

**Council of Europe Partial Agreement on Youth
Mobility through the Youth Card
and
European Youth Card Association EYCA**

invite to a seminar

**“Mobility towards Inclusion: European Youth Card
supporting young migrants & refugees”**

10th-11th of May 2016

**Samobor City
Croatia**

Introduction

The seminar on “**Mobility towards inclusion: EYC supporting young migrants and refugees**” was part of the 2016 programme of activities of the Council of Europe Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility through the Youth Card.

The Seminar was co-implemented by EYCA, an association of 39 member organisations in 36 countries. EYCA’s vision is a Europe where *all* young people are mobile and active. Today approximately 6 million European Youth Cardholders benefit from the opportunities offered by EYCA member organisations. EYCA member organisations work together to stimulate more young people to be socially, culturally, educationally and economically mobile throughout Europe by:

- delivering quality European Youth Card services, and
- contributing to better policy on youth mobility and active citizenship.

As a young person with immigrant or refugee background in Europe, one may experience mobility as a struggle for a better life, access to peaceful society and human rights, better education opportunities and eventually economic autonomy. However, studies show that young people with immigrant background have 70% higher chances to remain out of education, employment or training, i.e. socially, economically, culturally excluded from our societies. This aspect often leads to youth radicalisation, hate speech and extremist attitudes which can be prevented by providing young immigrants and refugees with access to youth services, including access to youth mobility.

Organisers of the Seminar

- Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility through the Youth Card of the Council of Europe;
- European Youth Card Association (EYCA);
- EYCA member organisation in Croatia, Croatian Youth Hostel Association.

Aims and objectives of the Seminar

Taking youth work and youth activities as one of the key elements to prevent and combat social exclusion, hate speech and extremist attitudes, the aim of the seminar was to debate and identify better opportunities for young immigrants and refugees when using the EYCA infrastructure:

- member organisations,
- the European Youth Card as a tool to increase social inclusion through mobility,
- the services and activities EYCA organisations build around the card in their respective countries.

The objectives of the seminar were:

- Understand better the phenomena of social exclusion for young people with immigrant and refugee background, the impact of that background on their lives, and policies/actions which could prevent it through offering opportunities for mobility, particularly with a focus on Western Balkans region;
- Look at the various models of best practices used in youth work to integrate young immigrants and refugees and ways to link them with the services provided by the organisations which implement the European Youth Card;

- Directly engage with young immigrants and refugees in Western Balkans region and find out their specific needs in order for EYCA member organisations to develop tailored services for using the youth card;
- Develop the strategy for fund-raising process that would provide sustainability to developing mobility services for young immigrants and refugees.

REPORT

The event offered a space to look at specific methods, services and policies that can be advanced by EYCA members and governments to achieve this goal. Participants looked at possibilities to build projects around the youth card and engage the cardholders themselves in supporting social inclusion of young refugees.

From a methodological perspective, the **seminar combined a variety of non-formal education methods**, among which we mention:

- Keynote speeches on topics related directly to the challenges that young refugee face in getting socially integrated once they arrive in European communities;
- Presentations of key stakeholders such as the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe, the National Youth Council of Croatia;
- Interactive workshop on youth work services that could be developed using the EYCA infrastructure (i.e. the network, the variety of member organisations and non-organised young cardholders) to refugees;
- Interactive workshop on youth policies and mapping the relevant actors for the topic of the seminar, respectively how EYCA and its member organisations can work with each of them, at different levels of decision-making;
- ‘World-Café’ method - used to gather all participants’ contribution on topics related to youth programmes, youth work and youth policies, as well as recommendations for EYCA members to consider in their work for social inclusion of refugees;
- Concrete examples of good practices in fostering social and economic inclusion for young refugees in their host environments.

The seminar brought together **participants with a variety of profiles**, thus the diversity of solutions, ideas and proposals enriched the event. Among attendees, we mention:

- Youth workers that deal directly with integration of young refugees in various communities of Southern Europe;
- Representatives of youth structures and youth NGOs that work at policy level;
- Government representatives of countries that received a massive influx of young refugees;
- Representatives of European organisations;
- Youth workers with a refugee background.

EYCA Board Member, Mrs. Gazela Pudar Drasko gave a welcome introduction on behalf of the organisation. She highlighted the importance of EYCA and CoE cooperation in supporting the positive aspect of mobility and in working together for youth social, economic and cultural inclusion.

Advisory Council on Youth (AC) representative, Mr. Valentin Dupouey presented the mechanisms of youth participation in the decision-making process of Council of Europe and the EU – CoE Partnership on Youth. He delivered a comprehensive presentation on the priority topics of AC and detailed on the young refugees inclusion work plan.

On behalf of the National Youth Council, Mr. Karlo Krlaj delivered a presentation on the work the organisation is doing to support the inclusion or transition of young refugees in Croatia, both at programming and policy level. In his speech, he focused on the non-formal methodology the Council is using to work with the young refugees as well as the advocacy processes to include youth refugees' needs as a priority in national and European youth policies.

Keynote Speaker: Mr. Mohammed Al-Saud - a Syrian activist, journalist and campaigner. Mohammed is a political refugee in Sweden and has been involved in the democratization process and youth work in other MENA countries especially Jordan, Tunisia and Turkey. Mohammed has been working for the past 4 years for a more free and democratic Syria, launching grassroots youth initiatives, training nonviolent activists and working in strategic planning and consultancy in media. During his speech, he offered both a personal and professional perspective on what it means to be a refugee in Europe. He gave glimpses on how to use youth work methods for advancing non-discrimination and democratic values in communities where young refugees are based. He offered the examples of methodology used at The Young Republic, mainly based on 'GAMIFICATION', to create mutual understanding, empathy and tolerance in communities where refugees live.

Good practice examples

Lunch offered by *The Taste of Home* - a local initiative and example of good practice to integrate young refugees and immigrants in the social and economic life of their communities and foster inter-cultural understanding. The entrepreneurial initiative consists of creating a catering small company where young refugees cook and deliver their traditional food, mainly African receipts. In this way, the Taste of Home company creates jobs for young refugees, encourages them to promote their culture through food and offers opportunities for young refugees to interact with their hosting communities.

Other examples of good practices offered by participants referred to:

- EYC in Greece: one Euro from every card sold goes to Doctors of the World initiative which deals with refugee issues;
- creation of Facebook groups of refugees in different communities to ease the communication;
- building initiatives on existing infrastructure: schools, churches, involving all actors of a community;
- use board games and non-formal methods in classroom in order to raise awareness on different;
- topics related to migration and intercultural understanding.

Workshop « Young immigrants and refugees – friendly public policies »: based on the above-mentioned questions, the participants of this workshop discussed how they/their organisations and institutions can contribute to create better, more inclusive youth policies that would address the new realities in Europe.

The results of the workshop include:

- Participatory process of young refugees in creating the youth public policies: do not create policies for them, but WITH them;

- Make participation in decision making process easier for young refugees by eliminating bureaucratic barriers;
- Conduct research and needs assessment of young refugees and create evidence-based youth policies for them;
- Have a realistic and feasible implementation plan;
- Policy papers should be strategic and based on facts, synchronise knowledge from civil society and public institutions;
- Policies should embed the recognition of human rights values;
- The process should be transparent and cross-sectorial;
- Young refugees should be included in all stages of the policies: creation, implementation, monitoring & evaluation.

Main challenges identified:

- From a social inclusion and participatory perspective, main challenges are: language barriers, delivering the correct, unbiased information and finding the common ground;
- The feeling of frustration of young refugees and their limited access to basic resources;
- Lack of information;
- Lack of strategy on this topic (especially for NGOs);
- Specific skills that are needed for youth workers;
- To address the situation as a complex process that should be reflected in the policies: for short- and long-term situations;
- The need to address and educate the locals;
- The bias of the mass media;
- Lack of specific curricula in schools, both for refugees and for locals.

Recommendations include:

- Creating training opportunities for youth workers to develop specific skills and foster social inclusion of young refugees. In this respect, a public budget should be allocated as part of implementing local youth policies;
- Creating a network of youth Ambassadors among the refugees to stimulate their participation in community;
- Developing training materials and resources for formal education to raise awareness and prepare young people to cope with a multicultural society;
- Including topics related to the situation of young refugees in the civic education curricula.

Workshop « Youth work and access to youth services for immigrants and refugees » – based on the above-mentioned questions, participants discussed how they could improve methodology or create programmes in support for young refugees.

Recommendations of the workshop include:

- Assess the real needs of young refugees before developing services for them;
- Be aware that it is a two-ways learning process, both for locals and for young refugees;
- Use detached youth work;
- Develop programmes in schools and in disadvantaged environments, e.g. in prisons, and ensure youth role models.

During the second day, participants focused on future possible collaboration opportunities. Using the 'World café' method, each participant discussed the following topics (results included below):

a) Projects & Activities:

- Develop a community mapping complex process
- Start exchanging information and resources on the topic among participating organisation
- Create cross-advertising campaigns between continents
- Create partnerships between countries using specific non-formal education projects
- Create opportunities for EVS programmes in refugee camps
- Co-create the fundraising campaigns

b) Future cooperation at youth policy level

- Organize youth budgets so as to develop programmes and activities that would foster social and economic inclusion of young refugees;
- Identify actors that should be involved: young refugees, youth workers, NGO representatives, EU institutions, universities and schools
- Priorities that should be addressed in youth policies: social inclusion, inter-cultural dialogue, volunteering.
- Establish measurable indicators and realistic action-plans.

c) How to effectively use the European Youth Card for social inclusion of young refugees

- Create a discussion forum where we share the initiatives taken
- Give the card for free to young refugees and immigrants
- Develop a campaign among EYCA member organisations to get actively involved in aid for refugees
- Donate a % sales of the card for projects that support young refugees
- Organise fund-raising events related to already planned EYCA events
- Create raising awareness campaigns on this topic among the 6 million card-holders
- Organise youth-friendly events that promote inter-cultural learning (e.g. music festivals)
- Use the EYC to facilitate access for free to basic services for young refugees, such as transportation, job searching services, etc.

Evaluation

EYCA distributed an evaluation form among participants to gather feedback on content and logistics of the seminar. Participants were requested to evaluate a series aspects by using a mark from 1 – not useful/important/ good to 5 – very useful /important / well.

On average, participants rated *the relevance of the topic and the input brought by keynote speaker and good practices models* with grade 4 out of 5, thus appreciating the added value that the event had for their daily (youth) work.

The *workshops* were rated, on average, with grade 4 out 5 for their usefulness and outcomes, thus participants appreciating both the methodology and the potential of following-up by implementing the recommendations resulted.

From a *logistical perspective*, more than half of the participants mentioned they were very satisfied with the venue, accommodation, transportation and responsiveness of the organisers.

List of participants

1. Aleksandar MANOJLOVSKI, Polaris Group, MK
2. Aleksandra KNEŽEVIĆ, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Serbia
3. Alexandros STARIDAS, The Youth and Lifelong Learning Foundation, Greece
4. Ana COSTA GARCIA, Lisbon Youth Centre / Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth
5. Annelijn RÜSING, Cultureel Jongeren Paspoort (CJP), The Netherlands
6. Benedetta VASSALLO, United Societies of Balkans NGO
7. Emina Buznikic MIRTA, Centre for Peace Studies, Croatia
8. Gazela PUDAR DRASKO, Evropski Omladinski centar, Serbia
9. Helena HEIDEMANN, MTÜ Noored Ühiskonna Heaks (NGO Youth for Society)
10. Jan PELOZA, Zavod Mobin, Slovenia
11. Janez PLEVNIK, Zavod Mobin, Slovenia
12. Jonida LAMAJ, Youth Act center, Albania
13. Karlo KRLAJ, The National Youth Council of Croatia
14. Katerina SYRROU, The Youth and Lifelong Learning Foundation, Greece
15. Krsto VUKADINOVIC Directorate for Youth and Sports, Montenegro
16. Liliya ELENKOVA EURO<26 Bulgaria / NYCA Bulgaria
17. Mohammed ALSAUD, The Young Republic
18. Morana MAKOVEC, Youth Department, Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, Croatia
19. Murat AKSOY, Civil Life Association, Turkey
20. Nurkhan BABAYEV, Azerbaijan Student Youth Organisation's Union
21. Sandra PIRES, Instituto Português do Desporto e Juventude (IPDJ), Portugal
22. Sarah SPITERI Agenzija zahazagh, Malta
23. Tiziano SBARAGLIA, CTS, Italy
24. Valentin DUPOEY, CCJ/Erasmus Student Network
25. Yugoslav RADOVIC, Center for youth education, Montenegro
26. Corina PIRVULESCU, EYCA Office
27. Cristina BANITA, EYCA Office
28. Manel SANCHEZ GARCIA, EYCA Director

**Programme of the Seminar
 “Mobility towards Inclusion: EYC supporting young migrants and refugees”
 10-11 May 2016, in Samobor, Croatia**

DAY 1 Monday 9 May 2016	
<i>ARRIVAL</i>	
Evening	Arrival of participants and a Welcome dinner at 20.00
DAY 2 Tuesday 10 May 2016	
<i>WELCOME</i>	
09.30–10.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Croatian Government Representative • Advisory Council on Youth, Council of Europe • Mr. Manel Sanchez, EYCA Director
<i>KEY NOTE</i>	
10.00–10.45	Sebastian Abdallah, University of Amsterdam Karlo Krlaj, National Youth Council of Croatia
10.45 – 11.00	Coffee break
<i>BEST PRACTICE</i>	
11.00–13.00	EYCA Best practice examples of using the European Youth Card as a tool to integrate young people of immigrant and refugee background Questions and answers
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
<i>FIELD VISIT</i>	
14.00– 18.00	Visit to a refugee/youth centre and activities with young people
18.00	Free time
20.00	Dinner
DAY 3 Tuesday 10 May 2016	
<i>OUTCOMES</i>	
9.30-10.30	Recap of the previous day: challenges and opportunities identified after the visit at the refugee centre
10.30-10.45	Coffee break
10.45-13:00	Towards a stronger cooperation for the inclusion of young immigrants and refugees through mobility: action plan and next steps
13:00	Evaluation and Closing of the seminar
13.30	Lunch