims of the regime and included mainly athletic events and the organisation of parades and marches.

A very important year in the development of youth work in Greece was 1975, when the Greek social security system acquired legal foundations in the new constitution. In this respect, at least two of its articles made direct or indirect reference to the duty of the state to protect youth (articles 16 and 21).²⁷ The next crucial step in this framework took place in 1983 when the National Health Service was established in order to guarantee free health care for all residents of Greece without any special conditions of entitlement.

However, the most important development in the field of youth work that year was the foundation of the General Secretariat for Youth by the new socialist government of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK). For PASOK, in its first period in government, leisure time and its management acquired paramount importance as a crucial factor in the socialisation, identity construction and skill acquisition of young people. Hence, the main purpose behind the foundation of the General Secretariat for Youth was to monitor and co-ordinate several state policies for the younger generation, giving special emphasis on leisure time activities.

This first period of the General Secretariat for Youth has been generally positively evaluated as it was accompanied by a series of important provisions for young people, such as social tourism programmes, introduction of the discount youth card, and provision of free theatre tickets. During the same period, many youth clubs were set up all over Greece, in parallel with the establishment of a network of cultural youth associations (Giannaki 2010:78). Other initiatives by the General Secretariat for Youth included cultural educational programmes in schools, programmes for the support of young entrepreneurs and young farmers, information campaigns on issues of mental and body hygiene, the creation of a helpline for young people, and the introduction of the institution of “youth week” in the rural areas of Greece (Giannaki 2010:78). All these initiatives were accompanied by other governmental policies, such as the introduction of school councils for the promotion of democratic participation, special cultural and athletic activities for adolescents in correctional institutions, the increase of professional orientation programmes, the extension of a network of rehabilitation centres, and so on (Giannaki 2010:78).

The third phase: youth work today (2000 to present)

To conclude this historical overview, let us now examine the situation on the ground today (from 2000 onwards).²⁸

As far as the legal conditions of youth work in Greece are concerned, in addition to the constitution and the Presidential Decree No. 274 on the General

27. Article 16 concerns education and stipulates the role of the state in the intellectual, professional, ethical and physical development of young persons. It also sets out as an aim their transformation into “free and responsible citizens”. Article 21 pertains to the obligation of the state to take measures ensuring the good health of young people. See, in this respect, *To Syntagma tis Elladas* (2010) [The Greek Constitution].

28. In this section, I will be drawing on my contribution to the study *The Socio-economic Scope of Youth Work in Europe* (2007).

Secretariat for Youth,²⁹ existing national legislation in the youth field deals with the following issues:

- youth employment (e.g. protection of juvenile employees; special measures for young employees);
- sports (e.g. special measures for young athletes with outstanding performance, such as easier entrance to state universities);
- education (e.g. legislation regarding the structure and function of the educational system including the participation of students in the governing bodies of state universities; the right of pupils to set up youth societies in schools, the *Mathitikes Koinotites*);
- family (e.g. special legislation which determines and protects the rights of the child, as well as particular measures against children's abuse within the family);
- military service (e.g. exemption from military service through serving an alternative social service);
- deviant behaviour (e.g. special courts and treatment for juvenile delinquents);
- media (e.g. special legislation for the protection of minors; measures to ensure that television broadcasts do not include any programmes which might seriously impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors, such as programmes that involve pornography or gratuitous violence);
- participation (e.g. special legislation for the increase of youth participation at the local level within the framework of Local Youth Councils).³⁰

Despite the existence of the above legal provisions regarding youth issues, there is no official definition or legal framework concerning youth work. However, youth work does exist as a social practice; it constitutes an integral part of educational and welfare endeavours and plays a significant role in supporting young people's safe and healthy transition to adult life (Bohn and Stallmann 2007:16, 24). The range of activities that are self-consciously described as youth work is extensive, and includes health, social support, counselling, education and training, personal development, information, career services, and so on. However, it seems that youth work is mainly related to leisure time activity – that is, artistic and cultural programmes, outdoor recreation, sports, and so on – providing a space for youthful experimentation and cultural development.

Youth workers in Greece work primarily with young people aged between 15 and 25, but may in some cases extend this to those aged 13 to 15 or 25 to 30. Most youth services provide a mixture of "open" youth work, intended for all young people in the area, and youth work targeting particular groups of young people, usually those who are disadvantaged or socially excluded (Bohn and Stallmann 2007:24).

In Greece, there is no specific education and training for youth work (in other words, there are no nationally recognised qualifications). However, people who wish to work with young people or become youth workers can acquire some relevant professional qualifications. In particular, one can obtain a higher education degree in social work, social sciences (sociology, psychology, social policy, social administration, social anthropology, etc.), or educational sciences and pedagogy (primary education, early childhood education, special education, social pedagogy, etc.) (Bohn and Stallmann 2007:31).

29. Presidential Decree No. 274, O.J. No. 130/1989.

30. See the Database for International Youth Work (DIJA): www.dija.de/griechenland/impressum-gr, accessed 19 September 2013.

Training in youth work-related subjects – for example social care/pedagogy, counselling and special education, leisure time management, organisation and management of youth camps – is also provided by public and private vocational training institutes (IEK), private vocational training centres (KEK), centres for adult education (KEE) and the General Secretariat for Youth. Trainees who manage to complete their studies are entitled to receive different types of certificates depending on their training, such as a vocational training diploma, a further education certificate, a lifelong learning certificate, a certificate of attendance, and so on (Bohn and Stallmann 2007:31).

Finally, non-governmental voluntary organisations and associations offer training courses and special seminars for volunteers in the youth sector but without any overall co-ordination in terms of administration, theory or approach. It should be noted that none of these training courses leads to an officially recognised qualification.

In terms of structures and institutions, youth work in Greece today involves a complex network of providers (community groups, NGOs and local authorities) supported by a large number of adults, working as full-time or part-time paid staff or as unpaid volunteers (Bohn and Stallmann 2007:24). Unfortunately, due to lack of official data it is impossible to provide precise figures for the number of youth workers in the country. Overall, the different organisations share a more or less common set of youth work values. These include working with young people because they are young people, and not because they have been labelled or are considered deviant; starting with young people's view of the world; helping young people develop stronger relationships and collective identities; respecting and valuing difference; and promoting the voice of young people (Bohn and Stallmann 2007:25). The main actors in the field are described below.

– The General Secretariat for Youth, which is attached to the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs and is responsible for the implementation of the government's youth policy. It works for the mainstreaming of the youth dimension in other governmental policies given that all governmental organisations may develop policies that ultimately touch upon some needs of the younger generation. In this respect, the General Secretariat for Youth comprises departments covering employment and development, culture and leisure, education and social participation, international co-operation and information, and its main role is to promote intersectoral youth policy taking also into consideration all the relevant developments in the youth sector at the European and international level. It also implements every year a special programme supporting youth initiatives. More specifically, with an open invitation to the public, interested youth NGOs and other agencies are invited to submit their proposals for any kind of youth activity. These proposals are evaluated and a certain number of plans proposed by young people (and their organisations) are financed throughout Greece.

– The Institute for Youth: This institute, which works under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, provides technical and scientific support to the General Secretariat for Youth and is responsible for the management of EU programmes for youth and the European Youth Card in Greece.

– The National Youth Foundation (NYF): This foundation is a private law legal body functioning under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. The main mission of the NYF is to support young persons in secondary and higher education, as well as to develop a series of cultural, social and educational activities. For over 60 years, this institution has offered services to a large number of young students from Greece and other countries (exceeding 12 000 yearly), in high schools, technological education institutes and universities.

– Second Level of Local Government (Regions or Peripheries): After a fundamental reform of the local government system introduced by a recently enacted Greek law on a new architecture of local and decentralised administration (code name *Kallikrates*), the second level of local government in Greece is now constituted by 13 regions, called “peripheries”. Regions are grouped into seven decentralised administrations, which are financially and administratively autonomous. They are concerned with the socio-economic and cultural development of their constituencies, as well as the running of services for the local authorities (municipalities) which are members of the regions/peripheries. Among their responsibilities are the development of initiatives, measures and programmes of interest to young people and the support of their activities, at local and regional level. To this effect, regions seek co-operation with relevant governmental bodies.

– First Level of Local Government (Municipalities): In Greece, there are 325 municipalities (replacing the 1 033 pre-existing municipalities and communities) which constitute the first level of local government. They are entrusted with a wide range of responsibilities concerning children and young people, including equipment and maintenance of nursery, primary and secondary school buildings, family and youth welfare services, leisure (such as sport) and out-of-school provisions for young people.

– Non-governmental organisations: The role of the non-governmental sector in the domain of youth work has become increasingly significant in the last few years. According to a relatively recent survey, in 2007 there were around 270 NGOs in the field of children and youth work (Bohn and Stallmann 2007:40). However, the real number must be substantially larger if we consider the existence of many more NGOs, which although not specialising in youth work, do offer certain services to children and young people. It is worth noting that the institutional umbrella of non-governmental youth organisations in Greece is the National Youth Council, which was established in 1998 and comprises 59 youth organisations.

Finally, one could suggest that although all categories of youth work do exist in the country, the main fields of action lie in the following: career/employment services, youth information, programmes for disadvantaged and socially excluded young people, cultural education and cultural programmes, social care, sports, and international youth work programmes.

A new future for youth work in Greece?

Studying the history of youth work in Greece, there is no doubt that the role of youth work was, and still is, of great social value. Due to recent economic developments in the country this role may substantially increase. The youth work sector may be called on to undertake functions substituting the welfare state, which

is currently being downsized and marginalised. It may have to provide services reminiscent of the distant past, such as the provision of housing and subsistence for large numbers of disadvantaged youth. This is far from inconceivable given that the basic salary for newcomers in the labour market has been set by law at much lower than the existing basic salary and the youth unemployment rate climbed from 38.5% in July 2011³¹ to 48% in March 2012³² and then to 62.9% in May 2013³³

This new reality requires a new strategy as far as youth policy in Greece is concerned. It will certainly require a new role for the General Secretariat for Youth by shifting the epicentre of its activities from the management of leisure time to the real problems and needs of youth today and, more specifically, to issues such as youth unemployment, intergenerational justice, social inclusion, human rights and respect of diversity, lifelong learning opportunities, provision of targeted welfare services (for example, housing), and so on.

The current situation will also demand a series of other initiatives, including:

- the formulation of a comprehensive institutional framework for youth work and youth workers;
- setting up national standards for youth work and the development of a professionally accredited youth worker training scheme;
- drawing up a national action plan for youth work and effective co-ordination between public authorities and other relevant agents in the field;
- essential promotion of research on youth work issues through a closer dialogue and contact between policy makers and Greek academia/youth researchers.

All this would make absolute sense under normal circumstances. Regrettably, Greece is currently going through a period that, in political science terms, can only be described a virtual “state of exception” or “state of emergency” (Agamben 2005). Within this framework, enforcing the drastic downsizing of the public sector, the troika³⁴ has demanded from the Greek Government the dismantling of many public institutions. The first victims of this policy were the National Youth Foundation and the Institute for Youth, which – since November 2011 – together with the Institute of Continuing Adult Education have been dissolved and merged into a single body, the Youth and Lifelong Learning Foundation,³⁵ with uncertain implications for the youth sector (both in terms of policy orientation and budget). And that was only the start: the Greek Government is now considering the dissolution of the General Secretariat for Youth itself and its downgrading into a directorate within the Ministry of Education. It is ironic that after more than 100 years, youth policy in Greece is in grave danger of returning to its starting point: philanthropy.

31. This data refers to young people aged 15 to 24. See “Youth Unemployment: A lost generation”, *The Economist*, www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange/2011/07/youth-unemployment, accessed 19 September 2013.

32. See “Greek unemployment passes 20 Percent, 48 for youth”, *H Kathimerini*, www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite2_1_09/02/2012_426909, accessed 19 September 2013.

33. See “Euro area unemployment rate at 12.1%”, *EUROSTAT*, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-30082013-AP/EN/3-30082013-AP-EN.PDF, accessed 20 October 2013.

34. Representatives of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Central Bank (ECB) and the European Union (EU).

35. Joint Ministerial Decision 127175/ H (O.J. B2508 / 4.11.2011).

In a period marked by the dramatic increase of youth unemployment and, with it, of social exclusion of young people, violent incidents and acting-outs like the ones witnessed in the UK in August 2011 will, no doubt, be an increasing experience in many European countries.

Indeed, it is often the case that few other reactions are left to young people to protest their exclusion from “normal” social life (from education and work up to consumption). How else can they show their despair and anger at the barriers regulating access to higher education – such as the increase in tuition fees in UK universities imposed by the coalition government – and working life, especially in countries of the European periphery where youth unemployment is skyrocketing? As Bauman has pointed out in a recent article, in our post-modern societies, consumption also functions as a means of social inclusion. Hence by stealing mobile phones and trendy sneakers, UK rioters found a way to demand their inclusion from a society denying them any access to dominant consumption patterns (Bauman 2011). Greek riots (in 2008, 2011 and 2012) cannot be understood without taking into account the rapid deterioration of living conditions and expectations affecting youth on all these levels in times of crisis.

This alleged or assumed resistance and radicalisation of youth will inevitably lead to a return to the classic debate affecting the design of youth policy from time immemorial. On the one hand, we find policies premised on the idea that youth constitutes an ever-present social risk, with young people considered victims and bearers of all sorts of social pathologies (Demertzis et al. 2008:41, 48). On the other hand, we have policies that discern in youth the hope for a better social system, that place youth at the forefront of social experimentation and creativity. Today, more than ever, we need to take sides in this debate – the side of youth.

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by Artūras Deltuva

A story of youth work in Lithuania

Introduction

I call it a story, not a history, for a reason. When I was invited to make a presentation (on which this chapter is based) during the third workshop on the history of youth work in Europe, at first I felt happy and a bit flattered. But then a doubt came to my mind: would I be useful in any way to the workshop participants? I am not a researcher or historian. And I was aware that a perfect report on youth policy, including a quite-detailed description of the development of youth work in Lithuania, had already been compiled by an international group of experts (Williamson 2002; Council of Europe 2002).

But then I decided to contribute by focusing not so much on historical facts as on a story from the perspective of a person who has been involved in the development of youth work in Lithuania since it regained its independence. This experience allows me to share a view on how our thinking has changed and what kinds of intentions people had when making one or the other decision in the field of youth work. Of course it is a subjective story: probably I should say something about where it comes from and what my experience is in the youth field, so that its limits are clearer.

I started as a volunteer in the youth psychological aid centre. I worked there for a couple of years. Then I worked as the head of the youth division in the Ministry of Education and Culture (later Ministry of Culture) between 1993 and 1994. So initially I had experience of working on a grassroots level, moving immediately afterwards to a government post with responsibility for the development of youth work and youth policy in the country. From there my career went up or down or probably back to a more practical field, that of youth work training. I started in Lithuania but later worked in other countries of Europe in close co-operation with the National Youth Council of Lithuania (LijOT), the Youth and Sport Department (YSD) of the Council of Europe, and the European Youth Forum (as a member of DEVDEMCOM, a committee for the development of democratic youth structures).

The training I was involved in was almost never about pure skills training. Even when this was the case, it was almost always also with the intention of developing the structure or quality of youth work. At the same time I was doing youth work myself by running outdoor experiential learning programmes for youth at risk and conducting training for youth workers and youth trainers on the subject. This is the experience that informs my story of youth work in Lithuania.

The Soviet paradox of participation

We in Lithuania, as in many other post-communist countries, have experienced an interesting phenomenon, which we can call a Soviet paradox of participation. At the very end of the Soviet era the level of youth participation in youth organisation (not in organisations, because there was only one correct organisation – Komsomol) was very close to 100%. But the first research conducted on the subject in independent Lithuania, just a couple of years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, found that the participation level was down to 3%. I believe 3% was also the real number in Soviet times. Real participation and belief in youth participation had long been decreasing; only fake participation in Soviet documents was increasing.

We had to face this situation in the post-Soviet area from the very beginning, because it was not hidden anymore. But the lack of a belief in participation turned from a passive attitude to that of active disbelief, or cynicism. Everything that was related to youth enthusiasm, with any idea-based movement, was immediately associated with Komsomol. And Komsomol had mostly negative or very negative connotations.

So it was an obvious challenge to re-establish a positive picture of participation, to patiently encourage new forms of youth participation in society. This became a primary goal of youth policy and youth work in the first decade of independent Lithuania (or the last decade of the 20th century).

The general situation from 1990 to 1993

Luckily it is wrong to say that we had nothing at all in the youth work sector. First, youth organisations and youth movements were created. This happened thanks to the enthusiasm of certain individuals and some foreign partners.

Almost all the traditional youth organisations were set up in Lithuania. Most were related to and sometimes initiated by foreign partners (for example, scouts, Youth for Exchange and Understanding, Red Cross youth, YMCA, young farmers association, and youth organisations associated with political parties such as the young liberals, social democrat youth and young conservatives). There were youth organisations drawing on roots from before the Second World War, in many cases supported by Lithuanian emigrants in the United States (for example, scouts, *Ateitis* or Catholic youth, *Lituanica*, young *Maironieciai*, the *Valancius* movement). And there were also very new youth movements born of the authentic movements of those days (for example, *Atgaja*, *Young Romuva*). In many cases these youth organisations had shallow roots among young people. This was so, in my opinion, because of the sometimes unclear idea of what exactly one was to do in life in those days. Organisations had strong ideas, but relatively poor pedagogical concepts, a lack of youth leaders, and youth workers almost did not exist.

Alongside these developments, there were non-profit youth (or sometimes for youth) service organisations (*Actio Catholica Patria*, the youth centre *Babilonas*, youth information centres, youth psychological aid centres, and so on). Some were initiated and created by adults for youth but in almost all cases they were joined by young people who were providing services for youth.

One more thing should be mentioned about the situation in those days. Youth organisations organised themselves into an umbrella organisation – the Lithuanian Youth Council, which *LijOT* succeeded in joining the Council of European National Youth Committees (*CENYC*). Even more: *LijOT* survived and did not split into alternative national youth councils, which was the case in some countries of the former Eastern bloc.

So the non-governmental sector was more or less developing in its own way, which was not the case at governmental level. There was no policy and/or budget for youth work at the national level or in municipalities. The only active player in this field that had a more or less clear policy and funding for youth work was the Open Society Foundation (the Soros Foundation). It had a very clear idea – the empowerment of youth initiatives. The Open Society foundation began the tradition of funding the non-governmental sector, which was followed by the state at a later stage. The foundation also had a very direct influence on the creation in 1993 of the youth division in the Ministry of Education and Culture. Its main influence was through good practice examples, which became possible because of Soros Foundation funding. But the foundation was also influential in encouraging and advising the creation of the first state institution to take over responsibility for the development of youth policy and youth work.

Additional education instead of youth work

Some colleagues from Lithuania would almost certainly disagree with me about my assertion that there was no state youth policy on youth work from 1990 to 1993. And they would be right in a way. There was a range of out-of-school education programmes (additional education, to translate it literally) paid and run by the state: music schools, art schools, leisure time centres, sport schools,

hobby circles at schools, and so on. People from the NGO side and from the newly established youth division in the Ministry of Education and Culture felt (but did not yet know how to explain) that this kind of youth work was not quite what they wanted and that it would be too easy an escape to say that everything was all right and that all this additional education should be accepted as youth work or as the only way of doing youth work. They may have felt that way, but often they did not have the arguments to explain that perspective. Nevertheless, this process of self-definition had started and I will come to the results of it later in my story.

→ Where to go?

The creation of the youth division was, without doubt, the starting point for the intentional development of youth work. This development was obviously influenced by different actors from abroad. The Soros Foundation, international youth organisations and CENYC have already been mentioned. They did what they did before that and continued doing their work. But other actors should be mentioned here as well.

The Council of Europe had a great influence by creating possibilities to learn about the experience of other countries. When the youth division in the Ministry of Education and Culture was established all the staff of the youth division had a fantastic opportunity for an extended study visit. Six countries – Sweden, Denmark, Luxembourg, France (the European Youth Centre, or EYC, in Strasbourg), Liechtenstein and Slovenia – were visited on the trip. Later, a big group of youth leaders and civil servants had a seminar at the EYC in Strasbourg, which enabled the establishment of a network of people working in different institutions on different levels who had a shared understanding of what kind of youth work we wanted to develop in Lithuania. This knowledge helped to decide how youth work had to be organised.

But another question was how youth work should actually be implemented. In this field, on the grassroots level, different partner organisations from different countries have shared their experience and knowledge, especially Catholic youth from Germany, including Katholische Junge Gemeinde itself, which had a big influence on the understanding of youth pedagogy. In particular, the very experienced social pedagogue Andrea Mewaldt was working in Lithuania for many years, first in Actio Catholica Patria creating a project for a youth voluntary work year, and later in co-operation with LijOT training youth leaders and youth workers, which helped to create a base for the tradition of youth work-based emancipatory practice. This is the approach that continues to have influence to the present day.

The influence was important, though very useful and very risky at the same time. The risk lay in blind “copy-pasting”, with the structure of youth work taken from somewhere else without an understanding of its roots and intentions. There was a risk of falling prey to the illusion that something could be created very quickly, without patience and reflection, forgetting that, for example, German youth work has a relatively long history with its own ups and downs. It was very important in Lithuania for us to understand that we had to go through our own process of step-wise development. It was our responsibility to reflect on the experience of others wisely, to keep growing on the basis of our own authentic experience, and to be patient in discussions and in our own discovery process. And I think

youth workers, youth leaders, youth trainers, youth organisations, LIJOT and the youth division in the Ministry of Culture (later the State Council for Youth Affairs and then the Department of Youth Affairs in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour) did their best in this regard.

What it is not to be done

We started from what is not to be done.

NO EMPTY BOXES!

What does this mean? It means that the structure for youth work should follow the development of youth work itself: that the structure should be developed together with the actors of youth work according to the changing situation.

The aim for this was a flexible structure encouraging authentic experience, in order to avoid a scenario wherein the structure suppresses the content. There were other core principles regarding what we wished to be done:

- yes to an emancipatory approach;
- yes to a subsidiarity principle;
- consequently, yes to the participation of NGOs but with a clear role for LIJOT.

In order to move in this direction there were three main aims:

- developing competences: knowledge, skills, attitudes of youth workers and leaders;
- creating a legal structure;
- creating a financing model for youth work.

A lot of energy and money was invested in people through long-term training courses for youth leaders, youth workers and youth trainers. This served both to improve youth work quality and provide a space for a self-defining process whereby people active in the field could meet, reflect on their practice and also formulate their ideas for youth work policy. Thanks to this process, or in parallel with it, examples of good practice of emancipatory youth work appeared and a youth policy concept was adopted in parliament in June 1996. This was probably the moment when the basis for a new quality of youth work for Lithuania was created.

Youth for Europe has arrived: big push, new quality

The EU youth programme Youth for Europe probably had a similar general influence in Lithuania as everywhere else in Europe, but additionally its arrival was a big catalyst for the development of youth non-formal education as an independent field. The National Agency for Youth for Europe decided that it was not enough for people to learn how to fill in application forms and how to do book-keeping correctly; after the receipt of a grant, the recipient had to be trained so quality

educational experiences were provided as well. Since the programme was open to a very wide range of applicants – youth organisations, non-formal youth groups, school groups – and since youth leaders came from different contexts and different fields, the idea of emancipatory/empowering youth work spread and reached a much wider population.

Youth workers had to explain themselves

Though it is suggested here that the basis for youth work was created more or less successfully and reasonably quickly, it should also be said that the process of defining youth work was never easy. People from the field naturally had to explain and define themselves and this still continues. As noted already this story is not a document on the history of youth work of Lithuania. Rather it is a story of how thinking about youth work developed. Examples of youth non-formal education should be mentioned here as an example of how youth workers have to explain themselves and what they do.

Naturally, when it comes to public funding, everything should be defined. Youth non-formal education is no exception. In many countries youth non-formal education is described in a very simple and clear way as education that takes place beyond formal education settings. But in our case it was felt that if only this criterion was adopted, those coming from the context of emancipatory or empowering youth work would have no chance in the invisible competition with what was called “additional education” in Lithuania. So the field of non-formal education had to be defined by two criteria: in terms of the space where it happens and by the method employed, as illustrated below.

Table: Educational fields and methods

	Field of non-formal education	Field of formal education
Empowering/emancipatory approach and methods, formative assessment	A	B
Directive methods, formal programmes, summative assessment	C	D

A. Non-formal education: This is mostly organised by youth organisations and open youth centres, but also by some teachers, enthusiastic individuals at hobby circles, youth exchanges and youth initiative projects. The content covers life skills, social/emotional competences, space for improvisation, and learning by discovering. Content and method is decided on by educators and young people together. Assessment is mostly formative, though it can sometimes be summative when recognition by third parties is needed.

B. Interactive teaching: This involves interactive teaching of formal curriculum subjects. It is often used for developing generic competences.

C. Additional education: This is mostly organised by state-funded additional education schools, and includes, for example, music schools and art schools.

It provides additional high quality training in specific fields (such as music, art, sports, technical skills). Content and methods are approved by the Ministry of Education. The assessment is mostly summative.

D. Traditional teaching: Traditional teaching is mostly used to impart conventional knowledge.

I will not go into the details of the table above partly because it is not an officially recognised table, and also because I am not writing about the pedagogical aspects of youth work here. But there are a couple of issues that require underlining.

If non-formal education as part of youth work were defined only according to the method, we have had very reasonable comments from teachers in schools who are already using a vast range of different group work methods and experiential approaches that contribute to emancipatory/empowering relationships with their students. They would say that they do the same as youth work, but the space or field in which they do it distinguishes it from youth work – it is “non-formal education” within the formal education system.

If non-formal education as part of youth work were defined only according to the field where it is organised, we would be in deep conflict with additional education, especially music and art schools, but also sometimes with sport schools, because if non-formal education appears in the same pot as additional education it does not serve the interests of either. Though both fields are important, useful and needed by young people and society more generally, the funding arrangements need to be separate and different. One funding approach is needed when we talk about preparing a high-class pianist and another kind of funding is needed when we organise non-formal programmes for groups of young people for a musical expression session. And it is not only about funding: the competences of the “youth workers” need to be different, and the learning environment is different.

This is just an example of how the youth work field had to be defined and it had to be defined in the context of the reality of Lithuania. The realities of other countries can give hints and inspiration, but decisions needed to be taken here and by us, and of course the consequences also had to be experienced here and by us. And this is where the tension and anxiety comes from, because it is so tempting to give in to the illusion that the right answer and the right decisions have already been made somewhere else, so we just take them and implement them. Then it is much easier and... less responsibility falls on our shoulders.

Recent developments

Before writing this story I talked to people who are involved in the field of youth work in Lithuania now. I asked them how things looked today, and what follows is a short summary of their perspectives.

All the varieties of youth work, in the sense of target groups, methods used, and geographical coverage, exist in Lithuania. But a striking view was that accessibility is limited. Youth work has become very rich and lively, but it has not become a massive phenomenon known and accessible to everyone everywhere. There might be different reasons for this. One of the reasons could be a pitfall of the

subsidiarity principle. Since this principle was established from the very beginning, it could be seen that it was implemented in a way that the responsibility for the development of youth work lay very much in hands of youth organisations. From one perspective this is good – youth organisations have real power in decision-making processes concerning youth work at all levels. But at the same time it seems to make it easy for the governmental sector to escape their share of responsibility. Sometimes one gets the impression that youth work is not the business of senior politicians anymore. It seems that they are happy that youth work has its own “sand box” (instead of an empty box) and they are happy to let youth work play there. Maybe this is not the reality quite yet, but there is definitely a risk. And if such a situation develops, it will be difficult to expect movement towards a new quality in youth work. By new quality, I mean the recognition of professional youth workers not only on paper, but also in the budget lines of municipalities, where there is a proper budget for youth work at the grassroots level, thereby creating equal access to youth services all over the country for a wide range of young people including those who are less motivated. This is especially important when it comes to professional work with youth. Voluntary youth work and project-based work with youth is there and it grows in its own, natural way, but professional work with young people is done by committed individuals at the cost of their free time and sometimes their health. We – the people from the field – know that things like this never last too long. And such enthusiasts are leaving the field already. They will continue to leave if the state is not able to buy their services now. If the state is not able, or willing, to buy their services now, we – actually us, the citizens – will have to pay much more later.

This is the dilemma or the challenge for the youth work story in Lithuania today.

Remembering the future

The story continues. Some areas that are now being dealt with are:

- the development and implementation of the concept of the youth worker;
- the development and implementation of open youth work;
- the concept of open youth centres (a pilot project is running, and nine open youth centres have been opened).

Regarding open youth centres, a new concept of open spaces/areas for youth is being tried out. This is a space or a room open and adapted to work with youth that can be in an existing institution (for example, cultural, educational, sport or social centres) but is adapted and applied for open work with young people using existing tools or a methodological framework. A new system of financing youth non-formal education is also under construction: a pilot project is running in four municipalities, to be followed by a national project in all municipalities.

Concluding remarks

As I have said this chapter is a very subjective story, more like an essay. It would probably be very different if written by another representative of youth work from Lithuania. By way of conclusion, I simply want to stress the main idea of this chapter – whatever we create (including youth work), it is a projection of our

thinking. So reflecting on the history of youth work might turn into a reflection on the way of thinking in the field. What I regret is that I did not have a chance to conduct proper research for this, to make my story less subjective. But youth work histories are also the histories of the people who were involved...maybe subjectivity is the beauty of the story?

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A history of youth work in Armenia

Introduction

Like many former constituent members of the Soviet Union, Armenia lacks both youth work history and a history of state-controlled and institutionalised (and instrumentalised) work with young people in their leisure time that may only rather misguidedly be referred to as “youth work”. Other histories of youth work may elect to start in those days, but this history has opted to start during the 1990s, when, after some struggles and tragedies, Armenia was in a position of democratic self-determination and decision making. Civil society and more participative public services were, even then (and, arguably, still are today), in an embryonic state. Seventy years of state socialism had stripped people of a capacity to think and plan for themselves and, in youth work as in a range of other provisions in youth policy and beyond, Armenia sought ideas and advice from elsewhere, though it was rarely clear where to turn when the thoughts and perspectives of others derived from very different cultural, political, economic and social traditions. Nevertheless, the idea of “youth work” took root following a concept paper produced around 1996 for a workshop with the title “Youth work is the working part of youth policy”.

The wider context

Even after the end of the Soviet period, Armenia – literally – faced a dark age. As *glasnost* and *perestroika* heralded the end of the USSR, the earthquake of 1988 resulted in many fatalities in Armenia. The war with Azerbaijan over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh led to the displacement and exodus of Armenians from that territory and the rest of Azerbaijan as well as the departure of virtually all Azerbaijanis from Armenia. Armenia, a country of three million people, but with a diaspora worldwide around double that size, also experienced mass emigration. There were wild economic transformations and fluctuations that at one point led to the rationing of electricity to two hours a day and of bread to 400 grams a day. The French-Armenian expatriate superstar Charles Aznavour subsidised electricity in Armenia in these dark days when, for two years in the early 1990s, there was an economic blockade that only allowed the passage of goods and services through neighbouring Georgia. Young people saw little future for themselves in Armenia. The old Soviet system of “youth work” had, predictably, broken down, and the question was whether or not new hope, optimism and possibility might be resurrected through the youth sector in this context of gloom, poverty and despair.

Former times

Figure 2. Examples of propaganda posters



Author's translations:

Top row, left to right: “Don’t talk too much!”; “No”; “Mothers of the planet for peace!”

Bottom row, left to right: “We are friendly, creative and we strengthen peace in space!”; “Humane relations and mutual respect among people: a man is a friend, comrade and brother to a man!”; “People and Army are united!”

Within the Soviet Union there was, without doubt, a strong infrastructure for communist youth work. There had been well-defined methodologies, a well-structured set of activities, specialists in the delivery of “youth work”, and a clear ideological commitment that underpinned this practice. The cultural unification, and “Russification”, of all corners of the USSR was clearly one of the central objectives of Soviet youth work, which promoted particular values, international co-operation (limited to the so-called “Socialist camp” countries) and links with other sectors of youth lives and youth transitions.

Though there is clearly no cause whatsoever to celebrate those days, the conceptual framework for “youth work” – structures, methods, leadership, values, internationalism, connections – may not be something to get rid of wholesale. The rejection of these ideas because of their association with former times, in Armenia and no doubt also in other former Soviet countries, has produced the risk of losing them forever. But the post-Soviet era in Armenia has witnessed an attempt by a small and under-resourced youth sector to try to recover the framework in order to build more relevant and appropriate content within it.

Of course, it was not just rejection of ideology and methodology. As the Soviet Union disintegrated, something also had to be done about the huge infrastructure of youth provision – buildings, Pioneer camps, youth centres – that belonged to Komsomol, the Communist Youth League. Much of this simply disappeared into private hands or was actively privatised, but some was transferred to the Armenian Apostolic Church, becoming part of church structures for youth provision.

The post-Soviet period

There was a slow start to the emergence of youth (student) organisations in the early 1990s. Though some did form, there was little in the way of resources to support their sustainability. Structures were largely sustained through voluntary work and the high energy of small numbers of young people who were committed to the democratic development of a youth sector. Indeed, for that reason and because of a belief in accountability, following institutional attempts at regulation and control, the first President of Yerevan State University’s Student Council resigned in the early 1990s. Around the same time, rather less independent, state-initiated and sponsored youth bodies were formed as part of the start of a very active national process to consolidate the alignment of youth with the country’s priorities. These included the Republican Student Council and the National Youth Council. In contrast, a variety of student bodies also emerged with rather greater levels of independence.

In parallel with the emergence and growth of student organisations, and in part emerging from them, were dedicated youth NGOs such as Young Armenia, which was formed in 1995. These generally had no resources but a great deal of creativity, and they existed through voluntary commitment. There were very rare sources of funding for youth NGO activities, such as the Soros Foundation, the Eurasia Foundation and some programmes supported by the United States Agency of International Development (such as the NGO centre in Yerevan). The competition for such scarce resources was intense.

Youth NGOs started to engage in networking and the creation of umbrella bodies. Such collaborative engagement heralded the emergence of a national

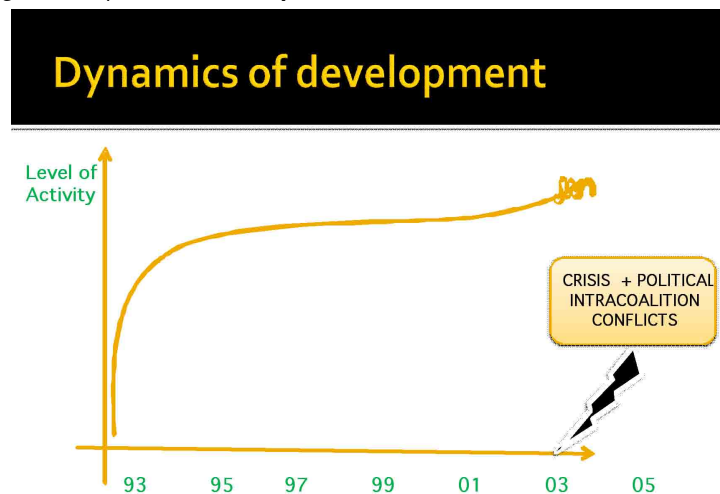
youth policy sector which, in turn, led to co-operation with European institutions of relevance to the youth field: the European Youth Forum and the Council of Europe Youth Directorate. At national level within Armenia, there was strong political lobbying by the youth NGOs and student sectors for the creation of a post of Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs and a separate budget for youth affairs, but below the national level – in the regions and at local level – progress in the youth field remained undeveloped.

A sharp learning and development curve: into the new millennium

This twin-tracked groundwork – within student organisations and other youth NGOs – produced the foundation for significant development in the late 1990s and the 2000s. Student organisations became more professionalised, securing more stable funding, leading to more competition for posts within them. Though many student organisations still lacked full independence and were often university controlled, they realised a range of projects and programmes.

Similarly, a significant number of healthy and strong youth NGOs sprang up in the regions, bolstered by resources from international donor organisations and some limited state support for projects developed and delivered by youth NGOs. A government-sponsored grant system supporting youth NGO activities was launched in the late 1990s, assisting these developments. However, such overall development contributed to greater competition among youth NGOs and the fragmentation of co-operation; as youth organisations became more politicised and polarised, reflecting the broader situation in Armenian society, the national coherence of the youth field was undermined. Only the activism in the youth field by the Armenian Apostolic Church sustained grounded youth provision, building paradoxically on the communist legacy, as we have noted above, through Houses of Young Armenians, cultural centres and youth camps.

Figure 3 – Dynamics of development



Youth policy and youth work development therefore flattened out during the 2000s, culminating in serious pressures on the field on account of both economic crises and political conflicts. Nevertheless, some serious youth policy reform initiatives did start again, with the development and production of the National Youth Report of Armenia and the Council of Europe's international review of Armenia's national youth policy, which took place in 2006. The momentum and political commitment that this produced was, however, difficult to sustain. Though Armenia may now be well connected with relevant bodies within European institutions, such as the intergovernmental steering group for youth (CDEJ) and the Advisory Council (representatives of youth organisations) of the Council of Europe, and part of the European Union's neighbourhood strategy, the future of its youth field now looks, in many respects, as precarious as it was some years ago.

But all is not (yet) lost

Notwithstanding the loss of momentum in the development of youth work and youth activity, there are pockets, or perhaps islands, where important elements of youth policy still have considerable strength. There is a strong political commitment to sports and healthy lifestyles as a policy priority and though much of this currently remains on paper, some practical measures are about to start. Co-management approaches to youth policy, adopted long ago within the Council of Europe Youth Directorate (now the Youth Department of the Directorate of Democratic Participation and Citizenship) but rarely evident in national youth policies, have been introduced through a new format for the Council on Youth Affairs under the prime minister in 2010. There are activities aimed at strengthening and relaunching a transparent online system for applications and the distribution of grants to youth NGOs, which was established in 2010 and stopped for the second half of 2011. Beyond the activities of the Church (see above), political parties in Armenia now have youth wings that command a significant level of resources. And there are a lot of good specialists in the youth field, including expertise in non-formal education, who work both in Armenia and on an international level. The challenge remains, however, in bringing such disparate strengths together to establish greater coherence within the youth field in Armenia.

Moreover, beyond the formal structures, there is a groundswell of youth activism quite independent of the traditions that have been described. There is a (possibly growing) population of young people who hate the structured methodologies of youth NGOs and student organisations, and who are equally hostile to official programmes and systems. Increasingly, such young people work together – through social networking platforms and other methods – on tactical issues (one recent example was a campaign to save Teghut Forest), though they are not yet connected in order to achieve more strategic objectives.

Challenges for the future in the context of Armenia

There is a range of issues that continue to obstruct and jeopardise the effective development of youth policy generally and youth work practice in particular. The most overriding is the huge implementation gap between legislative and

documentary proclamations and the more grounded realities. Those who are stakeholders in youth NGOs often experience a sense of hollow victory when the securing of apparent development in the youth field fails to produce any material change. While there can be significant benefits in securing political attention on youth issues, a second major concern in Armenia is that the politicisation of youth policy has started to affect the implementation of governmental youth programmes. Very recently, for example, for six months in 2011, the work of the newly established online grants system and virtually the whole package of state programmes for young people grounded to a halt as a result of conflicts within the ruling coalition government.

Youth schemes and programmes at the community level remain very weak, though more are being established. They are, however, often unstable on account of precarious funding sources. Even the funding at national level that is available for youth policy initiatives is routinely considered to be mismanaged. The sums are not, of themselves, inconsiderable for a country the size of Armenia. In 2010 the youth budget was €540 000, there was a budget of €140 000 for grants to youth NGOs, and there was more than €1 million in the All-Armenian Youth Fund, which mainly supports student programmes. Yet, allegedly, there is a low level of transparency in the mechanisms by which these funds are allocated and an equally unclear process for monitoring expenditure and activity. Indeed, monitoring of youth policy generally, though clearly set out in the Armenian Youth Strategy, is according to most commentators never carried out.

Youth information is central in dialogue concerning access to youth and wider provision, but Armenia continues to suffer from weak youth information programmes, notwithstanding efforts once made by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour to produce a youth newsletter. A Youth Information Portal was also once established but, currently, is no longer operational; its development was halted and now only an online youth magazine continues to be produced (www.youth.am). Until relatively recently, the primary source of information for young Armenians was still state-controlled television, but there is little doubt that there have been transformations in the information society, notably with the Internet and social networking sites. These have not, however, been suitably taken into account in the formulation and implementation of youth policy and practice.

There is, generally, a low level of youth involvement in the social sector. This may be, possibly, a sustained legacy of state socialism – it has been argued that a major youth policy challenge for Armenia more than many other countries is to reverse a culture of dependency and an expectation that services will be provided. It may also be the consequence of the fact that young people are often struggling to find the space to learn and earn; though per capita incomes remain very low, a very high proportion of young people in Armenia are engaged in higher education of one kind or another. Those young people who do make a voluntary contribution usually do so out of personal commitment or because it is simply a pragmatic, and relatively costless, way of using time.

Conclusion

The history of youth work and youth development in Armenia is, in many respects, a non-history. If it is a history, it is a short one. There is not a great deal to say.

As Armenia looked westward, in order to engage with “Europe” following the demise of the Soviet Union, it did embrace some of the ideas from democratic western Europe without completely abandoning the framework of ideas from totalitarian state socialism that had previously informed work with young people in the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia. But that legacy was patchy and it was, ironically, exploited primarily by the Church. The new youth organisations that sought to emulate youth policy and practice concepts from western Europe were often stymied by a lack of resources or by co-option and institutionalisation by the state. It is perhaps worth ending with a lengthy quotation that concludes the Council of Europe international review of Armenia’s youth policy:

Even though Armenia has now endorsed its State Youth Policy Strategy, the debate on youth policy is in many ways just starting. It is a debate that needs to be taken beyond a political and professional “inner circle”, though this has driven policy and practice so far. It is a debate that needs to pull together the many strands of existing youth policy, which are currently being delivered by a disparate group of players, and to knock them into a more coherent and structured form, that is realisable with the resources that are currently or prospectively available. And it is a debate that needs to establish the desired balance and interaction between an affirmative position that is characteristic of traditional Armenia and an anticipatory position that relates to the aspirations for an Armenia in the future. (Sipos et al. 2009:68)

Armenia continues to struggle to break free from the legacies of its communist past; state control and centralised bureaucracy may still squeeze the life-blood out of youth organisations that engage with the nation’s agenda, while more independent-minded youth organisations regularly find themselves marginalised and starved of resources and other support. Yet there are glimpses of a third pillar of youth policy and youth work development in Armenia. Not yet strategically coherent, young people who are making use of social media for single-issue campaigns and personal communication may come to be the vanguard for new forms of democratic and collaborative youth policy and youth work in a country that is still too stifled by a sometimes troubled and often tragic past.

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Youth work in connection to policies and politics

Youth work and the “social”

Over both time and space, people from research, policy and practice have struggled to address and resolve the question “What is ‘youth work?’” Variations in practices, goals, and environments which are generally labelled or might be recognised as “youth work” are too diverse to be captured in a short, succinct definition. The idea of “youth work” is often more of an umbrella term to be used in rather abstract and high-level discussions. Practitioners involved in concrete activities around work with young people in many countries might not even recognise the term “youth work”. Perhaps the term has become so popular because it appears, increasingly in European-level documents which need to be fairly general. Individual countries, by contrast, have their own histories of work with young people, which has led to great differences in contemporary practice. In some countries youth work is an established and to a large extent professionalised part of either the educational or social welfare system, or both. In other countries youth work has developed relatively independently of these systems and is a practice carried out by volunteers. In

most countries youth work is a mix of all these interventions.³⁶ The list of youth work practices and environments involves youth organisations, adult-led youth activities and supported associations, scouting, youth movements, service groups, military youth bodies, social inclusion initiatives, social enterprises, and more (Coussée, Williamson and Verschelden 2012). It is no wonder, then, that youth work in different countries has had different names through history. Youth work is carried out by educational instructors, social pedagogues, personal and social development specialists, learning mentors, special needs workers, operations managers in youth centres, health organisers, youth justice workers and other professionals falling into related categories (Loncle 2009).

The efforts to come to a succinct definition have not led to a few sentences or a short paragraph telling us what youth work is or is not. The reasons for this situation can be traced to the challenge of finding a social mandate that provides a generally recognised understanding of the social function of youth work in a given society. For what all youth work practices have in common is that they connect social problems to pedagogical questions. Youth work always, implicitly or explicitly, transforms public questions into individual needs and vice versa. Even if it is not immediately evident at all levels, at the “end of the day” youth work serves as a means to resolve a social problem or support the achievement of a developmental goal.

Semantically speaking, using the word “youth” and “youth work” – denoting the existence of a singular and homogeneous entity known as youth – is a simplification of reality, and perhaps a slightly misleading one. Plurality is an inherent feature of youth – age, socio-economic and ethnic/national differences spring to mind immediately. Acknowledging diversity should be the starting point when thinking of the social role of youth work, too – by its very nature, it cannot be homogeneous or similar for everybody. On the contrary, it is diversified. Thus it would be appropriate to think of the social mandate of youth work as having the property of varying with distinct groups that have different positions in society. Sometimes youth work must provide a base for those who need access to supporting resources so they are enabled to become fully integrated members of society, while in other cases youth work provides entertaining and experiential opportunities for those who feel they need more excitement and space for expression. Mostly youth work combines both, the mix depending on the situations youth workers are confronted with. There is no definite answer to the question of whether youth work should contribute to strengthening and developing a community, or be a tool to enhance the personal skills of youth and improve their individual competitiveness. The consensus on the answers to these, and related questions, is that any definitions of “youth work” should depart from this expectation – and should recognise the inherent tensions in its formulation and application.

Youth work cannot have a clear definition on a sectoral or methodological level, which would mean trying to define youth work without taking into account the diversity of young people we are talking about. The social and pedagogical identity of youth work inevitably leads to difficulties in distinguishing youth work from closely related fields like social work, career guidance and mentoring, musical tuition and sports coaching, and so on. Further, youth work is still struggling between its methodological and social/pedagogical nature. The professionalisation

36. *History of youth work*, http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/ekcyp/BGKNGE/History_Youth_Work.html, accessed 19 September 2013.

of youth work appears to strengthen the methodological identity. From a methodological point of view youth work is in a phase of development where it still needs to prove itself to other sectors which already been recognised and have found “a place under the sun” (Lorenz 2009). This oxymoronic combination of a methodological and social-pedagogical identity is the strength and weakness of youth work. Nevertheless, “youth work” has travelled a long way in earning recognition as an independent field in its own right. Research has produced a lot of “soft” and “hard” evidence which states that quality youth work is indeed capable of providing developmental support to young people. It is often argued, however, that the effectiveness of youth work is contingent on following quite stringent guidelines. Therefore it is not surprising that youth work, which started out as voluntary activism, has now developed general quality standards and concrete operational standards; it is taught at many universities as a distinct programme; it has organised itself into professional associations; and it has started to appear in youth policy debates and made its way to policy papers at national and European levels. Youth work is professionalising and it is increasingly recognised.

This progress has also attracted some criticism: professionalisation, some say, leads to disempowering mechanisms inherent to the maintenance of social order, with the individual questions of some young people being translated into social issues at the expense of others. The pitfall here is that professional youth work strengthens a methodological perspective which is often equated with effective youth work.

Youth work as a method and as a social practice

This increasing recognition, of course, is a good thing as long as it does not neglect the nature of youth work, which combines the social and the pedagogical. Therefore one of the core issues today is that youth work has to find its place, positioning itself in relation to family and school (as a central part of the so-called third socialisation environment), but also positioning itself in between adult concerns and young people’s needs and desires (in all their diversity).³⁷ This stance also means that there are clear expectations regarding what youth work should contribute to at an individual as well as at a social level. Youth work cannot simply be equated with providing only fun and excitement even though these are essential characteristics as they make youth work attractive for young people.

A lot of effort has been put into developing a systematic way to describe and analyse youth work, and relating it to both individual matters and wider societal contexts. Due to variations in the field of youth work practices, as well as on account of the diverse background of contributors to the field, youth work theory speaks in the language of tensions and dimensions, and tries to avoid concrete oppositions and mutually excluding alternatives. It is a “both/and” rather than an “either/or” approach.

On a more concrete level, both “social forum” and “transit zone” approaches to youth work have resulted. These two models capture some essential features of a range of youth work practices in different countries.

37. Ibid.

→ Problems of young people are problems with society

“Forum”-type practices are social educational practices that bring young people together to discuss their needs, reflect on their lives and prepare collective action to change social circumstances. It can be seen as fulfilling a social forum function where young people can discuss significant themes and problems, and take actions regarding these. Its task is to engage with young people in defining their problems. Social inclusion is not seen as the result of the harmonious development of an individual young citizen, but rather as a social learning process that takes into account diversity and problematises inequality. Within this mode, youth work is viewed as enabling young people to question their social condition and social change, and to ask whether they want to live in society as it exists now (Coussée 2012). This approach defines youth work as a response to social (and political) questions of youth socialisation. It is essentially based on the premise that society is an organic community, a *Gemeinschaft*, not a sum of individuals.

→ Problems of society are problems with young people

The “transit zone” approach, in contrast, denotes a situation whereby youth work is constructed as an instrument for social education, citizenship training and other forms of preparation for adulthood. In this approach, the development of individual competences and skills in order for young people to fit smoothly into a (presumed to be) functioning social system is brought to the fore. It focuses on the private life-world and the public system, focusing on individual development and smooth integration into existing society. Policy makers, youth workers and researchers all have the common goal of constructing ideal developmental trajectories and transitions for the young. In this model, youth work is constructed as a tool to integrate individual young people into the prevailing adult society. Youth work is defined more as an aid to support young members of society during the life-stage when they are learning adult roles and integrating into the functioning social order. It emphasises youth work as a method to support the development of personal features and qualities. Thus it is essentially based on the premise that society is a collection of individuals, not an organic community. It is a *Gesellschaft*, a society consisting of individuals whose rights and liberties cannot be restricted.

→ Having fun as a core characteristic

In both models play, having fun, association (“*la vie associative*” is one alternative descriptor of youth work) and recreation are the features that make youth work effective and attractive.

The notions of “transit zone” and “social forum” are, of course, analytical models and not exhaustive descriptions of the reality of youth work. They do not symbolise youth work practices that are mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they are useful concepts, analytical tools for identifying the presence of certain features in each concrete youth work practice. Obviously learning to play the guitar in educational or hobby settings does not pose questions about whether the society lived in is good or bad or whether it needs to be changed, and thus it is something belonging to transit zone practice. However, learning to play the guitar in a group consisting of young people from different cultural backgrounds could be seen as a peace-building activity and then it becomes a completely

different story. As such it would be aimed at bringing about a change in society and in people, and thus falls into the category of forum-type activities. The same may be said of a plethora of common practices in youth work (musical, cultural, sporting), and the contexts in which they take place (street-based, club work in centres, residential experiences). Their objectives may be very different although they may look very similar to the untrained eye.

→ Dialectical tension

The tension between the two youth work approaches – “transit zone” and “social forum” – serves as a case which exemplifies the distinction between a liberalist or libertarian stance and a stance justifying state intervention and redistribution and a community-centred viewpoint (Glaser 1995). Earlier analysis of youth work (histories) has effectively embedded youth work in the “social” or “societal”: social divisions, social inequalities, social policies, social integration, and so on. Though its contribution to the “personal” – to building up one’s competences, skills, motivation and action – is acknowledged, it has still been embedded in the societal framework. As such, the analysis and conceptualisation of youth work has worked as a critique of liberal thinking, which emphasises the centrality of the individual, his or her personal qualities and agency, freedom and liberties. This critique can be understood when we look back into the history of youth work. We see how the field emerged from ideas of solidarity, be it in terms of social class, religion or nationality/nation-state.

Contemporary understandings of individual and social well-being or welfare, however, are in line with actual dominant neoliberal views on the relationship between individual and society. As a consequence, youth work has shifted towards the Positive Youth Development (PYD) paradigm. The American PYD paradigm is an approach which attempts to support the integration of youth in the existing social order without being very much interested in young people’s opinions, especially if those do not fit in the existing social order (Taylor 2012). PYD as a concept draws its moral justification in applying principles of developmental psychology from the liberalist or libertarian conception of society. The “transit zone” approach manifests itself in various professional programmes in the hands of educated and trained youth workers which aim at supporting key competences and life skills, focusing on target groups which most need such help. It is expected to contribute to individual and social well-being by providing extra training for disadvantaged, vulnerable youth. As such, it is contrasted to youth work based on the social pedagogy approach.

Social pedagogy has its roots in the belief that humans are essentially social beings who live in a community, which is something more than the sum of its individuals. The development of a human being, through the encouragement of virtues, inescapably presumes integration into a community, living side by side and in close contact with other members of the community. Community well-being is increased through members’ devotion to the common good. Contemporary social pedagogy aims at empowering young people, reducing the constraints on them that derive from social-structural limits, and developing and strengthening community membership, identity, feeling and a critical stance on their social circumstances (Hämäläinen 2012). The dialectical tension between the social-pedagogical nature of youth work and the methodological-professional identity of youth work urges a broadening of the analysis of youth work practice and policy from that of a sectoral perspective to a political one.

Youth work and the political

Earlier analysis and conceptualisation of youth work kept an eye on access to youth work practices, departing from the methodological question of how social policy decisions could alleviate the youth work paradox, which posits that youth work endeavours to produce active and democratic citizens, but succeeds in doing so only with those who are already on this path while at the same time remaining inaccessible to young people who are excluded from active citizenship (Coussée 2009).

The next few steps in this analysis will take us away from the “customary” analysis of youth work, and the focus will be at the interplay between political and youth work. Any first glance into youth work stories and histories quickly reveals that youth work has been strongly framed not only by social policies and internal development but also, and in some sense predominantly, by the political system or state. By political system we hereby refer to the set of institutions, practices and values at work in governing a country (a broad-brush definition, but one that will do the job). On the European continent, the range of political systems in recent history has spanned from (many shades of) democratic to authoritarian and totalitarian.

→ Youth work and democracy

When talking about democracy, we usually mean a form of governance which respects certain values: pluralism and the existence of different opinions, including political opposition; tolerance and non-discrimination; justice and rule of law; the rights of minorities; and participation in the exercise of power. Democracy also needs to have a minimum set of institutions: elections, a parliament, government, a court of justice.

Authoritarian regimes may be contrasted with democratic political systems or with totalitarian systems. Many such regimes have actually emerged as deviations from democracy or as post-totalitarian regimes, which come in a variety of forms. The opposite development, from authoritarianism to democracy, is quite common, too. Authoritarian regimes are characterised by weak and controlled pluralism rather than its complete absence, as in totalitarian regimes. People are depoliticised and kept away from participation in governance even if a false and fabricated impression of participation is created; an authoritarian regime needs to control its people. This is done through the use of various ideas such as nationalism, economic development or even social justice, though without allowing it to lead to significant mobilisation.

Democracy is a scarce good in the world – in 2010 it was estimated that only slightly more than a tenth of the global population lives in fully democratic countries, which constitute less than 16% of all political regimes. The rest of the world’s political regimes are either flawed democracies, hybrid regimes or authoritarian regimes, the last comprising 33% of countries with 36.5% of the global population. In other words, a majority of the world’s population lives in countries that are not fully democratic and the majority of political regimes are not fully democratic. What is perhaps even more important to note is that since the early 2000s democracy has been in retreat (EIU 2013). There are no guarantees that what is held as the norm today – even within the most democratic regimes of Europe and other parts of the world – will last forever.

A look at the (his)stories presented in this volume identifies a clear pattern of co-variation between political regimes and the two youth work approaches which were outlined above: youth work as a “social forum” and youth work as a “transit zone”. What is noticeable is that authoritarian regimes attempt to suppress “social forum”-type activities and reinforce “transit zone”-types of environments and activities.

Perhaps Portugal was the country where government most strongly and directly interfered with youth work. During the Second Republic, which was an authoritarian regime established in 1933, participation in state-created youth organisations (Mocidade Portuguesa for boys and Mocidade Portuguesa Feminina for girls) was made compulsory. All other youth work activities were subsumed under the control of Mocidade Portuguesa. The scouts organisation, which attempted to continue as an independent organisation, was in confrontation with the state. Such a situation lasted until the regime began to dissolve in the early 1970s. After the revolution in 1974 ended the authoritarian era in Portugal and initiated democratic reforms, youth work also gradually started to broaden in the sense that new forms of youth work emerged, even though they still remained mainly the “transit zone”-type of activities. It took more than 10 years before “social forum” practices and environments became more prominent and active, and it was another decade before youth work that promoted youth participation and the appreciation and support of cultural differences acquired a solid place within Portuguese society.

Romania has experienced several authoritarian periods in its history. During the second part of the 1930s, when the country was under a royal dictatorship, the state reformed the scouting movement into a government-controlled youth organisation, the Youth Guard. Activities which were aimed at providing leisure time opportunities to youth in Romania at that time also included social service, which was seen essentially as work to help the rural population as well as a form of personal development through work education. Before the dictatorship, better-educated Romanian youth had gathered in the Legionary Movement, which protested against government politics in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The second pillar of the movement was voluntary work by young people to support mainly, though not exclusively, those in need. Christian churches, hermitages and monasteries also benefited from their help. The period under the communist regime, 1947 to 1989, was a time when youth “contributed to the development of their country”. Activities were organised and controlled by the state, so that the role of young people was to “build up the structure of the socialist homeland”. Interest for work, discipline and responsibility, also mutual aid were the main features reinforced in work yards, which were the main form of youth work during that period. The sense of citizenship and initiative and other similar features were not promoted. Youth clubs, which were also state-controlled ideological socialisation environments, were not popular among Romanian youth. Following the establishment of democracy in 1991, a number of youth organisations were created. However, because of relatively weak national support, many of these organisations have also remained relatively weak. In the case of Romania we saw how first dictatorship and later the authoritarian regime severely limited youth work and gave it the role of “transit zone” only. Youth participation and youth activism in society was not permitted and associated youth work structures did not exist. Following the construction of a democratic state in the late 20th century, a greater diversity of youth work opportunities started to develop, introducing some elements of “forum”-type activities into Romanian youth work, often for the first time.

The case of Greece shows that the authoritarian regime which was established after the *coup d'état* in 1936 immediately attempted to install a youth organisation – EON – which was meant to be a tool for controlling the feelings and thoughts of young people, and socialise them into a “politically correct” worldview. The attempt was not very successful, partly because it lasted only four years. The second authoritarian period in the recent history of Greece, from 1967 to 1974, witnessed a similar development: youth work was limited to propagandistic activities supporting the military junta, and all politically sensitive topics were censored. What happened in Greece confirms that authoritarian regimes tend to attempt to establish a “transit zone”-type of youth work environment. Authoritarian regimes need to control the minds of young people and take steps to assure their obedience to the regime. “Social forum”-types of youth work environments started to emerge in Greece during the Second World War, when Greece was occupied by German allies. An umbrella organisation, EPON, was established in 1943. After the war, during the democratic period before the *coup d'état* in 1967, a few other “forum” activities emerged in the form of student movements and political youth organisations.

The case of Estonia illustrates similar developments. The country was born as a parliamentary democracy in 1918. The first period of democracy lasted until 1934 when a relatively mild authoritarian regime was set up after a *coup d'état*. Youth work which had been very rich and lively during the period of democracy, containing both “forum” and “transit” environments, was increasingly controlled by the state. In 1938 a decree was issued which foresaw the creation of a single state-supported youth organisation and the immediate abolition of scouting organisations and also, in the longer run, all other youth organisations. It does need to be acknowledged that things did not go as the state had planned. The decree was not enforced but the main reason for that was the external political situation – the start of Soviet occupation in 1940 – rather than internal developments. Though Estonia was occupied by 1940, the real changes took place after the Second World War when the authoritarian political regime was established. The Soviet Union took over all aspects of the political, social and economic spheres of life and changed the ways in which Estonian society functioned. Youth work went through substantial changes too – the former richness of different youth organisations was replaced with one large youth organisation, Komsomol. The Communist Party gave youth work the role of youth socialisation into Soviet realities. Young people had access to a variety of different hobby activities, but all those opportunities were called into being with an aim of keeping youth away from or involved in socially and politically significant questions. The restoration of independence and democracy in 1992 saw the immediate re-emergence of a range of youth organisations. Youth social and political activism had in fact already started some five years earlier, and was one of the factors in the process leading to the restoration of independence. In terms of youth work models, these were the activities which clearly fall into the category of “social forum”, as young people wanted to bring about changes in society.

In these different country accounts, we see similar patterns recurring: authoritarian regimes, whether with domestic or foreign roots, tended to attempt to limit youth work to “transit”-type of activities only. Their primary goal was to ensure that youth was socialised into the political regime’s ideology. When authoritarian regimes were weakened (even if, sometimes, they had not yet collapsed), more “forum”-types of youth work and youth activism emerged.

The case of Armenia, too, shows that the shift from authoritarianism to democracy in 1991 was followed by a rapid increase in youth activism and youth organisations. These youth NGOs actively took part in defining, addressing and

seeking to resolve the country's problems. Thus democracy created conditions for "forum"-types of youth activism and youth work, whereas the previous authoritarian regime had limited youth work to the socialisation of youth within strict and non-negotiable parameters, albeit using a range of different youth work environments and practices.

The recent history of Lithuanian youth work is broadly similar to recent developments and events in Estonia and Armenia, since the restoration of independence from the Soviet Union and the re-emergence of democracy. But, for many reasons, events appear to have happened more quickly here. Once again, the restoration of democracy was followed by the emergence of a range of youth organisations. Many of them had strong elements of "forum"-type activities. Significantly, LiJOT, a national youth council and an umbrella organisation of youth organisations, was quickly established and it became a member of the Council of European National Youth Committees. LiJOT worked closely with the government through the State Council of Youth Affairs, which was guided and governed by the distinctive co-management principle pioneered by the Council of Europe in the work of its Directorate for Youth. As early as 1996 a new youth policy concept, emphasising youth participation and an emancipatory approach, was adopted. It took less than five years, therefore, to change the main guiding principles behind youth policy and youth work.

→ Different practices for different young people

It would be very possible to continue this line of argument with stories of youth work from countries which were not included in this book. Histories of Germany (Spatscheck 2009), Poland (Sinczuch 2009), and Hungary (Wootsch 2010) manifest similar patterns: the democratic periods in their history have witnessed youth activism and youth work which goes beyond supporting only selected and approved values and attitudes. Authoritarian and totalitarian periods effectively limited the range of ideas and activities for youth work, when they were beyond the boundaries set by authorities. Political regimes gave youth work certain tasks which needed to be fulfilled; alternatives were not allowed.

Luxembourg, however, constitutes a variation on the examples presented above. The country has not been under totalitarian or authoritarian rule in the last century, since youth work started to develop there. Young people have been involved directly in both youth-specific issues and developments and also in more general debates. Youth movements and organisations have always carried strong elements of social dialogue; in other words "social forum"-types of youth work and youth activism have been present throughout the century of youth work in Luxembourg. There has not been a dominant state-established and state-supported youth organisation. On the contrary, when the state first attempted to found a national council of youth organisations, this failed because youth organisations, from progressive to Catholic, could not overcome their differences. Though the second attempt was more successful, a number of youth organisations still refused to participate in this top-down initiative. We see also other signs of the freedom youth has enjoyed under democracy, such as issue-specific youth organisations and self-organised youth centres. Though the professionalisation of youth work led to two youth work strands by the turn of the century, youth movements still enjoy the freedom to implement their own values and goals, even if these do not match official viewpoints. Youth organisations have maintained their own identity and act as partners to government, which inevitably pursues a somewhat different agenda.

Very interesting here is that youth movements tend to adhere to the social forum function and reach out to the better-off, who can use youth work as an instrument to adapt society to their needs. Thus youth organisations find themselves increasingly following an official agenda. There is a need however for them to reach out to more vulnerable young people, and help them in adapting their behaviour to societal needs. This suggests that youth workers need to define their position. What is the relation between young people, youth work and democracy?

Conclusion

Across varied historical contexts, cultural backgrounds, socio-economic situations, and geographical locations, authoritarian regimes have tried to suppress or completely abolish “social forum”-types of youth work while supporting “transit zone”-types of youth work environments and practices. Naturally, the concrete forms and shapes of youth work vary across space and time (evidently building partly on national cultural, historical and institutional specificities) but the tendency to seek to limit youth work to compulsory socialisation is clear. Under authoritarianism, youth work becomes completely instrumentalised and subsumed to fulfilling the goals of the political regime. The reason for that is also evident – illegitimate political systems feel the need to keep control over the people they are ruling. And in this respect, youth is a high priority target. For one thing, young people constitute a danger to an oppressive regime, or even to a legitimate regime, in their own right. Their protests against a ruling regime can be a serious challenge, since such protests are capable of mobilising large numbers of energetic and active (young) people. We only need to recall the protests in Poland and in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia just over ten years later. For repressive regimes, such outbursts of discontent with political power should be avoided at any cost. It is easier to deal with reasons than with consequences and to control youth behaviour, rather than to search for critical understanding, also using youth work methods for that purpose. Secondly, young people are at an age where their minds can be influenced relatively easily. Authoritarian systems, in order to stay in power, need a citizenry which does not question its goals and actions, does not attempt to become involved in decision making and governance, and silently approves the decisions taken by authorities. Youth organisations, and youth work in a wider sense, are excellent tools for socialising young people so that in their adulthood they will not involve themselves in fields where it is not anticipated that they should make a contribution.

When we look at this equation the other way round, the youth work histories presented in this book suggest that “forum”-types of activities are possible only in democratic societies. Democracies too need to take care to socialise the young generation into the needs of a functioning democracy. Youth work can be seen as an environment where young people acquire a participative and deliberative worldview. However, there is a danger that youth work will be hijacked by “educational” programmes which teach citizenship as a set of more or less technical skills and attitudes (for example, understanding party platforms). Such an approach will de-emphasise the need for mindfulness and critical analysis of society as an organic community, and will not help youth to develop the feeling of being a member of society. Turning youth work into an instrument to socialise young people into liberal/libertarian worldviews is in fact simply another case of instrumentalising youth work. This is, of course, a highly complex theme which

calls for further thinking. Earlier analyses as well as the stories and histories in this book suggest that debates along these lines could significantly influence understandings of the identity and social mandate of youth work. It might sound like a paradox, but teaching liberalism as a matter of personal aptitude and capacity might not be the best way to support a deliberative and participatory democracy. Youth work has many more cards in hand if it is permitted to play them.

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