



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

Country Report Portugal

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Country report: Portugal

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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	Yes
Legal definition for youth work	No
Approximate length of youth work tradition	No real tradition of youth work
Approximate length of formal / professional youth work tradition	No real tradition of formal youth work
Overview of relative importance of youth work in supporting young people	Decreased
Main sectors/fields of formal / professional / statutory youth work	Not applicable, since no formal youth work
Main sectors / fields of non-formal / third sector led youth work	Youth organisations (non-formal education)

1.1 Definitions

The concept of ‘youth work’ was difficult to translate in Portugal as there is no such concept in Portuguese although the practice of youth work exists. The term youth work was formally translated at the EU level as ‘trabalho socioeducativo em prol dos jovens’, literally meaning ‘social and educational work for youth’¹.

There is neither a professional or academic recognition² of youth work in Portugal. It is certainly not a domain of academic research in Portugal. There is a general lack of government interest in youth and a lack of visibility/promotion of youth work practices.

The definition behind the term ‘trabalho socioeducativo em prol dos jovens’ encompasses the European definition, understood as “(non-formal) educational activities outside the formal educational system coupled with an emphasis on voluntary participation of young people”. The Portuguese conception of youth work seems to strongly refer to the work taking place within youth organisations which are aiming to engage the hard-to-reach/young people at risk and empowering young people.

However, there is a strong debate at the national level around the Portuguese translation and definition of youth work. Actors working with young people are varied – i.e. from the third sector (youth organisations) but also from the public sector (social workers, etc.). As there is no legal or systematic national definition of ‘trabalho socioeducativo em prol dos jovens’, each actor can understand it in a different way.

In addition, the debate centres on the assistantship idea that the Portuguese definition might embrace – i.e. the idea that it is *for* youth. Interviewees – which were mainly

¹ Europa press release RAPID (2009), Uma nova era para as políticas de juventude da UE, <http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-09-644_pt.htm?locale=en> date accessed: 10th of November 2012.

² Youth workers interviewees all mentioned that there is neither an official recognition of their work nor a formal and legal definition of their status. The researcher has some reservations regarding the interviewees’ opinions on that matter. Indeed, whilst there is a strong lack of visibility of youth work practices in Portugal, desk research suggests there is some recognition given to the practice, via the activities/policies developed by the Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute and via the constant dialogue taken place between the Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute and the National Youth Council.

active youth workers – refuse to see their work as assistance-based. They perceive their work as a way to empower young people through the use of non-formal educational activities developed *by and with* young people. They all stressed the importance of non-formal learning as the foundation of the '*trabalho socioeducativo em prol dos jovens*'. Also, interviewees urge the development and the promotion of a common definition to all actors working with youth.

1.2 Tradition and development of youth work

In Portugal, there is no real tradition or development of youth work – understood here as youth organisations actions. There is no tradition of formal/professional youth work. The development of youth work in Portugal really started to emerge after the end of the authoritarian regime that prohibited most forms of association³. The creation of the National Youth Council in 1985 gave visibility to national youth organisations. The National Youth Council is an independent umbrella organisation with the objective to give a political voice to youth organisations. Its main board and supervisory board are run by volunteers (e.g. former youth workers). In addition, it has a technician team composed of seven persons who are under a professional paid contract. It is subsidised by the Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute (IPDJ)⁴.

Across time, the most visible and prominent type of youth work in Portugal (understood, in this case, in the broadest sense) are the Scouts and other catholic forms of organisations, as well as youth camps, political and students' organisations.

To some extent EU policy priorities in recent years have reinforced the focus on the youth, especially via the Youth in Action programme, encouraging mobility and exchange opportunities. Political attention of youth work and youth issues has remained weak and according to interviewees is decreasing. The recent merging of the Portuguese Youth Institute with the Portuguese Sport Institute is seen by interviewees as an example of the decreased attention⁵. Also, the government has considerably decreased funding for youth policies as a result of the economic crisis. The annual budget for the Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute constituted 27,8% of the total budget programme in 2011⁶ but only 7,2% of the total in 2012⁷.

Thus, it is difficult to assess the importance of youth work in supporting the lives of young people in Portugal over the past ten years. On the one hand, the visibility of youth organisations has slowly increased, especially via the role of the National Youth Council in bringing youth issues to the political level. On the other hand, in terms of quantity, as the interviewees mentioned, the number of youth organisations has increased considerably over the last ten years, mainly due to the EU funding opportunities – e.g. Youth in Action, Youth on the Move. Yet, the quality and sustainability of these new youth organisations falls short due to a lack of monitoring of their work.

³ Delicado, A. (2002), *Caracterização do voluntariado social em Portugal*, Comunicação apresentada no Seminário: Olhares sobre o voluntariado: análises e perspectivas para uma cidadania activa, Lisboa, 10 de Maio de 2002, ISSCOOP.

⁴ The IPDJ is the result of the merge in 2011 of the Portuguese Youth Institute and the Portuguese Sport Institute by the Law Decree 98/2011. For more information see: http://www.juventude.gov.pt/Legislacao/Documents/decreto-lei_98_2011.pdf

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ministério das Finanças, *Orcamento do Estado (2011)*, *Outubro 2010*, p183, Lisboa: Ministério das Finanças, Orcamento do Estado.

⁷ Ibid.

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

In Portugal, non-formal / non-professional / third sector led youth work is more widespread. As previously mentioned, youth work in Portugal means involvement with young people and by young people via youth organisations, mainly to increase their non-formal learning, their social inclusion and their civic/democratic awareness. To a great extent, the staff of youth organisations is constituted of volunteers. Consequently, youth work does not exist as a formal / professional delivery in Portugal.

Since the start of EU funding programmes in Portugal, youth organisations were said by interviewees to have considerably increased, delivering a variety of activities targeted at the youth. Data from the 2010 Annual Report⁸ of the Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute is consistent with interviewees' impression. It indeed shows an increase of youth association between 2008 and 2010, respectively from 952 to 1329.

Portugal involves a complex network of providers. For instance, community or religious organisations, youth organisations, local authorities, civil society organisations, and private institutions might deliver youth work. Indeed, municipalities might work at the local level with schools in cooperation with local youth organisations. Civil society organisations such as the ACIDI (High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue) have implemented the 'Escolhas'⁹ Programme targeted at young people from a migrant/ethnic background. Private Institutions of Social Solidarity (IPSS)¹⁰ – which are non-profit institutions established by private/individual initiative – might also target their work at the youth. Private institutions/companies can also be involved in youth work, such as youth camps enterprises.

2 Legislative context and governance

KEY FACTS	RESPONSE
Legislative framework for youth work	Yes
Level of regulation for youth work	National
Body with a responsibility for governing youth work	Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute

2.1 Legal background

In terms of national Legislation, the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic makes an overall reference¹¹ to the attention the State has to provide (in terms of opportunities, security, etc.) to Youth within article 70¹². Article 70 states that the State has to

⁸ Instituto Português da Juventude (2011), *Annual Report 2010*, p65. Lisboa: Instituto Português da Juventude.

⁹ 'Escolhas Programme' funds various youth organisations and other civil society organisation to implement, at the local level, projects mainly targeting the most disadvantaged young people with an ethnic background and providing them with education and training opportunities. For more information see: www.programaescolhas.pt/

¹⁰ IPSS are an initiative of the Portuguese Social Security. Their website is: <http://www2.seg-social.pt/left.asp?01.03>.

¹¹ Youth Partnership, Youth policy country information Portugal 2008, <<http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/ekcyp/Countryinformation2.html>>.

¹² See: www.parlamento.pt/Legislacao/Paginas/ConstituicaoRepublicaPortuguesa.aspx

guarantee access to housing, to education, to leisure time to youth. It also states that Youth policy should have as its primary objectives the development of young people, creating conditions for their effective integration into working life. In addition, there is specific legislation in place in Portugal regarding *associativism* ('*associativismo*'), youth camps and volunteering activities.

Law 23/2006 of 23 June¹³ establishes the legal regime of *associativism*. According to the law, Scouts, religious or political organisations as well as organisations developing activities for youth are defined as youth organisations as long as they have a specific percentages of leaders/members below age 30. This law also makes a distinction **between youth organisations in general and students' organisations. It states how a youth organisation can be recognised as such by the Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute and how they can apply for funding opportunities. It also defines the key rights/responsibilities of association leaders, providing them the status of 'leader of an association'.**

Youth camps are regulated by various Law Decrees¹⁴ that establish the legal framework for youth camps (conditions for the creation of a summer camp, access to the camp, security measures, etc.).

Volunteering activities and the status of volunteers are regulated by Law 71/98, of 3 November¹⁵ which establishes the legal framework for developing volunteer activities and being a volunteer.

Interviewees have the feeling that there is no specific law that is targeted at youth work defined as '*trabalho socioeducativo em prol dos jovens*'. Indeed, the various laws described above are very general and do not provide a specific professional status for youth workers or professional standards for the practice of youth work.

2.2 Governance

At the governmental level, the Secretary of State for Sport and Youth is the main body developing policies targeted at the Youth.

The Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute (IPDJ)¹⁶ is the main body governing youth related issues in Portugal governed by the Secretary of State for Youth and Sport. The institute has the mission to implement policies at the national level and regional level – via its regional delegations – in the areas of sport and youth in close cooperation with sport organisations, youth organisations, student organisations and municipalities.

Concerning youth work, the Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute has the remit to provide support to youth organisations, to volunteering activities, to promote citizenship, leisure activities, non-formal education, to inform young people (via local information points and website) about youth related issues and mobility opportunities for young people in Portugal and abroad.

As youth issues are a transversal topic at governmental level, an Inter-ministerial Committee for Youth Policy was created in 2007 (Resolution 77/2007¹⁷, 4 June) with

¹³ See: http://juventude.gov.pt/legislacao/Paginas/Legislacao_Juventude.aspx

¹⁴ Decreto-Lei n.º 32/2011; Despacho n.º 6506/2011; Portaria n.º 586/2004; Portaria n.º 629/2004.

¹⁵ See: http://juventude.gov.pt/legislacao/Paginas/Legislacao_Juventude.aspx

¹⁶ The IPDJ is the result of the merge in 2011 of the Portuguese Youth Institute and the Portuguese Sport Institute by the Law Decree 98/2011. For more information see: http://www.juventude.gov.pt/Legislacao/Documents/decreto-lei_98_2011.pdf

¹⁷ Presidência do Conselho de Ministros (2007), Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 77/2007, de 4^{de} Junho, Cria a Comissão Interministerial para as Políticas da Juventude,

the aim of ensuring the coordination of an integrated youth policy between the various ministries.

At the local level, municipalities (around 300 all over the country) have developed local strategies to encourage youth participation in the political process and to support programmes/projects of leisure times, volunteering, etc.¹⁸.

Non-public actors have also competences in the youth field such as the National Youth Council and the Local Youth Organisations Federation (Federação Nacional das Associações Locais de Juventude) which are active at the national level, aiming to foster constant dialogue between youth organisations and the government¹⁹.

In 2008, the Portuguese Youth Institute²⁰ expenditures allocated to youth represented approximately 30 million Euros²¹. In 2010, expenditures of the Portuguese Youth Institute plummet to approximately 20 million€²². The budget for Youth was said to be decreasing due to the economic crisis, however, the new overall budget could not be found.

3 Policy and programme framework

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

3.1 Policy commitment

To date, there is no specific national youth strategy in place in Portugal. Nevertheless, it is the aim of the government to develop a Youth National Strategy: the Youth White paper. The content of the Portuguese Youth White paper is not yet known²³. In its National report²⁴, Portugal mentions that the aim is to develop a youth strategy in close collaboration with young people in order to assess and meet youth needs and aspirations. In theory, the aim was to consult young people in order to develop the key points of the White paper. In practice, however, interviewees noted the lack of a methodological approach to design the consultation process. It was reported that no representative sample of young people was chosen; members/leaders of youth organisations were left out of the process; and that the questionnaire lacked of a

<http://www.juventude.gov.pt/Legislacao/Documents/resolucao-conselho-ministros_77_2007.pdf>.

¹⁸ Youth Partnership, Youth policy country information Portugal 2008, <<http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/ekcyp/Countryinformation2.html>>.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Before the merge with the Portuguese Sport Institute.

²¹ Youth Partnership, Youth policy country information Portugal 2008, <<http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/ekcyp/Countryinformation2.html>>.

²² Instituto Português da Juventude (2011), *Annual Report 2010, p117*. Lisboa: Instituto Português da Juventude.

²³ For more information see the national website of the Youth White Paper at: <http://microsites.juventude.gov.pt/Portal/LBJ>

²⁴ European Commission (2012), *National report: First cooperation cycle of the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2012 (Portugal)*. Brussels: European Commission.

methodological design. The National Youth Council has reported the drawbacks of the consultation process to the Secretary of State.

In terms of policies targeted at youth, the Government proposed to enhance its youth policy, with particular emphasis on:

1. Streamlining and promoting mechanisms for young people to access real-estate loans.
2. Promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment.
3. Support entrepreneurial initiatives in conjunction with institutions of higher education.
4. Promoting youth volunteering, civic and political participation²⁵.

As it can be noted, these youth policies priorities include the promotion of volunteering, civic and political participation which could be considered as youth work. However, interviewees notice that political commitment in the area of youth work, in practice, is weak and that, there is no much change in the field – i.e. there is a lack of recognition of what youth workers do in the field. Reasons evoked by interviewees to explain the weak attention given to youth work were: the austerity measures that have diminished the budget for the youth; the social belief that youth work is limited to leisure activities; and a certain political fear of seeing an empowered youth that will socially disturb the political mainstream. The National Youth Council tries to bring youth work to the political agenda giving a political voice to youth organisations.

Nonetheless, municipalities – Cascais was mentioned by interviewees as an example of good practice in the field – seem more opened to youth work, implementing local strategies – e.g. strategies targeted at the fight against social exclusion, at the fight against school dropout, etc. – in close collaboration with local youth organisations. Reasons for this commitment might be political (i.e. to obtain votes) or economical (i.e. it is more efficient to ask a youth organisations to do the work rather than developing a new specific structure).

3.2 Policies and programmes to develop youth work

The Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute (IPDJ) developed specific funding programmes²⁶ to which youth organisations can apply to. Financial support up to **1500€ is provided for developing projects within the association, for buying material** and for participating in training programmes organised by the IPDJ. However, the budget is said to be very limited. As one of the interviewees noted, youth organisations cannot rely on public funding to survive.

The IPDJ has also developed many programmes²⁷ which reflect the government policies plans for youth described above. Programmes aim at: enhancing youth civic and volunteer participation; promoting healthy lifestyles via prevention actions; providing health related services to youth (e.g. free medical consultations, psychological advises, etc.); enhancing employability and entrepreneurship skills of youth (e.g. providing internships opportunities); developing cultural contest for the youth, thus promoting creativity; informing them, via the website, about existent financial support for housing, education, transportation, etc.

The national programme 'Escolhas'²⁸ implemented by the fifth consecutive time by the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue (ACIDI) is one of the

²⁵ Ministério das Finanças, Orçamento do Estado (2011), *Outubro 2010, p148*, Lisboa: Ministério das Finanças, Orçamento do Estado

²⁶ See: <http://juventude.gov.pt/Associativismo/PAAJ/Paginas/default.aspx>

²⁷ See: <http://juventude.gov.pt/Paginas/default.aspx>

²⁸ See: <http://www.programaescolhas.pt/apresentacao>

most visible actions having a positive impact in developing youth work in Portugal. Indeed, the programme funds projects of different kind of organisations (e.g. youth organisations, NGOs, local municipalities) with the aim of reducing the social exclusion among young people with a migrant/ethnic or disadvantaged background.

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	Extremely diverse
Number of youth workers	No data
Trend in the overall number of youth workers	Increase

4.1 Training and qualifications

There are no minimum qualification standards for youth workers in Portugal and youth work still does not exist as an academic subject in formal education.

Youth work in Portugal is not associated with a specific kind of educational route. Youth workers come from a range of extremely diverse educational backgrounds. As mentioned by interviewees, youth workers can come from all type of educational routes: biology, psychology, teaching, architecture, engineering, social work, international relations, high-school degree, etc. Youth workers are bound by their common will to work for the community and to empower young people.

At the national level, there are some formal and non-formal training opportunities available to youth workers even though there is a lack of formal qualifications on youth work. Training courses in Portugal are offered by the IPDJ and by youth organisations themselves. Yet, interviewees mentioned that the great majority of training opportunities are abroad and supported via EU funded programmes and promoted by the Council of Europe.

4.2 Status of youth worker profession

There is no professional status associated with youth work in Portugal. It is neither a legal recognised profession nor a social recognised profession. In this regard, all interviewees mentioned the difficulty they have to explain to their relatives what they do – **the profession is negatively perceived as ‘entertainment for the young’ and it is not understand why youth workers work so hard without being paid.** Similarly, the job market also underestimates the occupation and negatively perceives the skills of youth workers.

Interviewees reported that recognition and opportunities as a paid profession are offered abroad – it is usually the case that Portuguese youth workers would enrol in projects abroad – whereas there is no recognition at the national level. One of the interviewees pointed out that her experience and expertise as a youth worker was highly recognised at the European level – i.e. she could find a job in the field at European institutions level – whereas it was underestimated at the national level

where few opportunities – mainly on volunteer basis – were offered to her. Possible reasons for this lack of recognition are:

- The fact that there has not been a long tradition of youth work in Portugal.
- The fact that youth work is not a top policy priority.
- The fact that youth work is not an academic topic of research.
- The lack of recognition of non-formal education.

However, at the local level, local actors (e.g. teenagers, parents, inhabitants, municipalities, etc.) often recognise the benefits associated with the work of youth organisations.

4.3 Youth worker population

There are no aggregate data on the number of youth workers in Portugal. Even though there are no official figures available on the population of youth workers, there is some data on the number of youth work organisations – which includes all types of organisations such as student organisations, youth organisations, Scouts organisations, cultural organisations, etc. – that officially registered at the National Register of Youth organisations (RNAJ). In 2010, there were 1,750 youth organisations officially registered according to the Annual Report of the Youth Institute²⁹. In 2010, 1,329 were Youth organisations whereas students organisations only represented a total of 202 organisations and informal groups a total of 164. The number of youth organisations has considerably increased between 2008 and 2010, respectively from 952 to 1329, whereas the number of student organisations and informal groups remained relatively constant³⁰.

Youth workers interviewed assessed that the number of youth organisations has been increasing over the past ten years, largely thanks to EU opportunities – e.g. Youth in Action programme.

The great majority of youth workers are volunteers or part-time workers. Some (very few) youth workers earn a salary as youth workers. It was highlighted that this professional situation is particularly precarious as it depends on public/private subsidies and not on a legal status/profession.

According to research realised in 2005 on youth *associativism*³¹, within the sample of 1,000 young people, only 2,8% of them³² belonged to a youth association, 4,2% to a religious youth association, and 4,9% to student organisations. In addition, within the volunteer population of the sample, more than two third belong to a youth association. Volunteering activities can thus be strongly associated with youth *associativism*.

4.4 Profile of youth workers

There are no data available on the profile of youth workers, but as already described above, since there is no academic qualification available to become a youth worker in Portugal, the great majority of existing youth workers have very diverse educational backgrounds. There is also a proportion of unqualified youth workers since there are no minimum qualification standards for the profession in Portugal.

Interviewees estimate that currently, the great majority of youth workers are volunteers.

²⁹ Instituto Português da Juventude (2011), *Annual Report 2010, p65*. Lisboa: Instituto Português da Juventude.

³⁰ Idem.

³¹ Ferreira, P. & Alcântara da Silva, P. (2005), *O Associativismo Juvenil e a Cidadania Política*. Lisboa: Instituto de Ciências Sociais da Universidade de Lisboa.

³² In this research, one thousand young people between 15 and 29 years old were interviewed.

The major key challenges facing youth workers in Portugal are the lack of recognition of the occupation and the precarious situation associated with it, i.e. there is a lack of subsidies available – and when available they are really small – meaning that youth organisations have to struggle to survive.

5 The role and value of youth work

The role and value of youth work was difficult to assess as there is neither monitoring nor specific academic research of youth work practices in Portugal. Nevertheless, following the interviews we have undertaken, it is possible to draw various conclusions about the role of youth organisations in Portugal.

Youth organisations in Portugal do not act in only one particular field. They aim to reach transversal objectives, having a positive role in different areas. The activities developed by youth organisations fall within the overall scope of empowering the youth via non-formal learning techniques. Their aim is usually to:

- Provide non-formal learning opportunities for the youth (e.g. out-of-school activities, working closely with schools, empowering at-risk students, etc.).
- Increase youth participation in the wider community.
- Raise awareness about the Human Rights and global issues.
- Reduce social exclusion among young people and those at risk.
- Promote and increase youth participation in volunteering activities at the national and European level.

5.1 Education and training

Some youth organisations in Portugal focus in the provision of non-formal learning opportunities and of support for at-risk students. Some also support schools and training institutions in their service delivery (e.g. mentoring, career advice services, counselling, etc.).

The Association 'Espaço Jovem' is a good example of it. It has indeed developed, under the national 'Escolhas funding Programme'³³ and with the collaboration of local authorities, a project called 'Formar – Inserir'³⁴ targeting at young people at-risk belonging to minority groups from a specific neighbourhood of the city of Amadora. The project aims at providing study support to at-risk students, mentoring support to schools and family as well as life orientation support to the young people. It also provides non-formal learning via sport and volunteering activities that it organises for these young people.

5.2 Employment and entrepreneurship

Some national initiatives targeted at the youth and also youth work have an impact in improving entrepreneurship skills and employment opportunities of young people in Portugal.

In terms of good practice in the area of improving employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for young people in Portugal, the Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute

³³ It is worth recalling that the 'Escolhas Programme' funds various youth organisations and other civil society organisation to implement, at the local level, projects mainly targeting the most disadvantaged young people with an ethnic background and providing them with education and training opportunities.

³⁴ See: <http://formarinserir.programaescolhas.pt/projecto>

has developed the Programme 'Impulso Jovem'³⁵ which presents a set of measures to encourage the creation of youth employment, one of the main challenges currently facing Portugal. The Programme aims at, for instance, finding recognised company internships for young people aged between 18 and 25 providing them with an internship grant.

Also, the Youth Foundation, an association, in the city of Porto, promoting the integration of young people into the active life and the labour market, launches annual internship programmes³⁶ - i.e. the PEJENE³⁷. It is targeted at upper-secondary students aiming at providing them with a valid and recognised professional experience in a company, therefore facilitating their entry into the labour market.

Activities developed by the student association 'AIESEC Portugal' are also a good example of how youth work contributes to improve employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for young people in Portugal. For instance, AIESEC Portugal has organised in 2010 the 'Leadership Tournament'³⁸ which was an initiative aiming at stimulating the spirit of leadership of Portuguese young university students.

5.3 Health and well-being

Improving health and well-being of young people in Portugal seems to be a national concern rather than a specific concern of youth organisations. Youth organisations are often encouraged to participate in national initiatives promoting healthy lifestyles.

An important initiative is the 'CUIDA-TE'³⁹ Programme launched by the Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute (IPDJ). Various types of actions are developed under this Programme. The overall aim is to promote healthy lifestyles. In that context, the Programme provides **training for organisations' leaders, teachers**, health professionals and others who are engaged in this area for young people. It also organises, in collaboration with youth organisations, prevention activities and debate sessions for teenagers around the topics of youth sexuality, youth pregnancy, drug uses, etc.

In addition, the IPDJ runs free consultation offices⁴⁰ across the country where young people between 12 and 25 years can access free medical and psychological consultations. It also developed two free telephone lines⁴¹ targeted at the youth, namely 'SOS Drug' and the 'Sexuality line' where young people can ask for advice.

5.4 Participation

Youth work activities in Portugal strongly aim at improving youth participation into the wider community and in promoting democracy. Activities developed include seminars, meetings, discussions, training sessions or events of a public nature that usually gather youth and policy makers.

In terms of improving youth political participation in the community, the youth association Dinamo is, for instance, developing a network of all youth actors in the region of *Sintra* in order to develop a common political agenda for the youth in the region and to try to influence youth policy making in the region.

³⁵ See: <http://www.juventude.gov.pt/Emprego/ImpulsoJovem/Paginas/ImpulsoJovem.aspx>

³⁶ This is a 3 months non-paid internship.

³⁷ See: <http://www.fjuventude.pt/pejene2011/>

³⁸ See: <http://www.theleadershiptournament.com/index.html>

³⁹ <http://www.juventude.gov.pt/SaudeSexualidadeJuvenil/ProgramaCUIDATE/Paginas/programa-cuida-te.aspx>

⁴⁰ <http://www.juventude.gov.pt/SaudeSexualidadeJuvenil/GabinetesApoioSexualidadeJuvenil/Paginas/default.aspx>

⁴¹ <http://www.juventude.gov.pt/SaudeSexualidadeJuvenil/SexualidadeemLinha/Paginas/LinhadeAjuda.aspx>

The Portuguese National Education Council organises each year the project "Youth Parliament"⁴² **which is another example of an initiative to increase young people's active participation in public affairs and policy decision at the national level.** The program is directed to students aged 12-16 and it consists in a simulation of Parliament decisions. It aims at increasing youth awareness about the democratic **system via the method 'learning by doing'.** Last year, the theme discussed at the Youth Parliament was 'which future for Education'.

At the very local level, an example of a project developed in 2011 by the pool of trainers of the National Youth Council together with the youth association YUPI (Youth Union of People with Initiative), with financial support from the Youth in Action Programme, was the initiative 'A Tua Voz Agora! – Your Voice Now'⁴³ which brought together youth representatives from five secondary schools of the city of Famalicão and association leaders / youth leaders, with the goal of creating opportunities for reflection among young people regarding participation and youth policies needed in the city.

5.5 Voluntary activities / volunteering

Youth work is a key player in promoting voluntary activities among young people.

The Youth association Dínamo⁴⁴ is, for instance, an active player in the area of promoting volunteering in the region of Sintra. It is indeed the local accredited association for implemented the European Voluntary Service (i.e. sending and receiving volunteers) which is part of the Youth in Action programme. It also promotes and organises volunteering activities at the local level.

At the national level, the Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute (IPDJ) actively promote voluntary activities. Each year it launches the 'Youth Volunteering Programme For the Forest' which aims at encouraging young people between age 18 and 30 to preserve the Portuguese Forest, cleaning the Forest and reducing the scourge of fires through prevention activities. The IPDJ also launches calls of tenders for youth organisations or NGOs to organise youth volunteering camps around the theme of fauna and flora preservation. Selected youth organisations receive a small grant to organise a one week camp targeted at young people between age 18 and 30. They must develop concrete activities for preserving the nature and awareness raising actions for the local community.

5.6 Social inclusion

Youth work is often targeting at reducing social exclusion among the youth in Portugal.

The national 'Escolhas Programme' (developed by the ACIDI - High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue) is one of the most visible player in the area of reducing social exclusion among young people in Portugal. Indeed, as previously mentioned, the Programme annually funds various youth organisations and other civil society organisation to implement, at the local level, projects mainly targeting the most disadvantaged young people with an ethnic background.

⁴² http://www.cnedu.pt/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=312%3Aparlamento-do-jovens-que-futuro-para-a-educacao&catid=46%3Anoticias-arquivo&Itemid=84&lang=pt

⁴³ See: http://www.inducar.pt/v1/index.php?option=com_digifolio&view=project&id=74%3Aa-tua-voz-agora&Itemid=377

⁴⁴ See: <http://www.dinamo.pt/index.php/dinamo/projectos-e-actividades>

5.7 Youth and the world

Youth work projects in Portugal also involve awareness raising among young people of international / global issues, such as human rights, social justice, environment.

For instance, the network gathering youth organisations around the topic of youth Equality (Rede Jovens Igualdade⁴⁵) has organised a one week visit to a local school on **the theme 'Saint Valentine' s day and dating/domestic violence' in order to raise teenagers awareness on gender violence and to promote women's rights.**

Regarding environmental issue, the Youth Centre of Oeiras in collaboration with the Oeiras City Council **implemented the 'Youth on the Move - Summer Campaign'**⁴⁶ and recruited young people to carry out activities of cleaning and maintenance of beaches, streets and gardens of the municipality. The main objectives of the campaign were to promote new behaviours and attitudes toward the environment.

In addition, the Youth Association for Sciences⁴⁷ regularly organises biodiversity seminars/related activities in order to raise awareness about environmental issues.

5.8 Creativity and culture

Youth work seems to have less impact in encouraging creativity among young people in Portugal. Nevertheless, interesting practices have been identified.

An important national-level project in the area of creativity is the 'Young Artists Program'⁴⁸ subsidised by the Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute (IPDJ). The IPDJ, in collaboration with a youth association, annually launches the Young Artists Competition aiming at promoting youth with works of artistic creation in the areas of digital arts, visual arts, dance, design of equipment, graphic design, photography, jewellery, literature, fashion, music and video. It gives the opportunity of young artists to expose their work in various exhibitions across the country and awards the most creative ones.

The Youth Association Fest aims at encouraging young artists, in particular from the cinematographic area, to exchange experiences and promote their work. Each year FEST organises a Youth Film Festival⁴⁹ for young directors to present their films.

The Youth Association Rota Jovém has in the past organised a Photography contest called 'Photographic Raid'⁵⁰ in the city of Cascais. The aim was to enhance creativity among the youth: young local people had to take in a twelve-hours period twelve original pictures of the city. At the end of the day, the most creative ones were awarded with a price.

⁴⁵ See: <http://redejovensigualdade.org.pt/drupal/>

⁴⁶ See: <http://www.cm-oeiras.pt/noticias%5CPaginas/JovensemMovimento6.aspx>

⁴⁷ See: http://www.ajc.pt/index.php?view=article&catid=16%3Aactividades-20102011&id=92%3Ajornadas-do-ambiente-gera&option=com_content&Itemid=27

⁴⁸ <http://www.juventude.gov.pt/CULTURA/PROGRAMAJOVENSRIADORES/Paginas/ProgramaJovensCriadores.aspx>

⁴⁹ See: http://fest.pt/?page_id=385

⁵⁰ See: <http://www.rotajovem.com/index.php/actividades-nacionais79/o-que-e-que-ja-fizemos46>

6 Outcomes and impact of youth work

6.1 Target and reach

6.1.1 Target groups

There is a lack of monitoring or research about target groups reached by youth work in Portugal. Youth organisations in Portugal seem to have extremely diverse types of target groups. Interviewees all agreed that youth work should be able to target all type of young people – i.e. not only the most disadvantaged groups.

Nevertheless, it seems that youth organisations in Portugal target, in particular, early school leavers, Roma young people, young people with substance abuse problems, economically disadvantaged young people and street children.

One interviewee observed that the age group of the population reached by youth organisations has changed in the recent years, from age group 16-24 to age group 16-35 – probably due to the negative economic context.

6.1.2 Reach

There is currently no literature or data available on estimates of the number of young people reached by youth work in Portugal, nor the proportion of young people reached.

6.2 Outcomes and impact

There is a lack of research evidence about the outcomes and impact of youth work in Portugal. There is thus no evidence available on the outcomes and impact of youth work, aside from the results of small scale, ad hoc, individual projects.

The key strengths of youth workers, in comparison with other professionals, is the fact that youth workers can offer much more tailored responses to young people, enabling them to learn non-formally and providing them with a specific space to express themselves and develop their critical thinking.

6.3 SWOT

Table 6.1 Summary of key strengths and weaknesses of the youth work sector in Portugal

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The motivation of youth workers in continuing their work in precarious conditions. Their strong belief that society can benefit from youth work. ■ The role of the National Youth Council in giving a voice to youth organisations. ■ The national Programme 'Escolhas' which annually has a positive impact on youth work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In the context of the crisis, there is more competition among youth organisations to access funding opportunities. This is seen as an opportunity to improve the quality of youth work. ■ The fact that there are still young people to reach/target, especially in the context of the crisis, is seen as an opportunity to continue developing youth work.
WEAKNESSES	THREATS

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The lack of a common understanding among youth work actors of what youth work encompasses. ■ The lack of cooperation between youth organisations. ■ The lack of seriousness of some youth organisations. ■ The serious lack of consistent funding for youth work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The lack of political and financial support to youth work. ■ The lack of recognition and professionalisation of youth work. ■ The lack of monitoring of the work youth organisations deliver. ■ The future possible withdrawal of the Youth in Action programme which, in Portugal, provides important support to youth organisations.

7 Conclusions and recommendations

Recommendations to national authorities

One of the key issues related to youth work and youth workers in Portugal is the lack of political recognition and the lack of professionalisation of youth workers. At the moment, youth workers learn by doing and by attending European and international level training. As a consequence, youth organisations' actions remain for the most part invisible. Therefore, recommendations to the national authorities would be to:

- bring youth work onto the national agenda, opening a social dialogue between youth workers and the government.
- legally and politically define what youth work is.
- develop a legal status associated with youth work and minimum standards of qualifications that youth workers should possess (using tools that might be available or developed at European level).
- enhance the recognition of non-formal education.

Also, as the number of youth organisations has considerably increased in the recent years, there is the urgent need to monitor the quality of their work and how public funding is being managed. As a result, national authorities should require more transparency and financial monitoring from youth organisations.

Recommendations to the EU would revolve around

- Increasing efforts to listen to young people' voice in the European dialogue process – i.e. interviewees had the feeling that the message of the youth was not taken into account.
- Continuing to provide EU funding that gives numerous youth workers the opportunities to develop their projects and improve themselves through exchanges and training opportunities.

Recommendations to youth NGOs

There is the fear that with the increased access to EU public funds, the quality of the work delivered by youth organisations has dropped. Therefore the recommendation to youth organisations is to improve their transparency, showing that they are working in a professional manner.

In addition, in order to improve their actions, youth organisations should work in closer cooperation with each other, exchanging best practices and mobilising themselves for better political recognition.

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