



Working with young people: the value of youth work in the European Union

Country Report Poland

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Country report: Poland

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This report presents the situation as of February 2013

1 Introduction: tradition, definitions and concepts

KEY FACTS	RESPONSE
Definition for youth work	No
Legal definition for youth work	No
Approximate length of youth work tradition	Approx. 100 years
Approximate length of formal / professional youth work tradition	Approx. 100 years
Overview of relative importance of youth work in supporting young people	Increased/Remained the same
Main sectors/fields of formal / professional / statutory youth work	Vocational activity of unemployed youth (e.g. developing social competences, own initiatives, entrepreneurship), work with young people with special needs, development of cultural education, youth volunteering, and prevention.
Main sectors / fields of non-formal / third sector led youth work	General education, culture and sport, young people with fewer opportunities, participation in political life.

1.1 Definitions

Based on the interviews with key stakeholders carried out as a part of this study, 'Youth work' in Poland can be defined as:

- Educational and upbringing activities, both formal and non-formal, based on voluntary participation of young people, covering areas such as education, upbringing, welfare, prevention, culture, rehabilitation, sports etc.
- Compensatory measures, carried out on a regular basis, which aim to level the social deficiencies of young people and address certain problems they face (e.g. pathologies, addictions, unemployment).

Youth work in Siemacha Association

It has been pointed out by the interviewed experts and practitioners that the activity of Siemacha Association¹ can serve as a good example of properly defined and implemented youth work in Poland. As stated on Siemacha's website, they offer 'a yard of a new generation based on the values of peers, trust, community, activity, creation, development and multimedia, offering young people the space for

¹ Siemacha Association is a Polish non-profit association that provides a system that helps children and young people in education, education, therapy and physical development. For more information please see: <http://siemachaspot.pl/aktualnosci/SIEMACHA-Spot,14,158>

development, so they can build lasting social relationships, gain new skills, learn the responsibility and live up to the role of future citizens'.

The lack of formal definition of youth work as such in a form understood by the European Commission can be potentially explained by the following factors: the cross-sectoral nature of youth policy in Poland and no single coordination centre that could develop a universal definition of youth work; difficulties with direct translation of this term (e.g. associated with the labour market, hierarchy) and therefore with its meaning in Polish language; and the vague image of social work as a recognisable professional activity in general.²

1.2 Tradition and development of youth work

According to the literature in the subject, the tradition of youth work in Poland can be divided into five periods dating back almost 100 years. Years 1918-1947 were the time of emergence of centralised youth organisations focused on education, self-development and restricted socialisation, and influenced by the process of gaining national independence. In 1948-1956, youth work was condensed into one, mass and controlled movement, ideologically influenced by the totalitarian regime. In 1957-1970, when the process of deconstruction of socialism has begun, the role of schools as institutions of youth work increased and new ideas of a more liberal attitude to youth emerged. In 1970-1989, during the time of social protest, youth organisations - independent of the government - began to appear alongside alternative and subcultural movement. Also the role of Catholic Church began to increase (for more information please see Annex 1).³

During the last period, 1989-2012, an important change that could be observed is a departure from youth work carried out within youth organisations / institutions and centralised planning. In recent years, this area is being 'colonised' by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and self-governments (which often cooperate with the third sector). It is also expected that *'ad hoc activities and spontaneous creativity will become more meaningful'* in the future, *'especially with the growing distance of youth from solid forms of engagement and participation'*.⁴

In opinion of majority of interviewees, the importance of youth work in the past 20 years has been gradually increasing. This development was triggered by significant social, cultural, economic changes and their dynamics, which resulted in a growing need to meet the needs of young people.⁵ The following factors have been identified as key drivers or reasons behind the formation of youth work in Poland into its current shape:

- The opening of borders after Poland's accession to the EU followed by a large wave of migration.

² Rymsza, M. (ed.) (2012), *Pracownicy socjalni i praca socjalna w Polsce. Między służbą społeczną a urzędem*, Warsaw: Institute of Public Affairs (IPA).

³ Information in this sub-section comes from: Sińczuch, M. (2009), *Poland: the ideological background to youth work*. In: Verschelden, G., Coussée, F., Van de Walle, T. and Williamson, H. (eds.) (2010), *The history of youth work in Europe and its relevance for youth policy today*, Brussels, Council of Europe Publishing.

⁴ In 2008, 65% of young respondents declared they are not associated with any club, association, movement or organisation. (Sińczuch, M. (2009), *Poland: the ideological background to youth work*. In: Verschelden, G., Coussée, F., Van de Walle, T. and Williamson, H. (eds.) (2010), *The history of youth work in Europe and its relevance for youth policy today*. Brussels: Council of Europe Publishing.)

⁵ Interview with a representative of Voluntary Labour Corps (OHP).

- Access to 1) EU funds via projects run by actors such as NGOs and self-governments, where youth is listed as the main recipient/beneficiary, and 2) EU programmes (Youth in Action) that can be realised by youth themselves.
- Embedding youth as a clear and separate target group in the European Commission's agenda and adapting national programmes/strategies to the EU requirements.
- Strong focus of the Polish society (and accordingly youth) on catching up with civilizational backwardness and making money.
- Professionalisation and growing importance of the NGO sector.

As for the sectors/areas of youth work that have grown in importance in the past decade, some changes can be observed as well. In the past, main attention has been devoted to young people with fewer opportunities. In recent years, however, a growing number of projects that develop youth entrepreneurship and skills youth will need in the labour market can be also observed. Thus, while before youth work was addressing mainly young people threatened by exclusion because of their lack of competences, qualifications, and education, in the last two years also educated youth have been approached as a target group facing similar problems (e.g. with finding a job, developing social competences, own initiatives, entrepreneurship).

Other areas that have grown in importance include work with young people with special needs, development of cultural education, youth volunteering, and prevention. The main areas that have decreased in importance are general education, culture and sport, participation in political life.

1.3 The current situation: the delivery of formal and non-formal youth work

According to the law, the education system should provide the conditions for the development of pupils' interests and talents by developing their social activity and skills to spend leisure time as well as by organising extracurricular and after-school activities (Article 1 of the Act on school education system of 7 September 1991, with further amendments).⁶ Youth work is offered primarily by entities whose activity is described in the Act on school education system. These include above all schools and educational and upbringing institutions, including school youth hostels enabling the **development of youth's interests and talents as well as the use of various forms of recreation and leisure** (e.g. art centres, psychological and pedagogical counselling, youth centres, social therapy, special education centres etc.). Tasks in the area of education and upbringing of young people are also carried out by the Voluntary Labour Corps (organised according to separate regulations). Other providers include: youth culture houses (with libraries), socio-therapeutic day-care centres and career counselling, which are often contracted by the local self-governments to NGOs.

The third sector in Poland is regarded as the most dynamic in promoting youth work. Here, youth work is carried out by associations, organisations, foundations, scouts etc. For instance, NGOs are carrying out many activities voluntarily or thanks to outsourcing some of them by the central administration and local authorities (e.g. day-care centres, helping women working in prostitution, taking care of street children, addiction prevention). There is also a strong engagement in social care on the side of church organisations (e.g. convents or church related associations) and parishes, which run community centres and shelters for children and youth. With the exception of political parties and political organisations, associations and other organisations can also operate in schools if their statutory purpose is upbringing as

⁶ The Act on school education system of 7 September 1991 (with further amendments) can be found at: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/Download?id=WDU20042562572&type=3>

well as expansion and enrichment of forms of teaching, educational and care activities (Article 56 of The Act on School Education System).

The key differences and similarities between formal and third sector-led youth work are:

- Regulation by separate legal documents.
- Greater share of youth work in the public sector.
- More trust, authority and discipline associated with services provided by the public sector (especially in relation to the tasks of school education).
- Higher quality standards, more attractive services, and wider opportunities to choose the support form provided by the third sector (particularly in the area of extracurricular activities, innovation, novelties in applied approaches).⁷
- Approach to the role of youth work: prescriptive (education/upbringing) in formal sector vs. active (partnership) in the third sector.

Activities of the NGO-led youth work are often complementary to a formal offer in this area.

2 Legislative context and governance

KEY FACTS	RESPONSE
Legislative framework for youth work	No
Level of regulation for youth work	National/Regional/Local
Body(ies) with a responsibility for governing youth work	Various ministries, regional and local authorities, and their consultative bodies

2.1 Legal background

While there is no legal definition of ‘youth work’ in Poland, elements of youth work, widely understood as didactic, upbringing and caring, are being addressed in various regulations. The aspects of youth work covered by legislation include:

- Education and upbringing
- Psycho-pedagogical assistance
- Youth employment
- Safety
- Conduct with minors
- Organisation of social assistance
- Professional qualifications of those working with young people (please see Section 4)
- Tasks, responsibilities and relationships of public and local administration and the third sector in the area of youth

Please see Annex 2 for the list of specific legal acts in these areas.

The opinions about the need for further regulation in the area of youth work vary. According to some experts, the Polish law regulates all key aspects of youth work and should be only updated to reflect critically changing conditions. Others maintain that some sort of standardisation of this issue would be valuable (e.g. in terms of youth work definition, conditions to receive ministerial funding, subsystem of information,

⁷ Interview with a representative of the Voluntary Labour Corps’ (OHP).

monitoring youth work effectiveness). There is general agreement that further regulations, should they appear, should not constrain the activity in this sector.

It has been also suggested to remove the income criterion to qualify young people to various youth work related projects, events, and forms of activity (e.g. camps organised by the socio-therapeutic day-care centres only for youth from low-income or pathologic families), in order to make the system more inclusive.⁸

2.2 Governance

Youth work in Poland is a cross-governmental responsibility and there is no central body that coordinates activities in this area. Youth policy is considered through the **prism of youth's particular problems and not in a holistic manner, that is, addressing youth as a whole**. The national public authorities and institutions involved in youth work / policy include:

- Ministry of National Education
- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (e.g. Department for Improving Educational Chances, Department for International Relations)
- Ministry of Sport and Tourism;
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Science and Higher Education
- Ministry of Economy
- **Children's Ombudsman**
- PARPA (The State Agency for the Prevention of Alcohol-Related Problems)
- National Bureau for Drug Prevention
- **Parliament's Commission of Education, Science and Youth** (and sub-commission on youth issues)⁹

Also, Children and Youth Parliament held on annual basis supports governmental institutions in the area of youth policy.

According to the declaration of the Ministry of National Education *'due to the peculiar nature of this cross-sectoral policy, there is a strong need to create the conditions for coordination of the activities of the government and institutions working for youth (...).'*¹⁰ However, the Youth and Non-Governmental Organisations Department established within the Ministry of National Education in January 2011 to coordinate activities across many different youth policy areas has been dismantled in February 2012. The lack of coordination body that would be responsible specifically for youth policy in the country has been identified by interviewees as one of the key needs related to youth work.

At regional and local level, the competencies of Marshall's Offices and local administrative units - *gminy* (communes) - consider fields of education, culture and social welfare policy, sport and health. In addition, the provinces take actions to support and promote the idea of self-government among its citizens. In terms of youth, local authorities can also agree to create consultative bodies - Youth Councils

⁸ Sińczuch, M. (2009), *Poland: the ideological background to youth work*. In: Verschelden, G., Coussée, F., Van de Walle, T. and Williamson, H. (eds.) (2010), *The history of youth work in Europe and its relevance for youth policy today*. Brussels: Council of Europe Publishing.

⁹ There is also Interministerial Group of Children and Youth, but it has not been active till now. (European Commission (2012), *National report: First cooperation cycle of the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2012 (Poland)*, Brussels: European Commission. Available at : <http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/national_youth_reports_2012/poland.pdf>.).

¹⁰ Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej (2011), *Polityka młodzieżowa w Polsce*, <<http://www.prezydentja.men.gov.pl/pl/mlodziez/14-polityka-modzieowa-w-lsce>> date accessed: 5th of November 2012.

(at city, district, municipal, county level), composed of a group of young people elected by their peers in a democratic elections usually held in schools (Article 5b of The Act on local self-government of 8 March 1990).¹¹

In Poland, there are two main sources of funding of youth work: the state budget and local government expenditures.¹² However, there are no official calculations concerning youth participation in the budget and it is difficult to estimate the amount of public funding dedicated to youth work. The categories in the budget allocating funds directly to youth are:

- Education and Care (in thousands) - 53 406 760 PLN (1 015 532 PLN from European funds)
- Employment and preventing marginalisation and social exclusion of youth (in thousands) - 62 330 PLN (22 950 PLN from European funds)
- Health prevention programmes directed towards youth: promoting healthy life style and physical activities - 54 888 PLN (15 877 PLN from European funds)¹³

Other sources of funding include: European funds (ESF’s Human Capital OP, Youth in Action Programme) and independent donors (small, symbolic share in youth work funding).

3 Policy and programme framework

KEY FACTS	RESPONSE
General level of political commitment to the issue of youth work	Medium
Dedicated policy / strategy on youth work	No
Programmes on the development of youth work	Yes
Net impact of economic crisis on funding for youth work	Negative/Neutral

3.1 Policy commitment

The general aims of youth policy that should be mainstreamed to other policy areas are described in the Polish Youth Strategy for the years 2003 – 2012 adopted on 19 August 2003.¹⁴ Prepared by the then Ministry of Education and Sports, the Strategy aims to equalise the opportunities of young generation development in areas such as:

- Youth education
- Employment
- Youth participation in public life
- Leisure, culture, sport, tourism

¹¹ Rada Ministrow (1990), Ustawa z dnia 8 marca 1990 r. o samorządzie terytorialnym, *Dziennik Ustaw*.

¹² For instance, the tasks arising from the Municipal Committees for Prevention and Solving Alcohol Problems are financed out from the fees for the permission to sell and serve alcoholic beverages. Each vendor is required to pay the so-called '*kapslowe*' aimed exclusively for the prevention and resolution of alcohol problems, also among youth.

¹³ European Commission, Council of Europe (2011), *Country sheet on youth policy in Poland*. Brussels: Youth Partnership.

¹⁴ The inspiration to develop the Youth Strategy 2003-2012 in Poland came from the consultations for the European Commission's White Paper - A New Impetus for European Youth.

- Health and prevention¹⁵

Another important document is the 'Youth 2011' report published by the Prime Minister's Chancellery (September 2011) to start the debate on the situation of young people and the direction of youth policy in Poland.¹⁶ The report attempts to diagnose the contemporary young generation of Poles and presents recommendations concerning actions to be undertaken in relation to this age group. It was prepared as an element of debates on a long-term strategy 'Poland 2030. The third wave of modernity'¹⁷. In relation to youth, the Strategy aims to create proper conditions for a good life of the young generation and recommends creating a complex system supporting the entrance to autonomous living by the young generation.¹⁸ In response to the crucial policy challenges facing Poland in the last years, both documents reveal a shift in youth policy: from education as the main domain of youth policy (with youth as a group in education) to the uncertain situation of young people after leaving higher education (and equalising the educational opportunities of young people).¹⁹ The tasks addressing equal opportunities and strengthening ties with the labour market have also been included in the National Plan for Employment for 2009-2011 and 2012-2014 (version addressed to the Council of Ministers).²⁰

While the 'Youth 2011' report have been appreciated as a sign of the importance of youth for strategic planning, the policy commitment to the issue of youth work in Poland was defined by interviewees as medium. The main reasons are: limited funding and/or offer of programmes designed for youth, limited understanding of the problem, no plans to prepare a specific strategy for young people in Poland for the next decade, ad hoc rather than steady focus on youth at national level (as opposed to some local and regional authorities), stereotypical approach to young people not perceived as a different cultural, social, and civilizational quality, and a general tendency to limit the number of national strategies.

3.2 Policies and programmes to develop youth work

Although there are no plans to set up a youth work strategy, there is a number of youth oriented activities undertaken public institutions. Some of these actions have central character and some act as a guideline for their implementation at regional, local, and institutional level. They include:

- The 'Common room - Children - Job' Programme for 2011 - 2015 to support children and young people in the community is to expand the activities in the area of sociotherapy (also for young people from dysfunctional families, at risk of social exclusion). This activity is carried out in the daily support institutions by the community and voluntary

¹⁵ Ministry of Education and Sports (2003), *Youth Strategy for the years 2003 – 2012*, Waschaw: Ministry of Education and Sports.; Wydawnictwa szkolne i pedagogiczne, Update State Strategy for Youth, <<http://nauczyciel.wsipnet.pl/oswiata/arts.php?dz=5&nid=2615&r=15>> date accessed: 5th of November 2012.

¹⁶ European Commission (2012), *National report: First cooperation cycle of the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2012 (Poland)*, Brussels: European Commission.

¹⁷ Kancelaria Prezesa Rad Ministrów, <http://www.premier.gov.pl/rzad/polska_2030/> date accessed: 5th of November 2012.

¹⁸ European Commission, Council of Europe (2011), *Country sheet on youth policy in Poland*. Brussels: Youth Partnership.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ministerstwo Pracy i polityki Społecznej, <<http://www.mpips.gov.pl/bip/projekty-aktow-prawnych/projekty-programow-i-inne/krajowy-plan-dzialan-na-rzecz-zatrudnienia--2012-2014/>> date accessed: 5th of November 2012.

organisations and other entities authorised and supported financially by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.²¹

- Voluntary Labour Corps (OHP) is a state organisation functioning under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The primary objective of OHP is to create adequate conditions for proper social and vocational development of young people (aged 15-25) and provide support in organisation of various forms of combating poverty, unemployment, and social pathology effects.²²
- **'Prevention through sport: preventing aggression and pathologies among children and youth' Programme** aims at giving the young people the possibility to participate in various sport activities, promotion of healthy life style, organisation of extracurricular activities connected to sport, and training physical education teachers.²³
- Orliki (Eaglets) Programme aims to *'to build general-access to free of charge sports fields, called Orlik, with locker rooms and sanitary facilities, in all Polish municipalities. The idea of the Programme is to make modern sports infrastructure available to children and youngsters [though Orlik users are boys and men] to allow them to take up regular sports training.'*²⁴
- Youth welfare services include support provided to people aiming at autonomous living (pl. *osoba usamodzielniana*), who lack personal resources for this process.²⁵ They can receive financial or material support, mostly for education and housing, as well as assistance in finding **employment. The condition for receiving support is person's commitment** to realise the individual plan of becoming autonomous, with assistance of a social worker.
- Employment Services provide support for youth unemployed for a certain period of time in a form of benefits and trainings, job announcements, as well as funding for setting up a business (mostly through EU funds).²⁶

More examples of such engagement, also in the third sector, can be found in Section 5.

As for the impact of economic crisis on youth work, it is reflected in growing focus on measures concentrating on combating unemployment among youth and decreasing financing at local level. For instance, due to the difficult state budget situation, no resources have been indicated for the planned implementation of the programme on **'Activation of local communities and equalising the development opportunities for children and young people" - called 'Świetliki'. The project was designed to combat social exclusion of children and young people, to even their educational opportunities and facilitate the development of civil security.** This was to be done by providing

²¹

http://www.mpips.gov.pl/download/gfx/mpips/pl/defaultopisy/4527/1/1/Programme_Swietlica_14.01.11.pdf

²² **Voluntary Labour Corps' (OHP), Voluntary Labour Corps'**, <<http://www.ohp.pl/en/>> date accessed: 5th of November 2012.

²³ See: <http://www.msport.gov.pl/komunikaty/733-Przeciwdzialanie-poprzez-sport-agresji-i-patologii-wsrod-dzieci-i-mlodziezy>

²⁴ **Olik 2012, Strona główna**, <<http://www.orlik2012.pl>> date accessed: 5th of November 2012.

²⁵ For instance, 18-year-old persons with intellectual disability who leave social welfare homes, single mothers from single mother homes, or those leaving a reformatory, educational or psychotherapeutic centres (Article 88 of the Act on social assistance of 12 March 2004).

²⁶ European Commission, Council of Europe (2011), *Country sheet on youth policy in Poland*. Brussels: Youth Partnership.

conditions for the realisation of these goals in a friendly and well equipped building to serve the local community, supported by NGOs.²⁷

4 Youth workers: training, status, population and profile

KEY FACTS	RESPONSE
Minimum qualifications standards for youth workers	No
Youth worker as a recognised profession / occupation	No
Availability of formal, dedicated qualifications for youth workers	No
Education background of the majority of youth workers	Example of standards for professions working with youth: minimum Bachelor degree, ISCED 5, in rehabilitation, education/pedagogy, sociology etc.]
Number of youth workers	No data available
Trend in the overall number of youth workers	In the statutory sector: stable / decreased; in third sector: increased]

4.1 Training and qualifications

In the Polish legislation determining the qualifications and wage rates for persons **working with young people there is no such term as 'youth worker'**. Therefore, there are no minimum qualification standards for paid / salaried youth workers and no courses / studies for youth work specialisation. A similar situation applies to unpaid / volunteer youth workers. However, there are standards applying to other professions working with youth such as: social workers, pedagogues, psychologists, or counsellors. These are mainly persons with higher education (minimum Bachelor degree, ISCED 5) in Humanities (e.g. rehabilitation, education / pedagogy, sociology). Higher education is required particularly for youth work carried out in programmes/projects funded from the state budget and agencies.

In addition, other players in the youth work sector in Poland such as Polish Scouting Association (ZHP), Scouting Association of the Republic of Poland (ZHR), or Voluntary Labour Corps (OHP), have their own internal standards and arrangements for youth workers.

In general, specialised trainings are available for youth work with particular type of youth group, such as unemployed youth, addicted youth, young offenders, and not as a whole. There are also some projects devoted to improving the qualifications of those working with young people (e.g. within the Action 4.3 of the Youth in Action Programme) where persons/ institutions can apply for funds for activities, such as seminars, training courses, tools and techniques to work with youth, evaluation

²⁷ See: <http://www.portalsamorzadowy.pl/edukacja/deficyt-finansow-pograzyl-8222-swietliki-8221,31656.html>

meetings. For instance, one of projects was devoted to develop standards for youth work based on the experiences of other countries.²⁸

International training course on youth work in Poland²⁹

In September 2012, the Centre for Training and Personal Development from Poland, in cooperation with ACT GLOBAL CIC (UK), organised a five-day long training course 'Tool for Reflective Practice and Professional Development of Youth Work' for youth workers from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, and UK. The aim of the training was to raise awareness, share experience and good practices among participants, who are active in the field as well as revising youth work practice to create a common perspective for countries of Central and Eastern Europe where youth work is still not well recognised. By the end of the training programme, the learners were expected to be able to:

- Identify and explain common professional standards and expectations that a youth worker will seek to adhere to.
- Define what nonformal learning and informal education are and define the similarities and differences between the two.
- Define what a reflective practitioner is and the benefits of reflective practice within their own work environment.
- Identify and use a range of approaches to working with young people based on good practice shared within the learning environment.

The project was financed by the Youth in Action Programme.

Resources and opportunities, although not specifically aimed at working with youth, are also offered by Human Capital OP and training for counsellors from the district labour offices, who work with unemployed youth.

In the opinion of interviewees, post-diploma courses on youth work should be developed for those interested in providing such services. Yet, instead of top-down **enforcement of requirements in relation to youth workers' qualifications, an exemplary model (good practices) of youth work to follow and an educational profile of youth worker to refer to** could be offered.

4.2 Status of youth worker profession

Although the role of youth work and youth workers is growing, particularly in the NGO and volunteering sector³⁰, youth worker is not a recognised profession in Poland. Some aspects of youth work are carried out by other professional groups, whose activity is regulated by law, such as: social workers, teachers, probation officers, career advisors, youth team coaches, persons working in educational and cultural institutions (psychologists, pedagogues, sociotherapist, librarians, culture animators etc.). **Pedagogical powers are necessary if the target group's age is less than 18 years old.** Some organisations, such as scouts, have their own regulations regarding the degree scouting instructor.

²⁸ Interview with a representative of the Foundation for the Development of the Education System (National Agency).

²⁹ Salto youth, "Tool for reflective practice and professional development of Youth Work", <<http://www.salto-youth.net/tools/european-training-calendar/training/tool-for-reflective-practice-and-professional-development-of-youth-work.2729/>> date accessed: 5th of November 2012.

³⁰ European Commission (2012), *National report: First cooperation cycle of the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2012 (Poland)*, Brussels: European Commission. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/national_youth_reports_2012/poland.pdf>.

According to some interviewees, there is a belief in Poland that if someone works with youth, he or she must be a teacher. Youth work is therefore linked to the teachers who - in theory - are responsible for education, but in practice, take care of many other areas of youth problems and development. This linkage may prevent the youth worker profession that emerged in Europe to take deeper roots in Poland.

4.3 Youth worker population

The main difficulty in estimating a number of youth workers in Poland stems from the fact that tasks and duties of youth work are divided among many different social services. In addition, the profession of youth worker is not clearly recognised formally and socially. Examples of rough estimation of widely defined youth work providers are listed below:

- The number of people involved in youth work in all scouting organisations is between 20 000 (all staff) and 13 000 (leaders, instructors etc.).
- The number of court probation officers in youth (under 18) and family affairs is around 5000 (professionals and volunteers).
- The number of personnel employed in sociotherapeutic children & youth clubs³¹ (1748 places) and other day care youth and children clubs (5000 places) is around 15 000 (excluding volunteers).
- Instructors and trainers working in the field of culture are of similar quantity as above.
- The positions of school pedagogues / psychologist that are involved in the system of monitoring young people development -more than 5000.³²

The significant number of social workers' activity is devoted to youth but there is no special position among social service personnel dedicated to youth.

According to interviewees, the number of youth workers in the formal / statutory sector has remained more or less the same or has slightly decreased over the past 10 years. The main reasons for the decrease / constant numbers are: socio-economic transformation, general belief that formal youth activities are not very attractive, uninteresting way of implementing youth work activities, staff not being able to **impress young people (weakening of mentor's position and of intergenerational contact)**, individualised way of life of young people, no infrastructure for youth (other than school). This results in a small number of people willing to participate in such activities, which is exacerbated by the demographic decline.

As for the third sector, the number of people working with youth has increased. Among the main reasons for this trend are: treating this type of work as a philosophy of life or as a business, competitiveness and growing number of recipients, EU funds.

4.4 Profile of youth workers

The youth work is usually provided by: 1) the education system employees (e.g. coaches, teachers, pedagogues, etc.) and employees of other institutions (such as cultural centres, community day-care centres); 2) non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working for / with youth; 3) religious institutions (e.g. parish groups, religious associations). There are probably more salaried employees than unpaid volunteers engaged in youth work.

³¹ There are 4 categories of day care youth and children clubs.

³² Sińczuch, M. (2009), *Poland: the ideological background to youth work*. In: Verschelden, G., Coussée, F., Van de Walle, T. and Williamson, H. (eds.) (2010), *The history of youth work in Europe and its relevance for youth policy today*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

The following changes or trends in the profile of youth workers over the past 10 years can be identified:

- Generational change: more young people who get engaged in youth work (mainly from the NGO sector with a volunteering experience).
- Influx of young men for whom this type of work is a passion and who are heavily engaged in this type of work (particularly street workers, former beneficiaries of youth work activities).
- Youth workers are often the same people who take care of financing youth work; therefore they have to be skilled in grant seeking and project work.

The key challenges facing youth workers can be divided into six areas and include:

- **Personal qualities:** meeting the expectations of young people, winning their sympathy, being opened to dialogue with young people, having courage to admit the lack of knowledge in certain situations.
- **Knowledge: deficit of 'juventologic' competences and specialised education** / research centres devoted to youth and youth work.
- **Recognition:** recognition of youth workers, valuing and appreciating their work.
- **Tradition:** questionable acceptance of the profession in the Polish tradition of youth work, narrow interpretation of youth work in relation to specific groups, routine approach to extracurricular activities at school.
- **Reach:** more young people declare membership in informal groups, which are often difficult to reach; lack of system (e.g. network of youth clubs / institutions) based on voluntary participation of young people and open to everyone.
- **Legislation:** implementation of planned changes into the law exacerbating the conditions for school day-care centres to obtain a positive opinion issued by the fire department and health inspections; no regulation on youth work/workers.

*'Adults working with youth can take off their buskins and unlace their corsets of rigid roles; young people can benefit from caring partners and guides not as much in the knowledge that they can assimilate faster and more independently today but in the art of living, which is a deficit product.'*³³

5 The role and value of youth work

5.1 Education and training

The role of youth work:

- Showing young people how to discover their own abilities, which can be useful for them after finishing school.
- Revealing information about individual preferences and competences;
- Preventing digital exclusion.
- Assisting young people in difficult life situations by helping them to return to school / education.
- Providing a support system that complements a formal offer.

Good practice examples:

³³ Fatyga, B. (ed.) (2005), *White Paper on Youth. Two truths about activism. Conditions and opportunities for youth activities in the local community with a view to the Council of Europe's youth policy. Research Report.* Ministry of Education, Warsaw.

- 'Open school' contest organised by the Ministry of Education promotes a school model, which aims to shape students' pro-social attitudes and encourages cooperation between educational institutions and their surroundings, especially NGOs.³⁴
- Other: projects in the Youth in Action Programme, Caritas' activities, promoting volunteering by recognising voluntary experience at schools on individual basis.

5.2 Employment and entrepreneurship

The role of youth work:

- Increasing the availability of labour market services, especially in places with difficult access to vocational guidance, career information, job placement and vocational training.
- Providing help in finding the life or career paths and increasing the chances of instilling in young people the entrepreneurial attitudes, providing them with the knowledge necessary to set up and lead their own business / initiatives.
- Proposing various activities where youth can check their own competences.

Good practice examples:

- Nationwide activities of Voluntary Labour Corps (OHP)³⁵ aim at creating adequate conditions for proper social and vocational development of young people in various free of charge support forms such as: job placement, vocational guidance and career information, workshops, active job search, training, and labour market programmes.³⁶
- Activation instruments (e.g. career counselling, job placement, training) in the framework of the so-called special programmes targeted at different categories of unemployed people, with a special focus on the age group under 30, are provided by the local employment offices and financed from the Labour Fund.³⁷

5.3 Health and well-being

The role of youth work:

- **Increasing youth's knowledge about various diseases.**
- **Changing youth's attitudes for more health-beneficial approach.**
- Postponing a decision about risky behaviours.
- **Increasing youth's self-control and self-esteem.**
- Offering safe and productive way of spending free time.

Good practice examples:

- **The Programme on 'Combating aggression and pathology among children and young people through sport' aims at: creating opportunities for participation of young people in various forms of physical activity; healthy lifestyle and nutrition; organisation of non-school extracurricular activities,**

³⁴ See: <http://xn--otwartaszkoa-ncc.org/>

³⁵ About 3% of young people declared their association with the OHP (Youth 2008 (2009), *Opinions and Diagnoses*. Warsaw: CBOS.).

³⁶ See: <http://www.ohp.pl/en/>

³⁷ The rules to apply for additional funds from the Labour Fund from the reserve of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy for the financing / funding of special programmes in 2012 aimed at people under 30 years old. Appendix III of the programme 'Youth in the labour market', Ministry of Labour 2012.

recreation camps and sporting events; training and professional development of teachers and instructors etc.³⁸

- Sport Centre Com Com Zone³⁹ run by Siemacha Association in a rather deprived area of the city of Cracow offers various modern sport facilities and space for education and care activities (day-care centre, foster centre, free therapy or counselling etc.)⁴⁰
- **'Promoting a healthy lifestyle through the organisation of cultural and sports activities for children and young people', a programme decreed by the Mayor of Łęczycza, offers funds for NGOs, such as Municipal Interschool Sports Club or volleyball club.**⁴¹

5.4 Participation

The role of youth work:

- Shaping the attitudes towards citizenship.
- Increasing opportunities, interest and motivation to participate in a public / community life (particularly in deprived areas).
- Strengthening the involvement of young people in the democratic process through local activity.

Good practice examples:

- **This Civis Polonus project on 'Youth District Council in Warsaw' aims to enable young people to influence decision-making processes at local level, especially in the area of youth policy, by strengthening student's skills in analysing local problems, reflecting on them and formulating recommendations on solutions for local authorities.**⁴²
- Youth Academy of Local Leadership Local aims to encourage the active young people by providing them with knowledge and skills to facilitate the conduct of activities and projects in their communities.⁴³
- Youth Leadership Programme in Addiction Prevention and Health Promotion is designed to develop attitudes conducive to life without addictive and psychoactive substances and to prepare young people to lobby for a healthy, chemical-free lifestyle in their local environment.⁴⁴
- Other: Youth camps for members of the expatriate Polish community, Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity, MegaCal - Youth Centre for Local **Activity in Bełchatów**, Young Cracow Programme implemented by the Youth Department of Municipality, Ambassadors of Youth in Action Programme.

³⁸ Ministries involved in the Programme are: the Ministry of Sport and Tourism, the Ministry of Interior and Administration, the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Health. The financial resources come from the European Union (Financial Perspective 2007-2013), the state budget and the Physical Culture Development Fund. For more information please see: <http://www.msport.gov.pl/komunikaty/733-Przeciwdzialanie-poprzez-sport-agresji-i-patologii-wsrod-dzieci-i-mlodziezy>

³⁹ See: http://www.comcomzone.pl/index.php?page=comcomzone-krakow_o-nas

⁴⁰ European Commission, Council of Europe (2011), *Country sheet on youth policy in Poland*. Brussels: Youth Partnership.

⁴¹ Pofit, P. (2006), *Łęczycza. Kapslowe - 'money meant' for the prevention*. <<http://wiadomosci.ngo.pl/wiadomosc/238470.html>> date accessed: 23rd of November 2012.

⁴² See: <http://www.civispolonus.org.pl/index.php/strona-gowna/193>

⁴³ See: <http://www.mlodziej.org.pl/szkolenia/przewodnik-po-szkoleniach/szkolenia-ogolne/MALL>

⁴⁴ See: <http://www.tppu.org/programmey/165-liderzy.html>

5.5 Voluntary activities / volunteering

The role of youth work:

- Organising places where voluntary activities can be realised.
- Mediating in contacts with institutions that need volunteers.
- **Organisation of events / activities where volunteers' help is very important.**

Good practice examples:

- **'Projector – Student Volunteers' is a project within which** student volunteer teams (from two to five people) introduce the subject of patriotism to school students and pupils from small towns of up to 20,000 inhabitants during five-day workshops.⁴⁵
- Other: AIESEC, Greenpeace, Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH).

5.6 Social inclusion

The role of youth work:

- **Increasing young people's self-confidence** and awareness of their own abilities.
- Compensating deficiencies through development of social skills needed in various areas of life.
- Helping in solving problems (e.g. sessions with therapists).
- Proposing alternative lifestyles.

Good practice examples:

- **'Mobile School' is an educational tool on four wheels offering an attractive form** for filling free time of children aimlessly hanging out on streets.⁴⁶
- Programme 'Streetwork – an effective contact', funded from the ESF and realised by the Municipal Social Aid Centre, aims to help young people (**'street-kids' with multiple disadvantages (risky behaviours, hooliganism, family problems, and economical or psychological hardships)**) by establishing a relationship with them and motivating them to change their life for better.⁴⁷
- **'Model Action System – MDS' project (2012-2014)** involves the development, testing and implementation of a comprehensive system of support for young people (aged 15 – 20) that will be implemented in the region of Lodz.⁴⁸
- Other: Caritas activity, 'Common room - Children - Job' Programme, activity of the Po MOC for girls and women run by Sisters of Mary Immaculate Congregation, various forms of **Voluntary Labour Corps'** activity.

5.7 Youth and the world

The role of youth work:

- **Increasing tolerance for 'difference / otherness'.**
- **Enabling youth to experience this 'difference/otherness'.**
- Facilitating the first step towards future mobility (studying, working or living abroad).

⁴⁵ See: <http://www.pafw.pl/programmey/programme/197>

⁴⁶ See: <http://www.fundacjaludowego.pl/aktualnosci/?rok=2012&news=271>

⁴⁷ European Commission, Council of Europe (2011), *Country sheet on youth policy in Poland*. Brussels: Youth Partnership.

⁴⁸ See: <http://www.mds.monar.edu.pl/o-projekcie-2>

- Developing consensus-reaching skills despite different views.
- Greater openness to multiculturalism and awareness of common European values.
- Encouraging the learning of foreign languages.

Good practice examples:

- Since 2005 the MFA has been announcing a call for proposals for projects concerning global education activities addressed to broad groups of Polish citizens, including school pupils, students, teachers, educators, media and members of civil society organisations engaged in development education activities.⁴⁹
- Other: EU mobility programmes, missions of the Polish Humanitarian Action, Greenpeace, the Polish and German Youth Cooperation, the Polish and Lithuanian Youth Exchange Fund Youth Exchange Fund.

5.8 Creativity and culture

The role of youth work:

- Stimulating creativity.
- Showing places where the personal need for cultural development can be realised;
- Organising places where young people can develop their own culture / cultural activities (also for young people from disfavoured groups).

Good practice examples:

- Meeting places for young people of school age opened in shopping centres by Siemacha Association are an innovative example of combining educational and therapeutic functions. At a shopping centre, youth is free to participate in a wide range of workshops (e.g. music, cooking, social development), and can receive psychological support.⁵⁰
- Student Club for Creative Work 'From Beginning' at the Nicolai Copernicus University in Toruń organises more than 170 events per year, such as festivals, concerts, film screenings and theatre, gallery.⁵¹
- The Ministry of Culture began to design works and implementation of educational and artistic programmes to extend the offer of after-school art classes and strengthening school education run by cultural institutions.⁵²
- Other: the 'Enabling Arts' project addressing blind persons implemented by the 'One World' Association, 'Letters' project run by Tratwa Association for youth from small towns, Voluntary Labour Corps projects (e.g. Youth Culture Festival, Small Form Arts Festival folk workshops).

⁴⁹ European Commission (2012), *National report: First cooperation cycle of the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2012 (Poland)*, Brussels: European Commission. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/national_youth_reports_2012/poland.pdf>.

⁵⁰ See: <http://siemachaspot.pl/aktualnosci/SIEMACHA-w-galeriach-handlowych>, 14, 159

⁵¹ See: http://www.odnowa.umk.pl/main.php?PAGE=historia_klubu

⁵² European Commission (2012), *National report: First cooperation cycle of the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2012 (Poland)*, Brussels: European Commission. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/national_youth_reports_2012/poland.pdf>.

6 Outcomes and impact of youth work

6.1 Target and reach

6.1.1 Target groups

In principle, a universalistic rhetoric prevails in relation to youth work. In practice, due to very different degrees of development and specific local needs, it is aimed at particular groups of young people, with a big share of activities directed towards youth in troubles (with difficulties). Therefore, the dominant trend is directed at specific groups of young people selected through certain criteria, diagnosed needs and preferences.

Examples of target groups include:

- Young people with special educational needs (high achievers).
- Youth with educational deficiencies.
- Disadvantaged young people at risk of social exclusion.
- Young people affected by unemployment⁵³.

According to interviewees, youth work in Poland often takes a more problem-centred approach, which means that young people are treated as a problem rather than a resource. While the need for differentiation is acknowledged, it has been pointed out by interviewees that specialised programmes for defavourised youth can in fact increase the ghettoisation of these groups, e.g. due to criteria for potential beneficiaries, such as income or difficult life situation.⁵⁴ By concentrating youth work around two poles: youth with difficulties (in participating in education / labour market **and / or in the social life**) and gifted youth (high achievers), the 'middle' area remains not covered. It has been recommended to create an offer which would be easily accessible and open for all young people to facilitate contact for youth from various backgrounds. This could contribute to addressing the problem of growing disparities between youth from low- and high-income households.

Given that gender perspective is not applied in many official statistics on participation (in social care, day care, education programmes), it is hard to analyse the share of girls and boys in these groups.⁵⁵

Although according to the Polish law a person becomes an adult when turns 18 years old, youth is defined differently by various institutions. For instance:

- The Strategy for Youth for 2003 – 2012 defines young people as a group aged from 15 to 25, including teenagers (15-19) and young adults (20-25).
- The 'Youth 2011' report embraces also older groups of young people, such as those who have already completed higher education and are in the process of labour market transition and family formation.⁵⁶

⁵³ In national strategies the following groups of young people are targeted: young people with **disability, marginalized young people, students, graduates, 'dis-behaving' youth (at risk of addictions or addicted, in reformatory)**, unemployed youth, NEETs, young people living with their parents, those with non-permanent contracts, freshman at the labour market, young couples (Country sheet on youth policy in Poland. Youth Partnership).

⁵⁴ An interesting example of initiative contributing to further ghettoization of youth was a project in which children from poor families were given yellow school backpacks and the whole school and community could see who comes from deprived background.

⁵⁵ European Commission, Council of Europe (2011), *Country sheet on youth policy in Poland*. Brussels: Youth Partnership.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

The general target group of youth work in Poland in various programmes includes 16-24 years olds and the end of higher education is often considered as the end of being categorised as youth. However, there are also programmes directed to people up to 26 or 30 years old.⁵⁷

6.1.2 Reach

The information on the use of youth work services is dispersed across various ministries and institutions and it is difficult to collect such data.

Groups of young people who are not reached by youth work at the moment, or receive insufficient support, include:

- Youth above 18 years old that is neither in education nor in training or employment.
- Hooligans – so called 'pseudo football fans'.
- Youth whose parents are absent as they work abroad⁵⁸.
- Youth from rural areas and deprived urban precincts.
- Youth that is neither gifted nor deprived.
- Youth from migrant and refugee families.
- Young mothers.
- Youth of other faiths from communities, where the only social space is the Church.

6.2 Outcomes and impact

There are no indicators measuring the effectiveness of youth work. However, there is an increasing awareness and demand to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of measures in this area.

Key outcomes of youth work for vulnerable groups of young people and so-called 'high achievers', based on the interviews, are listed in a table below.

Table 6.1 Key outcomes of youth work in certain groups

Category		Impact	Caveats
Early school leavers		Return to the constructive path of social development.	This group (although smaller than in other EU countries) is not covered by any activity and therefore one can talk about the phenomenon of multiplication of a problem.
Young people with a migrant background		Ability to undertake independent decision after a period of adaptation whether to return to original location or to stay in a new place.	Various groups of young people are usually addressed based on a problem, not their origins.
Unemployed youth / NEETs		Tackling youth unemployment, providing education, financial and social support in acquiring qualifications and experience.	It depends whether they are registered as unemployed or not. If youth is not registered and does not generate other problems, then there are no measure / activities targeting these young people.

⁵⁷ Krzaklewska, E. (2011), *The Active Inclusion of young people in cities*. Krakow: Local Authority Observatory.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Category	Impact	Caveats
Young people with disabilities	Overcoming own disabilities through sport and cultural activity. Starting to enter the social sphere and participate in various events.	The effects of youth work are visible if there are no technical limitations to young peoples' disabilities (otherwise, they stay at home).
High achievers (young people)'	Multiplication of success.	The number of actions that would support such persons in long-distance dimension is limited.

Source: Stakeholder interviews.

The key strengths of youth workers in supporting the lives of young people / achieving these outcomes, in comparison to support provided by other professionals:

- Ability to build trust among youth, listen and explore.
- Realisation of individual passions and interests, flexibility and high engagement.
- Approaching young people on individual basis, staying close to the youth, knowing the needs of this group.
- Combining pedagogical and socialisation skills with a non-school approach (no teacher-pupils relation).
- Ability to understand the language of young people.
- Facilitating out-of-school learning and creating opportunities for non-formal education.
- Ability to access a wide base of competences, opportunities, and experiences, which can be used by young people.

6.3 SWOT

Table 6.2 Summary of key strengths and weaknesses of the youth work sector in Poland

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increasing number of youth work measures. ■ Numerous and diverse NGOs' activities, rooted in the local community. ■ High potential of youth located in their aspirations and aims connected with every-day life.⁵⁹ ■ Increasing openness towards the forms and methods of participation chosen by young people. ■ Innovation of third sector in this area. ■ High engagement on a local level. ■ Passion and ideas of people and organisations working with youth. ■ Commune Youth Councils as a form of dialogue with young citizens (although their potential is not fully used).⁶⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Capturing the differences arising from the socio-cultural context in which young people operate.⁶¹ ■ Youth's need of belonging to a community of peers stronger than in the case of their parents.⁶² ■ Youth's awareness of the need for education. ■ Cooperation based on partnership. ■ Growing needs of potential 'customers'. ■ Availability of European funds. ■ Wide range of possibilities for enhancing the attractiveness of youth work. ■ Recognition of youth work and youth worker as a profession. ■ Development of social media in communication with young people. ■ Potential of the elderly and pensioners (currently unused).
WEAKNESSES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mismatch between measures offered by the network of traditionally functioning institutions and the needs of young people. ■ Lack of systemic solutions, complex approach reflected in consistent activities. ■ Lack of coordination and monitoring centre. ■ Lack of definition and regulation of youth work. ■ Lack of a network of youth clubs / institutions based on voluntary participation of young people (mainly 15-18) and open to everyone. ■ Sporadic public consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Crawling economic crisis and demographic imbalance as factors impeding intergenerational solidarity.⁶⁵ ■ Debate about youth carried out without a dialogue with young people ('youth seen from above').⁶⁶ ■ Indifference of adults towards the feeling of depaysement/alienation among youth. ■ Perceiving youth / social work as a profession of declining public confidence and stereotypical image of this type of activity. ■ Highly depreciated infrastructure base. ■ Unsatisfactory youth work results often visible only after a time.

⁵⁹ Szafraniec, K. (2011), *The Youth of 2011*. Warsaw: The Chancellery of the Prime Minister.

⁶⁰ Giza-Poleszczuk, A., Strzezińska, A. & Mencwel, J. (2012), *Młodzi Bez Głosu*. Warsaw: Zeszyt no 1.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Szafraniec, K. (2011), *Youth 2011*. Warsaw: The Chancellery of the Prime Minister.

<p>dedicated to young people.⁶³</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No public space 'owned' by youth, where they could do 'something theirs', meet and talk freely and safely, outside the jurisdiction of the school.⁶⁴ ■ Directing sport-related activities mainly towards promotion of male sports (e.g. football). ■ Inability of education system to avoid ghettoisation. ■ Lack of educational paths preparing specifically for youth work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prevalence of project-based work contributing to lack of stability and a 'closed door' syndrome. ■ Fragmentation of policies and measures. ■ Dynamic changes in the demographic structure. ■ Instability and ambiguity of the legislation. ■ Dependency relationship between youth workers and youth. ■ Strongly shredded youth environments. ■ Low 'juventologic' knowledge among adults.⁶⁷ ■ Shifting all institutional responsibility on NGOs.
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7 Conclusions and recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

Due to its inter-ministerial character, youth policy in Poland is expressed in a number of legal regulations relating to youth and has many legislators. The key areas being regulated usually address the criteria for those who work with youth and the responsibility for it (e.g. certification of venues). The dispersion and fragmentation of responsibilities in this area are the main point of criticism of both youth work practitioners and experts.

The role of youth work in the context of reducing social exclusion among young people in Poland is very high. In addition, there is high demand for this type of work, which increased significantly in recent years due to the difficult social situation of many households.

The main target groups of youth work in Poland are young people with various difficulties. The main deficiency are limited (or no) pro-developmental investments in a social sense that would integrate all young people. Development of youth infrastructure in a form of youth clubs is perceived as a key need in the field of free space for young people to spend their free time and make their first steps in socialisation.

Currently, there is little room for real dialogue between existing structures and young people. As a result of this limited cooperation, the methods applied in youth work are often archaic if compared to the needs of young people.

⁶⁵ Szafraniec, K. (2011), *Youth 2011*. Warsaw: The Chancellery of the Prime Minister.

⁶⁶ Giza-Poleszczuk, A., Strzemińska, A. & Mencwel, J. (2012), *Młodzi Bez Głosu*. Warsaw: Zeszyt no 1.

⁶³ Giza-Poleszczuk, A., Strzemińska, A. & Mencwel, J. (2012), *Młodzi Bez Głosu*. Warsaw: Zeszyt no 1.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Szafraniec, K. (2011), *Youth 2011*. Warsaw: The Chancellery of the Prime Minister.

7.2 Recommendations

National level:

- Create a new strategy for youth in Poland, by the Ministry of Education in cooperation with other ministries and youth organisations, based on the evaluation results of the Youth Strategy for the years 2003 – 2012 and key problems faced by Polish youth identified by recent research (e.g. 'The Youth of 2011' report).
- Create by the Ministry of Regional Development in cooperation with other ministries and youth organisations a stable basis for youth action by establishing an inclusive nationwide system of youth infrastructure that is independent from formal education system, easily accessible, and open for all young people from various backgrounds (e.g. by opening new venues or restitution of culture houses / centres network).
- Encourage awareness-raising on 'juventologic' knowledge among adults, including educators, representatives of organisations working with youth and for youth, researchers and journalists.
- Integrate the activities of various ministries and relevant actors in the field by creating an inter-ministerial body for youth policy to coordinate the activities of the government and institutions working for youth.
- Invite young people from youth organisations, e.g. in a form of advisory body, to propose measures / areas for youth work.
- Monitor the quality of service and performance standards in relation to youth work carried out at regional, local, and NGO level.
- Carry out a survey to examine the needs of people involved in youth work.
- Create educational opportunities (e.g. in a form of courses or studies to specialise as a youth worker) and develop staff promotion policy in this area.
- Secure transparency of funding for NGOs centred on youth work and proper evaluation of these funds to support only those youth work initiative that bring visible results.

Third sector:

- Lobby to make the topic visible (e.g. to prepare a draft bill on youth work) and self-organise to create a strong youth work sector.
- Effectively encourage young people to cooperate with NGOs, especially in the out-of-school time.
- Engage professional staff in youth work, supported by experience and recommendations.
- Create a common platform to exchange the best practices in youth work in **both providing services in this area and developing youth workers' competences.**
- Continue an active role in the area of youth and culture at local or regional level.

EU level:

- Trigger a European debate on youth and youth work to promote youth **work by showing its effectiveness (e.g. 'soft' results and benefits), sharing good practices, and establishing standards (e.g. competences for youth work).**
- Reformulate / restructure the Youth in Action Programme for the next period by making it more inclusive for all young people, reflecting the current reality, and offering the possibility for funding long-term activities.

- Reconsider criteria, such as income, in some programmes financed from the ESF.
- Establish a supervisory body at the EU level devoted to youth policy, which would oversee the advancements and effects of developments in youth sector and collect hard data.
- Create a youth work model and promote it in Member States (combined with a financial support if it functions properly).
- **Promote youth work by showing its effectiveness (e.g. 'soft' results) and good practices.**
- Instigate a European debate on effective, integrated and multi-faceted remedy for pathological forms of leisure activities of young people.

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