

ENTER! Access to Social Rights for Young People from Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods



Project Report 2009-2012

by Ingrid Ramberg

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**Enter!
Access to Social Rights
for Young People from
Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods**

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Access to Social Rights for Young People from Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods

A project of the youth sector of the Council of Europe for the development of youth work and youth policy responses to exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods (2009–2012)

PROJECT REPORT

Second edition

By Ingrid Ramberg

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Note on the second edition

In the second edition, we have updated the text of the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights. The Recommendation was adopted on 19 January 2015.

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Preface

Enter! was a multi-disciplinary project of the Council of Europe's youth sector which aimed to develop responses to exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and was implemented between 2009–2012.

Enter! is also an ongoing project for promoting access to social rights for all young people.

There is a continuum between the first and the second phase of Enter!, determined first and foremost by the realities that young people face in Europe today. In 2009, Enter! was introduced to act and reflect on situations of exclusion, discrimination and violence faced by young people, notably in multicultural neighbourhoods. This was, in itself, a slow-motion reaction to the growing feeling of powerlessness experienced by young people and youth workers confronted with the apparent resignation of public authorities to the denial of access to social rights to populations of stigmatised neighbourhoods. The situation across Europe in this regard has not changed; in many cases it has become worse, at least in terms of young people's concerns. Most social indicators point to a degradation in access to quality education and training, and the younger generations are enduring the consequences of the multiple social and economic crisis in a particularly hard manner. Furthermore, despite a seemingly growing awareness by politicians to the damage of these situations to the fabric of European societies, in many cases this awareness is not visible either in policies or in programmes.

This is not the main reason why Enter! now addresses social rights for all young people, but it is certainly symptomatic. Situations which seemed contained to young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods are progressively extending to other young people who fear for their future in societies where social mobility and inclusion for all are unaffordable at best, and undesirable at worst. The problem is definitely not with neighbourhoods, but with society as a whole.

Resilience is a value associated with young people. It transpires in the projects of the Enter! youth workers and in the words of young people taking part in the Enter! youth meeting. It is also resilience that makes young people occupy streets and squares and call for different policies and politics, determined to be heard and to be taken seriously. Resilience is also an indispensable ingredient for youth work and for youth workers. The commitment of the Council of Europe to promote social human rights for all young people remains unshaken. As this report reminds us, however, it is not possible to ignore what ought to be the role of national and local policies, hence the need for greater attention to the involvement of local authorities and the concern of national youth policies to work with actors – governmental and non-governmental. This has to go hand in hand with the awareness that long-term solutions do not depend solely or mainly on youth policies.

‘Complex’ was how Enter! was sometimes spontaneously described. This complexity did not concern only the necessary interaction between actors and policies to address social realities that are anything but simple; it also referred to the wide range of activities intended to bring together youth policy, youth research and youth work perspectives to improve access to social rights. In addition, there was also the complexity of the social realities and problems experienced by young people across the member states, and which went beyond the multicultural neighbourhoods which were at the origin of the project. This complexity is well reflected in the contents of the policy recommendation which emanated from the project: there are no simple solutions to complex situations, but this is also no excuse for not acting. Simple but clear youth work interventions make a real impact on the lives of young people and their communities.

The task of Ingrid Ramberg in reporting about a project in which the results and outcomes are always bound to be insufficient in view of the scale of the problems was no less difficult. This is a report of reports, because each activity in Enter! was thoroughly documented and evaluated. To extract and synthesise the various kinds of input in the project was essential in order to secure the next phase of Enter! This report succeeds this in a fully comprehensive and readable manner. In doing so, it fulfils an essential function of the project: to learn from reality and from experience, and, hopefully, to support other youth work and youth policy actors to further access to all social rights for all young people.

Rui Gomes

Head of Education and Training,
Youth Department of the Council of Europe

Young people must never be interpreted and confined to being only a receiving party: they are full citizens, with tremendous capacity to contribute positively to their societies.

Introduction

We don't need fish. Please give us a fishing rod and we will catch the fish ourselves.
Sulkhan Chargeishvili, Georgia, participant in the Enter! Youth Meeting in Strasbourg, September 2011.

The unhindered and full access of young people to rights is an essential element of a culture of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. This “right to rights” does not need to be vindicated by any instrumental value; it is not something that has to pay off to be justified. Young people, like all other groups or categories in society, have rights, human and social rights that must be recognised, defended and developed. It's that simple. Young people are as human as everyone else.

Apart from representing intrinsic values and therefore being self-explanatory and self-contained, it is perfectly clear that the acknowledgement and fulfilment of young people's rights would indeed have positive implications for the whole of society. Giving the young generation its rightful role as co-creator of a sustainable future for all is a matter of utmost importance. Young people must never be interpreted and confined to being only a receiving party: they are full citizens, with tremendous capacity to contribute positively to their societies. In a comparison between generations, young people are more likely to be action-orientated, expecting things to actually change, and actually happen. On average, they are also more open to new ways of thinking, exploring new technologies and setting new goals.

It is in this dynamic interplay between give and take, between claiming rights and contributing to sustainability for all, that the dialogue and activities of the Enter! project took place.

Allow us and the future generations to fully enjoy our social rights! We are committed to making a positive change in our communities; we expect the Council of Europe and its member states to be equally committed to improving the access to social rights for all young people ... (From the Message to the Council of Europe by the participants of the Enter! Youth Meeting in Strasbourg, September 2011.)

On the lookout for innovative youth policies

When the Ministers responsible for youth met in Saint Petersburg in September 2012 on the occasion of the 9th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for youth, their topic for discussion was “innovative youth policies in Europe”.

The overall objective was to secure the access to rights for all young people, but what is it then that makes a youth policy innovative? To this writer, the following characteristics appear to be core requisites for a policy to count as innovative. It must be

- ▶ grounded in experience,
- ▶ rooted in reality,
- ▶ conducive to dialogue and development, and it must
- ▶ enable actors to promote and advocate its ideas, methods and learning outcomes.

The youth sector of the Council of Europe meets these qualifications in many important ways. It has a longstanding tradition when it comes to ensuring that the perspectives and the voices of young people be heard and listened to: 2012 marks the 40th anniversary of the permanent establishment of the first Council of Europe youth structures, the European Youth Centre Strasbourg and the European Youth Foundation. A fundamental feature of the youth sector is also its co-management system which, through its joint decision-making process between youth organisations and governments, ensures that programmes are grounded in the realities of young Europeans and national decision makers.

The Youth Department serves as an engine and a hub where ideas and methodologies can be developed, discussed and disseminated. For many years it has, furthermore, been a very concrete meeting place for individuals and institutions involved in, touched by and committed to issues related to youth.

This report revolves around a three-year project, Enter!, initiated in 2009 and lasting until spring 2012. The project was launched against the background of the current situation in Europe with the deteriorating social situation of young people in ageing societies affected by economic crises. Enter!, therefore, focused primarily on the access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The project period of Enter! coincided with the 50th anniversary of the European Social Charter (first adopted in 1961, and revised in 1996). The Charter lays down very specifically what the elements of a decent life are. For young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods (the particular focus group of the Enter! project) having the Revised Social Charter as a point of reference can help to set a goal, or a standard: this is what we are entitled to.

However, setting a goal is something quite apart from reaching it. The Enter! project had methodological development high on its agenda. It was a project about young people living in precarious conditions, as well as a project which dealt with the precariousness of youth work conditions in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Strengthening the functioning of youth work through a Long-Term Training Course for youth workers was a core activity of the project. One element in this process was also to promote the recognition of youth work as an important factor for change.

Enter! the project

Running for a period of three years, 2009 to 2012, the Enter! project involved over 500 people, saw the creation of over 30 projects reaching out to 16,000 young people, and engaged a large number of NGOs and public institutions in deep and far-reaching exchanges on the situation of young people across Europe.

The particular focus was on the access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The overall mission was to take young people seriously, and to recognise their rights as well as their willingness and ability to participate and contribute to society.

Enter! The project name in itself constitutes an invitation opening up a multitude of hopes, ambitions and expectations, as well as a mix of responsibilities and needs, rights and obligations.

Enter! The project name in itself constitutes an invitation opening up a multitude of hopes, ambitions and expectations, as well as a mix of responsibilities and needs, rights and obligations. In a European context of diverse and changing realities, the Enter! project ventured at being both pragmatic and highflying, combining short-term specific activities at the local level with long-term strategic work at the European policy level, opening an arena for young people, youth leaders, and representatives of international organisations to explore more deeply the serious predicaments of our time, as well as some possible remedies.

Activities of the Enter! project were characterised by the long-established interdisciplinary and participatory-based methodology of the youth sector of the Council of Europe, relying on its non-formal education methodology. For the multiplying effects of the project the Long-Term Training Course (LTTTC) was of particular importance. The LTTTC constituted the framework for local projects carried out in neighbourhoods across 25 European countries and was an important connecting point for exchange and learning around the thematic fields of the project.

A particular feature of the Enter! project was that it aimed at contributing to the development of European youth policy. The project was based on concrete experiences of the youth workers and young people involved, and was informed by the outcomes of their shared learning processes. Through the Long-Term Training Course the Enter! project sought to apply the perspectives of social rights to specific, local projects, developed by the participants and supported within the framework of the LTTTC. Depending on local needs and resources, different dimensions of the social rights spectrum were focused on. Some activities aimed at awareness raising, while others were more action-orientated. Apart from being activities in their own right, the many different undertakings of the Enter! project also informed a larger policy discussion that in spring 2012 resulted in a Draft Recommendation from the Joint Council on Youth. This Recommendation was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in January 2015.

The world as it is now: background and context

The Enter! project was born out of pressing needs. With climate change, political and economic instability, extremism and recession, prospects for many young people are bleak. Gaps keep widening, globally as well as in Europe, between the haves and the have-nots, between those with an abundance of material goods, self-confidence and hope, and those with less.

Since 2008 the current economic crisis has hit many countries around the world. In Europe differences are increasing between countries and segments of populations, something that is manifest in high, rising and diverse unemployment figures. In May 2012 the average youth (i.e. under 25) unemployment rate among the EU27 countries was 22.7%. In Greece and Spain more than 50% of young people were unemployed. In Germany, Austria and the Netherlands levels were below 10% (Eurostat news release, 2 July 2012). While youth unemployment gives reasons for everyone to worry, it is clear that certain regions and categories are harder hit. In a number of countries we have experienced both demonstrations against companies and regimes and an occupy movement pointing to the role and responsibility of banks and multinational corporations, along with resignation and loss of hope in the future.

During the same period diversity has been challenged in aggressive and/or antagonistic ways in a number of countries. In 2009 Switzerland banned the building of minarets. In October 2010 Germany's Angela Merkel announced that the attempts to build a multicultural society in Germany had "utterly failed". In 2011 the Netherlands became the third country after France and Belgium to ban the wearing of nikkab in public places. There are estimates that in France less than 2,000 women wear the nikkab, in the Netherlands maybe 100 women. Forces at work here include both scapegoating during times of hardship and the conscious use of the crisis for ideological purposes. This is what Alana Lentin and Gavan Titley, authors behind *The Crisis of Multiculturalism* (2011), find when digging more deeply into "the insistent sense of multiculturalism as a unitary idea, philosophy, 'failed experiment'" (Lentin & Titley 2011, p. 2). Beyond the lacking empirical foundation, statements about the failed experiment allow that "complex social problems and political-economic disjunctures can be blamed on 'migrants', and the solution, in a neoliberal era, located in an increased individual responsibility to become compatible and integrate" (ibid. p. 3).

Nevertheless, there are also positive things to bring back to mind. The year 2011 saw the birth of the Arab spring with young people as a driving force. The Nobel Peace Prize 2011 was awarded to three women advocating human and social rights publicly, (as the motivation reads, "for their non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women's rights to full participation in peace-building work"). One of the laureates was Tawakkol Karman, a young woman from Yemen.

In this age of increased insecurity and little predictability, many young people without steady jobs and permanent housing keep oscillating between autonomy and dependence, knowing that their right to a decent life is far from guaranteed. Not all young people share the same conditions; some are more vulnerable than others, some experience more hardship than others. However, from all different

backgrounds there are nevertheless many who commit themselves to an active engagement for our shared future, as the Enter! project clearly demonstrates. They want to be co-creators of their own future.

The ambiguity of the setting into which Enter! was launched was pointedly summarised in the “Final Declaration of the 6th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth” (2002). Ten years have passed since then, but this description was still very much up to date when quoted by Gavan Titley in 2008, in a background document for *The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020*:

Despite the differences from country to country, certain general trends in the situation of young people can be identified:

- ▶ Young people experience longer and more complex transitions to adult life. They stay longer in full-time education and training and they stay longer in the parental home;
- ▶ In many European countries, youth unemployment rates are higher than general unemployment rates and regional inequalities in this respect are still important. Young people are over-represented in marginal and precarious employment;
- ▶ Throughout Europe, young people’s economic reliance on families and social networks is growing. Inequalities of educational opportunity and outcome do not decrease;
- ▶ Insecurity as regards the challenges in contemporary society, in particular globalisation, the development of biotechnologies and the protection of environment, is increasingly felt by young Europeans.

In this context however,

- ▶ A strong tendency towards freedom of cultural expression, creativity and individualism paves the way for young people today, who identify themselves as cultural producers and carriers of innovation and new forms of expression;
- ▶ Young people are highly positive towards democracy, although they are often critical towards the way institutions work;
- ▶ Civic engagement is the form of participation that attracts the widest support and participation of youth in Europe, although membership in associations varies widely from country to country;
- ▶ Although a minority of young Europeans display intolerant social and xenophobic attitudes, the great majority have open and positive attitudes towards cultural ethnic and social diversity in Europe.

It is obvious that the current situation has not emerged over night. For an intergovernmental organisation such as the Council of Europe, it is necessary to see behind the clouds of smoke to evaluate the sources of the fire. The core idea and methodology behind Enter! may not be new; the Youth Department has always relied on non-formal education and participative methods. Nevertheless, Enter! represents a systematic response, aiming to alert stakeholders at all levels, from local to national and international, to the topic of a just and sustainable future, thus securing social rights for all.

Youth rights and youth policy: characteristics and motivations

One very clear reason behind the focus on the situation of young people is the present European context. As the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe states:

Due to the demographic and cultural changes that have taken place in Europe over the last few years, young people face increasing difficulties in accessing and exercising their rights. Their autonomy is increasingly threatened as a consequence of economic, geographical and socio-cultural inequalities. Youth policies are also particularly vulnerable to economic recession, as they are often relegated to a secondary place in governmental priorities and resource allocation. (Recommendation 1978(2011))

This deteriorating social situation is, however, not the only factor determining the situation of youth. There are also the more general characteristics of what it means to be young in modern society.

The transition from childhood to adult life is, by definition, a complicated journey. The human child's dependence on parents and significant others is longer and more all-embracing than that of any other creature. The world of grown-ups plays a crucial role both during the many years of total dependence, as well as during the years of growing independence. One of the features characterising modern society is precisely the clashes that occur when teenagers revolt against the parents' generation. However, this breaking away is far more complicated than meets the eye. Firstly, there are the practical complications outlined above, young people being unable to secure their material independence, with jobs and housing. Equally important are the existential dimensions, the significance of being a human among humans. If young people were to remain forever independent in an absolute sense, there would be no society anymore.

Adult life in a society respectful of human and social rights is characterised by a balance between independence and dependence. "No man is an island" as 16th century poet and priest John Donne once wrote: we all need one another both for our mere survival and for our well-being as human beings. This is also why it is so detrimental to individuals as well as to society when young people's transition to becoming responsible citizens ends up in dead-end streets, where young people cannot find their place, and they feel excluded and unwanted.

Being excluded or attacked is even more detrimental to young people of minority or migrant background. "There must be another reason," is a telling comment by a young person interviewed about experiencing everyday racism in Sweden (Motsieloa, 2003). It is very difficult not to take on guilt, not to seek a logic that rids the perpetrator of responsibility. Social psychologist Marianna Kosic comments further on the effects of this lack of correspondence:

Failure to recognise the other's self-identification may imprison that person in forced and restricted ways of being that do not fit his or her self-definition, enhancing tensions and diminishing general well-being, due to not feeling accepted and recognised. (Kosic 2011, p. 163)

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) notes in its annual report (2011) that multiple discrimination is rarely monitored. The report refers primarily to gender matters, but age, too, is clearly relevant for a resembling investigation.

The issue is therefore not about granting special, or different rights to young people. It is about acknowledging their fundamental rights to *receive from* and *contribute to* their societies. As the Final Declaration of the 8th Conference of European Ministers responsible for youth (2008), states:

The ministers express their determination to pursue the objective of ensuring young people's access to quality education and training, to decent work and living conditions, as well as developing the conditions to enable them to contribute to the development of society.

The underlying philosophy of mainstreaming is clearly visible in many Council of Europe documents. One telling example here is the suggestion to consider lowering the voting age (Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Recommendation 1978(2011)). The same document also voices a word of warning against actions that risk becoming counter-productive:

Young people should not, however, be relegated into youth parliamentary structures to the detriment of their participation in core decision-making procedures. (Recommendation 1978(2011))

Also in the context of the European Union there is at present a resembling focus on youth issues. In 2009 the European Commission adopted a new EU strategy for youth policy for the coming decade. Entitled 'Youth – investing and empowering', the new strategy acknowledges the fact that (1) young people are one of the most vulnerable groups in society, especially in the current economic and financial crisis, and (2) in our ageing society, young people are a precious resource (European Commission, Press release, April 2009).

If this state of affairs is not acted upon it will get worse. As Filipa Menezes warns in her report from the project, "If vulnerabilities develop into more chronic needs, they become harder and more expensive to tackle" (Menezes 2011, p. 6).

Her report is focused on precisely youth work for disadvantaged neighbourhoods and stresses the importance of early intervention and participative programmes. They achieve better results, she concludes, since they avoid exclusion, rather than trying to repair it. Filipa Menezes also notices how youth policy frequently underestimates the psychological or emotional sides of exclusion.

Inclusion is taken as a matter of finding work, a house, but the resilience and happiness of young people is being neglected. The "informal" aspects of exclusions play a huge part in discrimination, including among peer groups, namely by bullying. The "traumas" of having experienced exclusion are not necessarily sorted out only with the access to infra-structures, since they leave strong effects on young people's self-esteem and motivation, which are essential for the involvement in projects like the ones performed under Enter!. (Ibid. p. 6)

The aims and contents of the report

The purpose of this report is to collect and capitalise the experiences and learning outcomes of the entire Enter! project. A very specific motivation is the

expected continuation of the project, the embarking on an Enter! project 2012– 2014. Systematising the proposals directed towards this next round of work is therefore of special importance.

As the author of this report I have participated in some of the Enter! activities, namely the Preparatory Seminar in 2009, the Seminar on Youth Policy Approaches and Responses in 2010, and the Evaluation Meeting in 2012. My main source of information has been the project documentation in all its variety. In addition to this, I have benefited from informal exchanges with participants and a continuous and supporting exchange with the Secretariat. My perspective is informed by my longstanding experience in the field of education as well as from my current profession as the editor in chief at the Multicultural Centre in Botkyrka, Sweden. My own previous writing specialises mainly within the field of migration, diversity and youth.

Throughout its three years of operation, Enter! initiated a number of different activities, diverse in scope, duration and outcome. Many of these activities have been individually documented, some also evaluated; others were prepared for and presented to the Evaluation Meeting (Strasbourg, April 2012). This meeting was not documented independently, which is why the outcome of it is included and reported in detail in the current report.

A number of texts and reports that in themselves present, discuss and draw conclusions about core dimensions of the project have been included in significant detail. One effect of this is some overlapping of arguments – like looking into the same room through different windows. What is gained is that it avoids a synthesising that risks going astray from the original contexts of discussions.

The outcomes of Enter! are manifold. They have taken place in the minds of people, and in the interaction between people. They have influenced groups and activities across Europe. They have manifested themselves in projects, activities, seminars and meetings. It is my hope that a substantial part of this richness can be mirrored in the chapters that follow.

There are also fruits of the project that are in themselves written products. There is the Message to the Council of Europe from the Youth Meeting that gathered in Strasbourg in September 2011. There is also the Draft Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, into which a lot of experience, wishes and needs were fed from different Enter! meetings and activities. Both these documents have their given positions in this report and are included in detail. The report is arranged according to the following logic.

- ▶ **Section I** consists of a presentation of the whole of the project by the Youth Department, including also comments on its results and recommendations, as presented in the Enter! Final Report, November 2011.
- ▶ **Section II**, on the project's written outcomes, contains the Message to the Council of Europe from the participants of the Enter! Youth Meeting held in Strasbourg, 14 to 18 September 2011.
- ▶ The Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights.

- ▶ In **Section III**, on the LTTC comes first the Recommendations of the Final Evaluation of the Long-Term Training Course, conducted by Yael Ohana, consultant and external evaluator of the LTTC.
- ▶ This is followed by an account of the Long-Term Training Course as experienced by one of its participants, Biljana Vasilevska.
- ▶ In **Section IV** there are various evaluations and recommendations of the Enter! project: firstly, a brief introduction to the Evaluation Meeting.
- ▶ This is followed by the youth sector of the Council of Europe and social inclusion of young people: Getting real and getting back to basics. Reflection Paper for the Enter! Project Evaluation Meeting, prepared by Yael Ohana.
- ▶ Subsequently, the working group reports from the Evaluation Meeting in Strasbourg, 2 to 4 April 2012, reflecting on different thematic aspects of the project, its past and future.
- ▶ This section also includes a chapter on further resources – exemplifying support mechanisms.
- ▶ The final chapter in this section includes a summary of the learning and recommendations, shortlisting the main points of input from all stakeholders and activities.
- ▶ **Section V** is a summary of the essence and the lessons of the Enter! project in view of its continuation. The first part looks at the project's key concepts.
- ▶ This is followed by Conclusions: the Enter! legacy in view of its continuation.
- ▶ Lastly, in **Section VI**, there is an Appendix with a list of references.

SECTION I
THE PROJECT

Youth workers and youth organisations are often at the forefront of projects designed to ease tensions, provide alternative non-formal education or leisure time activities, counter discrimination and exclusion and, generally, to promote participation and citizenship. The responses, however, are rarely sufficient and sustainable. At the European level, few possibilities exist for sharing experiences and learning from each other.

CHAPTER 1

Enter! A presentation of the project by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe

Enter! was an inter-sectorial project of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe aiming to develop youth work and youth policy responses to exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It was realised with the financial support of the Flemish Agency of Foreign Affairs. The Enter! Final report (by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, November 2011) describes the project as follows.

Introduction and background of the project

At times of economic and social crisis, the feelings of powerlessness and anxiety about the future risk deepening local tensions and underlying conflicts. Young people are often at the centre of these tensions because they are more vulnerable, more insecure and because they are more directly affected by the uncertainties regarding the real possibility of their being able to participate in society, contribute to its development and develop their autonomy.

In the 47 member states of the Council of Europe realities are very different from country to country and from city to city; the responses of local and national authorities are also diverse. Rarely, however, are the root causes adequately addressed; at best, policy responses seem to address epiphenomena (e.g. youth violence or delinquency) at times of critical events or media focus.

The problems faced by many young people in these situations are often complex and multi-dimensional, sometimes resulting in a spiral, or a vicious circle, of discrimination, violence and exclusion. Responses, therefore, need to be inter-sectorial and consider the whole social context – the neighbourhood. This complexity, however, cannot justify lack of action or response. On the contrary, it should stimulate co-operation, creativity and determination in order to prevent escalation of conflicts and, essentially, to make sure that the social (human) rights of the young people concerned are not denied or violated.

Youth workers and youth organisations are often at the forefront of projects designed to ease tensions, provide alternative non-formal education or leisure time activities, counter discrimination and exclusion and, generally, to promote participation and citizenship. The responses, however, are rarely sufficient and sustainable. At the European level, few possibilities exist for sharing experiences and learning from each other.

The youth policy of the Council of Europe aims at "...providing young people, i.e. girls and boys, young women and men, with equal opportunities and experience which enable them to develop knowledge, skills and competencies to play a full part in all aspects of society" (Committee of Ministers Resolution CM/Res(2008)23 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe).

The Enter! project was set up as a response to the growing concern and attention of the European Steering Group on Youth (CDEJ) and the Advisory Council on Youth (AC), the governmental and non-governmental partners of the youth sector of the Council of Europe to matters of social cohesion and inclusion of young people.

The Enter! project aims at developing youth policy responses to exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

With this understanding, youth policies must also consider and approach young people and their issues not only as "problems to be solved – the so-called 'fire brigade approach' – but holistically across policy domains and through clear objectives that can be assessed" (Guidelines for the implementation of the international reviews of national youth policies, 2003). Youth policy ought also to respect the role and "agency of young people while recognising the specific challenges and obstacles they face according to their position and possibilities".

These approaches are well reflected in the institutionalised forms of youth participation in the Council of Europe, including the original form of co-management applying to the youth sector, which applies also to the educational and training activities as ways of practising citizenship and learning democracy through youth projects.

The recognition of non-formal education as a tool for social integration and autonomy of young people – alongside and complementary to non-formal education systems – supports these values in as far as it recognises the need to adapt to the specific situations of concrete young people and in recognising, for example, social competences acquired through youth and social work and voluntary projects.

Human rights are the inalienable rights which guarantee the respect of fundamental dignity of the individual. Within the Council Europe, the European Convention on Human Rights guarantees civil and political human rights; social rights are guaranteed by the European Social Charter and the Revised European Social Charter. Thus, social rights are an integral part of the human rights, and include the right to employment, housing, health, education, social protection and to non-discrimination. The level of social and economic development have a direct impact on the access to these social rights. Social rights are also interdependent: not being able to access one social right has a direct effect on accessing other social rights.

Realities of exclusion, precariousness, violence and discrimination to which young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods are exposed are a threat to their dignity and a violation of human rights.

By focusing on social human rights, and access of young people to them, Enter! adopts a human rights-based approach to social exclusion, discrimination and violence. This includes the awareness of social rights, as defined notably in the European Social Charter of the Council of Europe, as part of practice of human rights education in youth work. Awareness of the equality in dignity, however, is not enough. Young people should also feel enabled and motivated to take action for their own human rights and also for the rights of others.

Human rights education is also the basis for the conflict transformation approach that youth projects in Enter! seek to adopt. The ability to understand and deal with conflict in a constructive manner and the understanding of the root causes of social conflict go together with the understanding that violence of any form is an abuse of human rights and results in the violation of the rights of others.

Intercultural learning, as the educational approach supporting the objectives of intercultural dialogue – living together with diversity in dignity – is the third educational basis informing Enter! and its activities.

By focusing on social human rights, and access of young people to them, Enter! adopts a human rights-based approach to social exclusion, discrimination and violence.

Aims and objectives

Enter! aimed at developing youth policy responses to exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The objectives of the project have been defined as:

- ▶ To address situations of conflict and exclusion of young people living in multicultural environments through non-formal education and youth work projects
- ▶ To develop conceptual and practical means of translating intercultural dialogue into the realities of youth work
- ▶ To explore and identify means for innovative youth work projects with young people at risk of exclusion and violence
- ▶ To initiate, support and evaluate up to 30 innovative pilot projects with a high multiplier effect across Europe
- ▶ To address situations of exclusion, conflict and violence affecting young people through partnerships with youth work, youth policy and local authorities
- ▶ To consolidate results of the All Different – All Equal European youth campaign in relation to diversity, participation and human rights.

Enter! combined different types of activities and youth interventions which, while rooted in the realities of young people and based on youth work practice, sought to influence youth policies in Europe from the local to the national level.

The project was also planned and managed in ways that allowed building on the connection between different experiences, partners and knowledge. Developed through open consultations with partners, the use of responsive evaluation and of the potential provided by the Internet, Enter! was participatory and open.

The most visible part of the project – the Enter! Long-Term Training Course for youth workers (LTTC) – was complemented by and linked to seminars and activities in which social and youth policy approaches were shared and discussed. In its final stage, the project focused on developing and promoting youth policy guidelines and recommendations. Young people, coming mainly from the projects implemented by the participants of the Enter! Long-Term Training Course for youth workers, were directly involved in the development of the recommendations and guidelines.

Enter! project at a glance

2009 Preparatory Seminar

- First meeting – Reference and Support Group
- Enter! LTTC for youth workers – Launching
- Enter! LTTC for youth workers – Introductory seminar
- Enter! LTTC for youth workers – E-learning and project preparation

2010 Second meeting – Reference and Support Group

- Enter! LTTC for youth workers – Consolidation seminar
- Seminar: Gender Equality in Youth Projects
- Seminar: Youth Information and Counselling
- Seminar: New Ways of Participation in Multicultural Youth Work
- Conference: Social Mobility of Young People
- Enter! LTTC for youth workers – project implementation and e-learning
- Seminar: Access to Social Rights of Young People – Youth Policy Approaches and Responses

2011 Enter! LTTC for youth workers – Evaluation seminar

- Experts group: Youth Policy recommendations (2 meetings)
- Evaluation meeting of the Enter! LTTC for youth workers
- Enter! Youth Meeting
- Enter Dignityland – game on social rights

2012 Final Evaluation of the Enter! project and follow-up seminar

Most of the partners in the project were active within the Reference and Support Group of the project. This group supported the development, monitoring and evaluation of the project and its links with other projects and programmes. The group met twice and its members also provided input on specific activities. It was composed of the following partners:

- ▶ Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
- ▶ Directorate General of Social Cohesion
- ▶ Advisory Council on Youth
- ▶ European Steering Committee on Youth
- ▶ SALTO Participation Resource Centre
- ▶ Youth Workers
- ▶ European Youth Forum
- ▶ European Network of Youth Researchers

Enter! was managed by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe – Education and Training Division. It involves also other services of the Youth Department: the European Youth Centres in Budapest and in Strasbourg, the European Youth Foundation and the programme of Intergovernmental Co-operation.

Activities implemented

A preparatory seminar was held at the beginning of March 2009 in Budapest to set a clearer framework to the project, review the current needs and issues related to the project aims, take stock of already existing initiatives, define the overall approach, and develop an operational model for the planning and implementation. Quality criteria for the project were identified and an informal network of potential partners for the project was established.

The central component of the project was the Long-Term Training Course that prepared and supported youth workers and youth leaders working in disadvantaged neighbourhoods with young people who face difficulties in exercising their social human rights. Through the course, the participants developed their skills and competences in setting up projects for integration and sharing them with colleagues across Europe.

The participants of the course were not passive learners. During the course they also developed concrete projects with young people, based on active participation, intercultural learning and human rights education, and addressed specific challenges in their access to social rights. These projects provided the practical basis for learning about how to promote social rights of young people and how best to use youth research for youth policy action. They were to be implemented in co-operation with local or regional authorities.

The LTTC was spread over the three years of the project and was structured around three residential training seminars at the European Youth Centres. In between the seminars, the participants worked on the development and implementation of

their project while being mentored by trainers. An e-learning platform provided deeper insights into specific issues and allowed participants to co-operate and share experiences.

The experience gained from participants' projects served as a basis for the development of policy recommendations on the access of young people to social rights.

The LTTTC was evaluated by an external evaluator, who also provided input to the team in charge of its implementation.

A seminar on gender equality in youth projects, held in Strasbourg in June 2010, deepened the work done by the Youth Department on gender matters and gender-based violence, with a special focus on gender equality in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The seminar made several proposals for inclusion of a gender-equality dimension in Enter! and in the projects set up by the LTTTC participants.

A consultative meeting on youth information and counselling, held in Budapest in June 2010, discussed ways to improve access to information for young people and youth workers in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, including the role of young people in producing and providing information. Links were made with the LTTTC through some of the participants' projects; very interesting examples of successful synergies between youth work and youth information were provided, amongst others, by ERYICA (the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency) and by JES, a project on recognition of young people's competences in Antwerp, Brussels and Gent (Belgium).

New ways of participation in multicultural youth work were shared and discussed at a seminar in Budapest in June 2010. The programme and recommendation focused on the participation of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and how to support unrecognised forms of participation while working towards equality in the access to existing structures and processes of youth participation.

A joint conference was held together with the Directorate General of Social Cohesion of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in July 2010 within its project on Social Mobility. The conference focused on the social mobility of young people and the factors that support and hinder it, including the role of youth work and non-formal education. The conference highlighted the relationship between social inclusion and social mobility and called for more research about the role of youth work in supporting social mobility of young people, social mobility being a clear indicator of access to and exercise of one's social rights.

A seminar on access of young people to social rights: youth policy approaches and responses was held at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg from 30 November to 4 December 2010, aiming at identifying, reviewing and prioritising main issues and proposals to be taken up for a policy recommendation by the Committee of Ministers to the member states and other areas of youth policy on social inclusion and access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The seminar produced specific recommendations on the access to social rights in order to contribute to the work on drafting guidelines and policy recommendations resulting from the Enter! project.

The evaluation meeting of the Enter! Long-Term Training Course took place in Strasbourg on 29 and 30 August 2011 with the aim of reflecting on what had been learnt from the implementation of the course and to draw recommendations for the future.

Two expert meetings on Policy Recommendations on the Access to Social Rights for Young People from Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods were organised. The first one, which took place before the Enter! Youth Meeting, aimed at preparing a draft recommendation to be discussed during the Enter! Youth Meeting. The second seminar was an opportunity to review proposals and comments coming from the participants of the Enter! Youth Meeting.

The Enter! Youth Meeting gathered 180 young people, youth workers, youth researchers, policy makers and representatives from the project partners with the aim of providing them with the opportunity and the space to voice their opinions and share their experiences about access to social rights in Europe as a contribution to the development of youth policies in the Council of Europe. The meeting had the following objectives:

- ▶ to share realities and collect experiences of young people affected by the issues of violence, exclusion and discrimination in disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- ▶ to engage young people in dialogue with the Council of Europe and discuss together the issue of access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- ▶ to create opportunities for the participants to learn about social rights in Europe by associating the event with the 50th anniversary of the European Social Charter
- ▶ to take stock of the experience of young people involved in the projects run within the Enter! Long-Term Training Course as a contribution to the planning of the second phase of the Enter! project
- ▶ to discuss priority areas of intervention of youth policy on access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- ▶ to provide input to draft policy recommendations for the Committee of Ministers on access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

During the meeting participants shared their realities on access to social rights and presented ideas on how to address the challenges they face in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It was a unique opportunity for young people, coming from local projects implemented in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, to meet and contribute to the development of youth policies. They drafted the message to the Council of Europe and worked on recommendations on access to social rights for all young people. A film produced during the meeting is available online and gives an overview of what happened during the meeting, together with messages young people wanted to pass on to the Council of Europe. The meeting was organised within the 50th anniversary of the European Social Charter.

The “Enter Dignityland” game on social rights with young people was developed and published in 2012. This card game aims at raising awareness on social rights

and reflects on the challenges young people face in access to social rights. It can be used as an educational tool in youth work or other educational projects.

The project was supported by an Internet site – www.coe.int/enter and by an e-learning platform <http://act-hre.coe.int>.

The project was concluded by an evaluation and follow-up seminar in Strasbourg from 2 to 4 April 2012, where the evaluators of the project, partners and stakeholders were able to draw lessons learned and make proposals for furthering the work on social inclusion of young people.

Results achieved

The project turned out to be a great success for all participants and stakeholders involved. Part of the success is rooted in the conviction of many partners that something must be done about access to social rights and about countering exclusion, violence and discrimination affecting young people.

The evaluation report of the LTTC, which combines the results from evaluations done by the participants, trainers and representatives of the stakeholders clearly shows that both the aim and the objectives of the LTTC were met. While it seems obvious that the greatest merit of Enter! is that it existed, the findings of the external evaluator of the LTTC and the evaluation of the various activities coincide in indicating other results being achieved at various levels:

Inter-sectorial co-operation. Co-operation with other sectors in the Council of Europe – Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, DG III, human rights – was fruitful and positive. Initial difficulties started to be overcome and an almost shared ownership for the project began. This is very promising to further co-operation in the work on access to social rights for young people. The same can be said about the various units and divisions in the Youth Department (European Youth Foundation, Intergovernmental co-operation, etc.).

Adoption of a human rights-based approach to social inclusion. Youth workers and youth leaders took seriously the project and its approaches in terms of how quality criteria were being applied in their projects, including co-operation with local authorities and providing a leading role for young people. The projects were real and were run in order to have an impact on young people's lives. Furthermore, there is a serious commitment to looking at social exclusion from a rights-based approach; this is new for many partners and participants in the project. Within the context of the LTTC, 33 projects have been initiated. Of these, 26 projects have been completed or are on-going at the moment of writing this report, in 2011. The approximate reach of these is more than 16,000 people.

Co-operation with local authorities. Although the reality is very different from project to project in the Long-Term Training Course, there is a growing awareness of the importance of developing useful alliances and partnerships with local authorities. This is very different from one place to another, but the cases where it worked are definitely an inspiration for some of the youth workers, their organisations and for local authorities.

Interest in non-formal education and youth work. The project has generated curiosity and in some cases real interest in investing in improving the recognition of non-formal education and youth work, particularly from the research and academic spheres.

Networking and partnerships. One of the most obvious and successful dimensions of the project is its capacity to attract interest and co-operation from other partners active in social rights, conflict transformation, peace building or youth work. This was clearly visible in the list of applicants and attendees in the seminars and in the relationships established with other partners, notably those involved in the Youth in Action programme, such as SALTO Participation and SALTO Inclusion and some national agencies.

Potential for youth policy mainstreaming. Youth policy being by nature cross-sectorial, the four seminars held in June and July 2010 on specific areas of youth policy – from gender equality to social mobility – suggest strong results in bringing into the realm of youth policy experiences from other sectors of work (e.g. youth information and counselling) and, at the same time, a serious interest from other partners in taking up social exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people within their projects.

Quality development in youth work. The project as such, and the projects of the LTTC participants, was run according to a set of quality criteria set up by the Reference and Support Group in co-ordination with the external evaluator. The application of these criteria has raised the profile of the work being carried out by youth workers within the framework of the course and, in this respect should lead to their application in other future projects dealing with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Innovative monitoring and support system. The setting of the Reference and Support Group constitutes an innovation for the youth sector of the Council of Europe and a serious attempt to involve, in the definition and monitoring of the project, the three main professional sectors concerned with youth matters: youth workers, youth researchers and public youth officials. The functioning of the Reference and Support Group played an important role in the shared ownership of the project and keeping its coherence, and in allowing the different activities to influence each other.

Generating resources for youth projects combating exclusion and violence. The interest in the project and in the projects of the LTTC has also resulted in financial resources being committed to youth work against exclusion, violence and discrimination. This is due to the quality aspects brought by the Council of Europe and the framework of Enter! which serve as quality assurance. So far 17 projects have received financial support from the European Youth Foundation. All the projects, through the input of the LTTC, can be said to include some dimension of innovation for the context where they were or are being run.

Recommendations for follow-up

In the report from the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, finalised in November 2011, there was also a list of recommendations on follow-up issues of what the Enter! project had achieved to date. This list, from the Youth Department, was later followed by other complementary compilations of recommendations, summarised from different perspectives. (Further recommendations from other stakeholder see p. 105)

1. To complete the evaluation of the Enter! project on access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.
2. To map the results of the project.
3. To involve other bodies (inside and outside the Council of Europe) in the process of consultation on the draft recommendation and guidelines on access to social rights for young people.
4. To present the recommendation and guidelines on access to social rights for young people to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.
5. To follow up on the recommendation and promote it in the member states.
6. To organise a consultative meeting on the continuation of the Enter! project.
7. To plan another Enter! LTTC for youth workers taking into account the recommendations from the evaluation, for example:
 - ▶ to run more in-depth social analysis of the target group
 - ▶ to retain the aim and revise objectives
 - ▶ to revise the duration of the course making e-learning phases between the residential seminars shorter
 - ▶ to plan regional mentoring meetings
 - ▶ to look more closely at the profiles of participants and take them into account during recruitment
 - ▶ to reflect on and propose solutions on how to assess and certify the LTTC
 - ▶ to plan enough time for developing participants' project management skills
8. To link more closely the future Enter! LTTC for youth workers and the participants' projects with the European Youth Foundation.
9. To associate local and regional authorities more closely with the overall project and with the participants' projects.
10. To promote the recognition of youth work and social rights at a local level through youth policy development in the pilot countries.
11. To disseminate and promote the 'Enter Dignityland' game on social rights for young people.
12. To disseminate the results of the Enter! project within the member states through the Ministerial Conference in 2012.
13. To advocate for social rights within youth policy of the Council of Europe.

SECTION II
THE OUTCOMES

We are committed to making a positive change in our communities; we expect the Council of Europe and its member states to be equally committed to improving the access to social rights for all young people [...] Exclusion, violence and discrimination are not inevitable.

CHAPTER 2

Message to the Council of Europe by the participants of the Enter! Youth meeting, Strasbourg, September 2011

This message was developed by the participants of the Enter! Youth Meeting that was held in the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg from 14 to 18 September 2011. The meeting gathered 180 young people, youth workers, youth researchers and policy makers to share their experiences and voice their opinions and expectations about access to social rights as a contribution to the development of the youth policy in the Council of Europe.

We, the participants of the Enter! Youth Meeting, want to share our experiences and views about the access to social rights for all young people. Sharing similar experiences of growing up in Europe, many of us in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, we want to highlight the difficulties young people have in accessing their social rights.

All young people in Europe today should grow up and live under the protection of the Council of Europe's human rights system. The 50th anniversary of the European Social Charter is an opportunity to make it more effective for the future generations. As active and committed young people, we are concerned about the living conditions and prospects for many young people across Europe today, especially those whose human rights are most threatened or denied, such as young people living in segregated and disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

United by similar needs and expectations caused by the stage of life we are in, young people form a group in society that needs specific political attention. This is not always recognised and we are seldom seen as political partners in decision making that concerns our situation. Instead, we are often portrayed in negative terms, seen as the problem rather than part of the solution. This is wrong!

We are united also by the experiences of failed policies and more importantly by our daily local actions; we need your help in support through the implementation of tangible and long-term measures for and by young people. Allow us and the future generations to fully enjoy our social rights! Recognise us, for we're the solution.

We are committed to making a positive change in our communities; we expect the Council of Europe and its member states to be equally committed to improving the access to social rights for all young people through:

1. Implementing sustainable youth policies at local and national level that are based on social rights
2. Raising the attention of member states to the challenges faced by young people in accessing their social rights and to call upon them to seriously address them
3. Regular and consistent monitoring of the obstacles young people face in accessing their human rights at local, national and European level, notably through national youth policy reviews, and involving non-governmental youth organisations
4. Realising and valuing the potential and creativity of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, including in the artistic, social, and cultural fields
5. Setting up and supporting local youth councils and youth advisory mechanisms as examples of good practice and ensuring democratic participation as well as the involvement of local authorities
6. Facilitating closer communication and co-operation between decision makers and young people
7. Providing human rights education through formal and non-formal education, including accessible and decentralised information about the rights in the European Social Charter
8. Securing the right to free education, through the provision of quality education and vocational training for all – regardless of legal status –, advice and counselling for young people and the democratic governance of schools
9. Ensuring that all schools are a supportive environment for learning, and are free from violence
10. Providing quality and affordable public services, especially in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, including free health care, affordable housing, and access to water and sanitation
11. Paying special attention to gender-based discrimination, particularly the obstacles to the equal participation of young women
12. Effectively addressing discrimination, stigma and prejudices that young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods face, including the combined effects of multiple discriminations
13. Adopting specific measures to secure the rights of young people with disabilities and particularly vulnerable groups such as Roma, the homeless, offenders and those in care institutions
14. Paying particular attention to ensuring the social rights of young undocumented migrants, asylum seekers, internal displaced people and refugees
15. Launching a Europe-wide youth campaign against all forms of discrimination and racism

16. Promoting and creating opportunities for intercultural and interreligious dialogue and exchange in public spaces such as schools, and community, cultural, leisure and sports centres
17. Addressing the causes of exclusion and violence through prevention, not punishment and repression
18. Recognising the role of youth work and of young people in promoting social rights and providing accessible funding and support for their projects through simplified procedures
19. Developing specific programmes for employment and entrepreneurship of young people
20. Promoting and supporting youth mobility programmes addressed to young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Youth meetings such as the one we have attended at the European Youth Centre are exceptional learning opportunities. The outcomes of the Enter! project need to be consolidated and followed up. More young people in Europe should benefit from projects and meetings like this one.

Exclusion, violence and discrimination are not inevitable.

Note for chapter 3

In the second edition, we have updated the text of the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights. The Recommendation was adopted on 19 January 2015. For more information and updates about the recommendation, please check regularly the website www.coe.int/enter

CHAPTER 3

Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 January 2015
at the 1217th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

Ministers' Deputies

CM Documents

CM/Rec(2015)3 1217th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies 21 January 2015

8 Youth and sport

8.2 European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ), Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ)
and Joint Council of Youth (CMJ)

a. Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member states
on access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods

The present recommendation on the access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods is stemming from the “Enter!” project on access to social rights for all young people, which is currently implemented by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe as one of its flagship projects.

The “Enter!” project was set up in response to the growing concern and attention of the European Steering Group on Youth (CDEJ) and the Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ), the governmental and non-governmental partners of the youth sector of the Council of Europe, to matters of social cohesion and inclusion of young people. It aims at promoting innovative youth work practices and youth policy standards in order to address social exclusion and discrimination of young people, and to improve their access to social rights. It is a cross-sectoral project involving several other sectors of

the Council of Europe, which is combining the training of youth workers through long-term training courses, logistical and financial support to local projects by the European Youth Foundation and thematic seminars the results of which are used for the preparation of policy guidelines, including the present draft recommendation.

A Reference and Support Group advises the Secretariat and acts as a resource pool to the project's various activities. It is also a forum in which various stakeholders meet and where inter-sectoral cooperation is arranged in a rather effective manner.

The draft recommendation was examined by the Joint Council on Youth (CMJ) at its 26th meeting held in Budapest on 28-30 March 2012 and, at the request of the Joint Council, finalised by the Bureaus of the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) and Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ) at their joint meeting on 23-24 May 2012.

The Committee of Ministers, in accordance with Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity between its members, in particular by promoting a youth policy based on common principles;

Having regard to the European Social Charter, opened for signature in 1961 (ETS No. 35) and revised in 1996 (ETS No. 163), (hereafter "the European Social Charter"), in particular its Article 1 (The right to work), Article 7 (The right of children and young persons to protection), Article 9 (The right to vocational guidance), Article 10 (The right to vocational training), Article 11 (The right to protection of health), Article 15 (The rights of persons with disabilities to independence, social integration and participation in the life of the community), Article 17 (The right of children and young persons to social, legal and economic protection), Article 19 (The rights of migrant workers and their families to protection and assistance), Article 21 (The right to information and consultation), Article 30 (The right to protection against poverty and social exclusion) and Article 31 (The right to housing), as well as the relevant conclusions and decisions of the European Committee of Social Rights and the reports of the Governmental Committee;

Recalling Resolution CM/Res(2008)23 of the Committee of Ministers on the youth policy of the Council of Europe;

Recalling the following recommendations of the Committee of Ministers to the member States:

- ▶ Recommendation Rec(2003)8 on the promotion and recognition of non-formal education/learning of young people;
- ▶ Recommendation Rec(2003)19 on improving access to social rights;
- ▶ Recommendation Rec(2004)13 on the participation of young people in local and regional life;
- ▶ Recommendation Rec(2006)5 on the Council of Europe Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015;
- ▶ Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)13 on gender mainstreaming in education;
- ▶ Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 on the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education;

- ▶ Recommendation CM/Rec(2011)12 on children’s rights and social services friendly to children and families;
- ▶ Recommendation CM/Rec(2011)14 on the participation of persons with disabilities in political and public life;

Recalling Parliamentary Assembly Recommendations 1437 (2000) on “Non-formal education” and 1978 (2011) on “Towards a European framework convention on youth rights” as well as the replies to them adopted by the Committee of Ministers;

Recalling the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe’s Revised European Charter on the Participation of young people in Local and Regional life and Resolution 319 (2010) on the integration of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;

Having further regard to:

- ▶ the final Declaration adopted by the 5th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth (Bucharest, 27-29 April 1998), in particular to the references pertaining to youth participation and active citizenship, non-formal education, integration into society and social cohesion;
- ▶ the final Declaration adopted by the 6th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth (Thessaloniki, 7-9 November 2002), in particular to the references pertaining to the access of young people, notably those from disadvantaged groups, to information which concerns them and to encourage the development of national youth policies based on general common principles and involving young people and their organisations as much as possible in the drafting of these policies;
- ▶ the Declaration and Action Plan adopted at the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Warsaw, 16-17 May 2005) which stated that the Council of Europe would further develop its unique position in the youth field;
- ▶ the Declaration “Making gender equality a reality” of May 2009, whereby the Committee of Ministers urged member States to commit themselves fully to bridging the gap between de jure and de facto equality through effective gender mainstreaming;
- ▶ the Strasbourg Declaration on Roma adopted by the Committee of Ministers (CM(2010)133) on 20 October 2010 in which the member States of the Council of Europe agreed to adopt and implement anti-discrimination legislation, in particular in the fields of employment, access to justice and the provision of goods and services, including access to housing and key public services, such as health care and education;
- ▶ the Declaration adopted at the 8th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth and the Agenda 2020 – Programme for the future of the Council of Europe youth policy;
- ▶ the General Policy Recommendation No. 13 (CRI(2011)37) of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) on combating anti-Gypsyism and discrimination against Roma;

Bearing in mind the work carried out by the Council of Europe youth sector to promote human rights, social inclusion and the active participation of young people, particularly through the “Enter!” project, implemented since 2009;

Underlining that access to quality education, secure employment, decent living conditions, adequate transport, health care, technology and opportunities for social, cultural and economic participation is a prerequisite for the inclusion and active citizenship of all young people;

Aware that in their transition to full autonomy and adulthood, young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, especially those living in poverty, are more vulnerable to all kinds of risks, including poor physical and mental health, substance abuse, self-harm, violence, discrimination and exclusion;

Recognising that many young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods are motivated to contribute to the improvement of their own situations and those of their communities; and recognising the positive role they and their organisations can play for social cohesion;

Mindful of ongoing demographic changes throughout Europe and of migration issues also involving youth;

Preoccupied by the continued deterioration of the social situation and life chances of young people in the context of the European economic crisis,

Recommends that the governments of the member States develop and implement sustainable, evidence-based public policies that take into consideration the specific situations and needs of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. These policies should aim at preventing and eradicating the poverty, discrimination, violence and exclusion faced by such young people through efforts to:

- a. improve the living conditions of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods by providing accessible, affordable and youth-friendly public services and other measures in the fields of education and training, employment and occupation, health, housing, information and counselling, sports, leisure and culture;
- b. implement concrete measures to work towards abolition of the segregation and isolation that negatively affects disadvantaged neighbourhoods irrespective of their location;
- c. promote meaningful opportunities and programmes for consultation and participation of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods in all matters related to the planning and management of their living environment;
- d. implement concrete measures to enable all young people to exercise their active role in society without discrimination;
- e. recognise the role of non-formal education and youth work, and those who deliver them, notably youth workers and youth organisations, for the prevention of discrimination, violence and exclusion and the promotion of active citizenship in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and provide support for their development;

- f. develop gender-sensitive approaches to the elaboration of youth policies in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and provide support for the capacity building and equal participation of young women and young men;

Recommends that the governments of the member States take into consideration the measures proposed in the appendix to this recommendation when formulating and implementing policies and programmes and encourage local and regional authorities to do the same;

Recommends that authorities responsible for youth in the member States ensure that this recommendation, including its appendix, is translated and disseminated as widely as possible, in particular among young people using youth-friendly means of communication;

4. Asks the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to bring this recommendation to the attention of the governments of the States Parties to the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 18) that are not member States of the Council of Europe.

Appendix to Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3

Suggested measures on access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods

This appendix proposes a number of measures which can be taken by local, regional or national authorities within their respective competences and with due regard for national realities. They have been developed on the basis of “on the ground” youth work experiences through the “Enter!” project, which has been directed by the youth sector of the Council of Europe with inter-sectoral partners since 2009. They are grounded in the realities of the lives of the young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and experiences reported by youth workers, policy makers, researchers and all stakeholders of the youth sector of the Council of Europe. They offer a framework within which responsible governmental authorities, from national to local levels, can conceptualise their efforts to support young people who encounter challenges in accessing their social rights, especially those from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

While helpful for all young people for accessing social rights, these proposals can have a greater impact on young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods as they are most likely to experience violence, exclusion and discrimination.

Member States’ authorities responsible for youth are encouraged to disseminate and implement this recommendation and its proposals, including incorporating them into national youth and social policies, informing local and regional authorities about them and supporting them in implementation efforts and initiating cross-sectoral and inter-agency partnerships on access of young people to social rights. Representatives of young people, especially of those most concerned, should be involved in discussion and decision-making processes related to the recommendation.

The respective authorities are encouraged to engage in following up, recording and evaluating the progress of youth and social policy initiatives resulting from this recommendation, taking an inter-disciplinary approach, by gathering evidence of youth needs from as many relevant sources as possible, by involving the broadest

possible range of social partners and by ensuring that those who are most concerned (such as young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, youth work and youth organisations supporting them) are included as equal partners in such efforts. The realities of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, so often determined by multiple discrimination, disenfranchisement and marginalisation, must be at the centre of concern throughout.

A. Improving the living conditions of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

i. Education and training

Young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods experience a wide range of barriers to their full enjoyment of the right to education and challenges to the fulfilment of their educational potential, ranging from lack of physical access to educational institutions through poor quality of education to educational failure. The following measures help young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods when accessing their right to education:

- ▶ investing in education and training for disadvantaged neighbourhoods from pre-school through the tertiary education;
- ▶ implementing gender-sensitive and other forms of beneficiary sensitive budgeting to promote equal access to and enjoyment of educational resources;
- ▶ updating educational curricula to make them more relevant to the needs of young people for their employability and the challenges facing young people entering the labour market;
- ▶ making vocational training more attractive and relevant to young people who are not used to academic methods;
- ▶ improving the status, recognition and resources of vocational guidance in the school system;
- ▶ providing additional support (to purchase books, clothes, meals, etc.) to those for whom the costs associated with participation in education above and beyond tuition are unaffordable to ensure that access to education is not dependent on financial resources of individuals and their families;
- ▶ creating mechanisms through which schools and educational staff can assess and identify learning and social problems and cultural or any other barriers to the successful completion of education as early as possible and implement specific measures to prevent students from dropping out of school;
- ▶ making available quality “second chance education” opportunities to young people who have left education early, including non-formal education and mobility programmes for increasing self-confidence and entrepreneurship and work-based training for the acquisition of skills and qualifications;
- ▶ promoting the development of non-formal educational partnerships between schools, youth workers and independent youth organisations as part of a holistic lifelong learning strategy at the centre of which is placed the learners’ needs and their active participation;

- ▶ including education for democratic citizenship and human rights education in school curricula, particularly at primary and lower-secondary levels, and creating partnerships between teachers and youth workers for mutual support in their delivery;
- ▶ implementing specific measures through mediation activities, among other things, to make schools safe and free from bullying as well as all manifestations of prejudice, discrimination, segregation, sexual harassment and all forms of violence;
- ▶ promoting comprehensive health, nutrition and sexual education and information for young people in order to support them in making informed decisions;
- ▶ developing participatory school communities through mechanisms for the inclusion of student-elected representatives in decision-making processes in schools;
- ▶ adapting teacher-training programmes to the challenges of working with young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods through the inclusion of new contents (such as social issues, social identity and concerns of young people) and new approaches (intercultural, gender equality and mediation, for example), and by developing partnerships between professionals close to young people in the neighbourhoods (such as youth workers) and relevant training programmes;
- ▶ promoting and facilitating mobility for learners between different learning sectors, in other words, between school and non-formal education/learning programmes, through specific measures, including the possible recognition and certification of learning acquired through non-formal and informal education/learning;
- ▶ taking into account the special circumstances and barriers which complicate access to education experienced by young people whose families lead a nomadic lifestyle, are engaged in temporary migration (for example, labour migration) or who have refugee or asylum-seeker status in the development of education strategies and policies.

ii. Employment and occupation

Young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods face serious challenges in their transitions to the working life including a lack of qualifications, poor self-confidence, stigma or discrimination, and once in the labour market, often experience precarious working conditions. These challenges are exacerbated by the fact that the neighbourhoods in which they live are often peripheral, isolated and segregated. The following measures are effective in facilitating the transition of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to sustainable and secure employment:

- ▶ adapting apprenticeship, training and vocational programmes so that they are inclusive, linked to employment opportunities and have clearly defined paths of progression;
- ▶ developing all efforts (in particular through legislation) to ensure that apprenticeships are adequately remunerated, so as to be a viable option for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;

- ▶ ensuring (in particular through legislation) that internships are a secure and legal form of employment and a viable entry point into the labour market for young people starting out. Involving employers in the process can ensure better results;
- ▶ improving existing and developing new approaches to youth information and career counselling, taking into account the specific barriers experienced by young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods in searching for and acquiring vocational training opportunities, apprenticeships and later employment;
- ▶ facilitating access to work-based learning opportunities in both the public and private sectors for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, including through partnerships between relevant social partners;
- ▶ encouraging responsible authorities (local authorities, educational institutions, etc.) to work in partnership with other social partners (local businesses, large companies, trade unions, chambers of commerce) to develop work experience programmes for young people who have difficulties in acquiring such experience without additional support;
- ▶ studying the feasibility of creating and implementing a “youth guarantee”, including necessary measures to ensure that no young person is out of education, training or employment for longer than four months;
- ▶ recognising experiences gained through non-formal education and community work as relevant work experience for the labour market. This requires the exchange of good practice among relevant social partners (education and training providers, employers and their associations, youth organisations, youth work providers, etc.);
- ▶ investing in improving public access to information technologies through existing public services (youth centres, public libraries, media centres, youth information and counselling centres, etc.);
- ▶ including career counselling and support measures for job-seeking youth in the programmes of public youth work and community work providers and formal education establishments (workshops on seeking employment information, writing a CV, interview techniques, etc.);
- ▶ facilitating young people’s access to micro-finance and co-operative financing schemes, thereby improving conditions for youth entrepreneurship and social enterprise;
- ▶ proposing incentives, through relevant tax breaks and other forms of financial support, to private-sector stakeholders, especially local businesses, to provide quality employment;
- ▶ investing in affordable public childcare facilities that can be made compatible with working hours to facilitate young parents’ access to the labour market;
- ▶ providing incentives to public and private stakeholders for implementing measures sensitive to the challenges experienced by young families in harmonising their work and family lives (parental leave schemes for fathers, flexible working arrangements, childcare facilities, etc.);

- ▶ taking into account the specific barriers to entering employment that young people experience, when developing employment strategies and policies.

iii. Housing

Young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods experience serious barriers to independent living, including the acquisition of decent, affordable and secure housing. Actively discriminated against on the private market and often unable to access social housing, they can risk homelessness or poor living conditions that are detrimental to their health and well-being and prevent them from holding down a place in education or employment. The following measures have proven effective in helping young people to access housing:

- ▶ encouraging responsible authorities to implement measures to improve the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to adequate affordable housing;
- ▶ actively considering the special housing needs of the most vulnerable groups, including young people at risk of homelessness or already homeless, young families, young people, especially those belonging to minorities and victims of domestic violence, in housing strategy planning and implementation by considering the possibility of involving them in decision making;
- ▶ simplifying processes for acquiring housing assistance through intensive co-ordination between public housing and other relevant social services;
- ▶ facilitating the dissemination of up-to-date information on available housing and housing assistance through relevant youth-friendly means of communication and taking advantage of existing public infrastructure such as youth information centres and youth work locations;
- ▶ encouraging and helping the competent authorities to develop “mixed housing markets” offering the full range and diversity of housing forms from social housing through private rentals, adapted to the needs of young people beginning an independent life;
- ▶ supporting responsible authorities in rolling out “mixed housing schemes” so as to ensure the internal diversity of local communities, and prevent segregation and ghettoisation;
- ▶ putting in place mechanisms to ensure that minimum standards of safety, health and hygiene are respected across the mixed housing market (private and public), including the implementation of measures for bringing non-respect of such standards to the attention of relevant authorities (spot inspections, complaint mechanisms) in co-operation with consumer protection or other relevant institutions. Information about such standards and mechanisms should be widely disseminated using youth-friendly means of communication;
- ▶ providing “halting sites”, with access to clean water, electricity and proper sanitation, for use by Traveller communities, complemented by relevant mediation support should such initiatives meet with community resistance.

iv. Health

Young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods are more vulnerable to specific health risks and are less likely to be able to access and make use of quality health services for prevention and care. The following approaches have proven to work well in supporting young people who are experiencing difficulties in exercising their right to health:

- ▶ facilitating access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to free quality health care through youth-friendly health and social services and health information through youth-friendly means of communication (especially Internet-based social media);
- ▶ paying special attention to the health needs of especially vulnerable groups of young people experiencing multiple forms of exclusion (including young Roma and migrant women, young people suffering from poor mental health, young people with disabilities, young people with HIV, etc.);
- ▶ addressing cultural, attitudinal or other barriers hindering young people's access, including language barriers between patients and medical professionals, through appropriate measures (for instance provision of interpretation, cultural mediation, etc.), as necessary;
- ▶ investing in the development and implementation of youth health programmes and crisis counselling services through educational, awareness-raising and support programmes on healthy and responsible lifestyles (addressing in particular any substance misuse, addiction, sexual and reproductive health, early, unplanned or crisis pregnancy, mental health, sport, nutrition, family and work perspectives and overall well-being) through existing public youth work, education and community institutions. Youth workers, social workers and nurses could be effectively engaged in promoting and updating such programmes in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- ▶ creating programmes to encourage medical practitioners, nurses and community health workers to update their competence in areas such as intercultural aspects of patient-medical professional relations, gender sensitivity, reluctance to discuss medical issues, youth-friendly approaches in health care, etc., through a variety of measures (including lifelong learning opportunities, exchange of practice and expertise with other professionals working in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, etc.);
- ▶ elaborating health strategies taking into account the needs of the young people concerned, by involving young people and youth workers from disadvantaged neighbourhoods directly in development and decision-making processes;
- ▶ promoting sport as a way of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and for the prevention of future health problems, inside and outside school, with measures to ensure full and equal access to public sports amenities, including investing in their provision or improvement.

v. Information and counselling

Young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods have limited access to information and counselling because of their location and lack of resources. However,

they are among those who need such services the most. The following approaches improve access to information and counselling for these young people:

- ▶ investing in improving and, where they do not exist, considering the feasibility of creating comprehensive and fully accessible youth information systems that provide up-to-date and youth-friendly information on, inter alia, social rights, civic and social participation and international mobility, taking full advantage of new information and communication technologies (ICTs);
- ▶ making training on intercultural and gender-sensitivity available to counselling staff and other professionals working directly with young people;
- ▶ making youth-friendly information and counselling services available through existing community infrastructure in the neighbourhood (health centres, youth centres, schools, youth organisations, etc.);
- ▶ implementing measures to follow up and assure the quality and effectiveness of youth information and counselling services on the basis of recognised standards.

vi. Sport, leisure and culture

Sport, leisure and culture have become increasingly commodity goods across Europe, access to which often requires substantial financial outlay that young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods cannot afford. Other barriers, such as limited awareness, a poor level of information, physical distance, or poor accessibility, further challenge young people's access to sport, leisure and culture, which paradoxically are recognised as excellent channels for participation and active citizenship. The following measures have proven useful in improving access to culture, leisure and sport among young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods:

- ▶ equipping disadvantaged neighbourhoods with fully accessible and affordable sports and leisure facilities and improving those that already exist with the full participation of the communities concerned about the choice;
- ▶ integrating community development and participation strategies so as to make the best possible use of existing provisions (youth work, education, community services, information and counselling services, cultural institutions, etc.);
- ▶ recognising the potential of both sport and culture to promote active youth participation and citizenship, social cohesion, inclusion and well-being, and giving these more prominence in community development schemes;
- ▶ recognising the specific challenges young people can face when trying to participate in sport, youth work and other activities outside of their families' control and implementing gender and culturally sensitive measures to ensure the access to and inclusion of young people of both sexes in such activities;
- ▶ improving the accessibility and affordability of cultural opportunities including theatre, concerts or exhibitions for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- ▶ providing young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods guidance and opportunities to actively contribute to the improvement of their communities through effective use of their talents and cultural creativity.

B. Breaking down segregation and the promotion of social inclusion

Young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods often experience isolation and segregation, whether by intent or by neglect. This serves to further stigmatise them and exacerbate the discrimination they experience when they venture outside their neighbourhoods, often resulting in a vicious cycle of exclusion and a sense of being trapped. The following measures are effective in promoting social inclusion as they address the causes and symptoms of segregation and isolation:

- ▶ acknowledging that all young people should have equal access to public amenities. Where access to essential public services (including post offices, community centres, youth work centres, employment services, and information and communication technologies) cannot be ensured by the responsible authorities, investing in convenient and affordable transport services;
- ▶ reaching out to the most isolated and disenfranchised young people in peripheral and segregated disadvantaged communities with information, non-formal education and other opportunities for participation, through for example, “mobile youth work”;
- ▶ addressing the specific needs of segregated and isolated disadvantaged communities through co-operation across sectors and levels of government and developing community improvement strategies, with the direct involvement of young people from the communities concerned.

C. Promoting meaningful participation opportunities in the planning and management of their living environment

In political terms, young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods are among the most disenfranchised groups in the wider community, even in decision-making processes that have a direct impact on their lives. Participation in such processes is an important mechanism for the exercise of citizenship. Consulting young people on matters related to urban planning and the management of their living environment provides evidence of real needs and concerns that should be addressed through policy. The following measures contribute to improving the consultation and participation of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods in decision making about their living environment and other issues of concern to them and the wider community:

- ▶ developing inclusive and transparent processes which allow young people and their representatives to participate in the planning of their living environment (at urban, community and neighbourhood level) and in which the needs of young people, the accessibility of essential public services and community amenities are at the centre of planning duly recognised. Examples of good practice include the establishment, at local and regional level, for example, of youth consultative bodies such as municipal youth councils, youth parliaments or forums, allowing all young people, whether or not they belong to organisations or associations, to express their opinions and present proposals

on the formulation and implementation of policies affecting them, as well as the principles of co-management in place in the youth sector of the Council of Europe;

- ▶ using locations and media that are popular with young people (social media, youth organisations and centres, sport clubs, public spaces they frequent) for the purpose of informing and consulting young people on planning processes relevant to them;
- ▶ providing youth organisations active in disadvantaged neighbourhoods with sustainable support and resources for reaching out to the least enfranchised young people and for facilitating their participation in relevant debates.

D. Ensuring that all young people are fully able to exercise their role as active citizens without discrimination

Discrimination further exacerbates the barriers to active citizenship that many young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods experience because of social prejudice, isolation, etc. Measures, through youth work, which promote cohesion and positive relations between people from different backgrounds, have been effective in preventing and redressing discrimination. The following measures can encourage the active citizenship of young people:

- ▶ actively supporting initiatives of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and their organisations that aim at community cohesion, mutual understanding between community residents, combating negative attitudes towards people from different social and cultural backgrounds, reducing stigma and prejudice, and the promotion of access to social rights, human rights, inclusion, etc., through a variety of measures including the provision of funding, project development and management support, facilities and/or capacity building;
- ▶ supporting projects that promote inclusive accessibility, for example, by making information and activities available to community members in traditional and alternative formats;
- ▶ increasing investment in youth work (including mobile youth work), community amenities and youth organisations that engage young people in activities promoting active citizenship, social cohesion, intercultural dialogue and other activities that bring together young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods with their wider peer group, from minority and majority communities;
- ▶ implementing measures to ensure accessibility to all buildings open to the public for young people with disabilities in accordance with the principles of Universal Design accepted as the standard for accessibility in the built environment;
- ▶ acknowledging the specific vulnerability of specific groups of young people in relation to all sorts of discrimination and stigmatisation and develop, where appropriate, specific measures to address this problem.

E. Recognising and supporting non-formal education, youth work, youth organisation and youth workers in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

Non-formal education/learning and youth work have again and again proven effective in helping young people to find approaches and solutions to overcome the disadvantage they experience and to become active and constructive contributors to the development of their communities and society as a whole. Yet, youth work and non-formal education/learning as well as their providers, youth organisations and more generally youth workers tend to suffer from poor social and political recognition, and are often considered low-status professions. The following measures increase the value of youth work and non-formal education/learning and contribute to community development across Europe:

- ▶ encouraging responsible authorities to recognise and value youth work as an important measure in supporting community cohesion, through a variety of measures including consultation of youth work professionals in strategy and policy development and implementation processes concerning disadvantaged young people; providing funding for youth workers and youth organisations, in particular simplifying funding procedures; facilitating lifelong learning among youth workers; encouraging the exchange of expertise between youth workers and other professionals working with young people; improving working conditions for and the status of youth work, etc.;
- ▶ supporting youth work professionals and youth organisations that provide non-formal education/learning in the promotion of best practices, through a variety of measures, including relevant legislative and policy measures;
- ▶ taking measures to ensure that the environment is empowering youth organisations that are active in youth work and non-formal education/learning in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, including through the provision of sustainable funding and other forms of structural support.

F. Improving gender equality of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

Young women living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods tend to be more vulnerable to risks of social exclusion and, therefore, require additional support for the exercise of their social rights. The following measures contribute effectively to promoting gender equality and improving the access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods:

- ▶ encouraging young parents (especially young mothers) from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to continue or return to education or training, or to pursue employment through a variety of measures including appropriate benefit systems and childcare support services;
- ▶ providing specific support measures for young women and men living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods to voice issues of concern to them in the public sphere, through dedicated platforms for their participation in youth organisations political life and in society;

- ▶ supporting young people's leadership in the community through a variety of measures, including supporting gender-specific youth organisations, co-educational youth work and gender-sensitive boys/young men's initiatives.

G. Preventing all forms of violence in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

Disadvantaged neighbourhoods are often plagued by violence, inside and outside the home, in which young people are both victims and perpetrators. The very diverse forms of violence that can be observed create a climate of fear and further fuel prejudice and discrimination against young people from such neighbourhoods. The following approaches can help prevent and stop violence:

- ▶ creating platforms for dialogue between the various responsible authorities at local, regional and national levels (including police, youth justice and probation services, health and social services and youth workers) and young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and their representatives (youth organisations, youth work providers, etc.) to identify causes of and strategies for effectively combating all forms of violence in the neighbourhood;
- ▶ creating and implementing formal and non-formal education programmes that address bullying, sexual harassment, gender-based violence, and all other forms of violence prevalent in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- ▶ making available support measures for the recovery process of young victims of violence and disseminating information widely about these measures in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, using youth-friendly means of communication;
- ▶ encouraging young victims to report gender-based violence to the police, while ensuring that they have access to services to ensure their safety, including the availability of places in alternative accommodation for them and their children, relevant counselling and financial support;
- ▶ implementing gender-sensitive human rights training for police, legal professionals and representatives of other responsible authorities involved in addressing violence in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- ▶ encouraging police officers to protect young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods from violence including through clear and effective sanctions for not doing so;
- ▶ facilitating initiatives that aim at supporting the recovery process of perpetrators of violence, the social re-integration of young offenders and the prevention of hate speech and hate crimes.

* * *

GLOSSARY

Active citizenship: The capacity for thoughtful and responsible participation in political, economic, social and cultural life. Young people learn about active citizenship through introduction to the concepts and values underpinning citizenship in a democracy (usually through some form of education, formal or non-formal), by being

active and responsible members of their community (through the activities of civil society) and, once they have reached the relevant age, by practicing the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy (voting, standing for elected office, etc.). It is at one and the same time a human right and a responsibility. Active citizenship requires both opportunity and competence. Young people experiencing barriers to accessing social rights are also more likely to experience barriers to exercising active citizenship and participating responsibly in society.

Co-management: The model of partnership between public authorities (governmental representatives in charge of youth) and civil society (representatives of non-governmental youth organisations and networks) in place in the youth sector of the Council of Europe since the 1960s. Partners in the co-management system decide together on an equal basis about the policies and programmes of the Council of Europe's youth sector and determine how they shall be financed.

Disadvantage (social): A lack of access to the instruments required by every person for self-sufficiency and sustainable autonomy. In the context of the "Enter!" project, disadvantage is viewed as the process through which some groups of young people or other individuals are systematically denied (whether by design or neglect) the opportunity and/or means to fully enjoy social rights (as defined by the European Social Charter), which in effect represents a violation of their human rights. The experience of disadvantage may include a lack of independence; incentive; responsibility; self-respect and respect from others; health; education; information; employment; adequate financial support; social, cultural and financial capital; responsive support systems and participation.

Disadvantaged neighbourhoods: Areas or communities in which residents, including young people, experience poverty, deprivation, violence, exclusion, marginalisation, a lack of opportunities, poor living conditions, a degraded environment and vulnerability to a higher degree than the majority of the population. Disadvantaged neighbourhoods lack important infrastructure and services for young people, which has negative impacts on their life chances and future development. Such infrastructure and services include youth centres, schools and other education amenities, sport and cultural facilities, public meeting spaces, health centres, employment and training agencies, as well as local businesses and community initiatives.

These neighbourhoods are often denied or overlooked in terms of funding from national, regional and local authorities and the private sector. Furthermore, they are often at a distance from city centres without adequate transport systems, leading to isolation and segregation. In this recommendation, the terms "disadvantaged neighbourhoods" refer essentially to urban areas but also to the rural areas where Roma communities are settled and generally live in poor conditions.

Disadvantaged young people: Young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods (as defined above) experience various and multiple forms of (social) disadvantage (as defined above), including a lack of economic, cultural, and social capital and/or resources; a lack of access to or success in education; a lack of training or employment; a lack of perspectives for the future; a greater risk of homelessness, conflict with the law, sexual exploitation and/or violence and substance abuse, etc. Furthermore, some young people from certain categories could become disadvantaged young

people, including young people growing up in care or without their families; young people from migrant backgrounds or from ethnic minorities; Roma young people; young people with disabilities, mental health problems or living with illness and young people living in segregated or isolated communities are much more likely to experience social disadvantages than other young people. Disadvantaged young people are among the most marginalised in society and require special support measures to access the same opportunities as their peers.

Discrimination: The term “discrimination” shall be understood to include all forms of discrimination, irrespective of grounds, as explicitly outlined in Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights or any other form established by the case law of the European Court of Human Rights.

Mobile youth work: A flexible and “outreaching” form of youth work that goes to the young people with which it tries to engage, rather than grouping them together in a centralised point such as a youth centre or office. Mobile youth work takes a variety of forms and includes street work, individual assistance or counselling, group work and community work and takes place outdoors as much as indoors, in private as much as in public spaces.

Non-formal education: “Non-formal education” means any planned programme of education designed to improve a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational setting.

Informal education: “Informal education” means the lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from the educational influences and resources in his or her own environment and from daily experience (family, peer group, neighbours, encounters, library, mass media, work, play, etc).

Social rights: The rights contained in the European Social Charter and in the revised European Social Charter.

Youth policy: A strategy implemented by public authorities with a view to providing young people with opportunities and experiences that support their successful integration into society and enable them to be active and responsible members of their societies, as well as agents of change. It involves four dimensions referring to all aspects of young people’s lives: a. being in a good shape (physically and mentally); b. learning (informal, non-formal and formal); c. participation; and d. inclusion. Youth policy may combine different means of intervention (legislation, specific programmes, etc.) and integrates a long-term educational perspective. Youth policy targets all young people but should pay special attention to those who are socially, economically or culturally vulnerable.

Youth workers: People involved in work or activities with and for young people, either on a voluntary basis or professionally and in several contexts, including youth organisations, youth services, youth centres, youth/social work training institutions, or any other structure operating in the area of non-formal education with young people.

SECTION III
**THE LONG-TERM
TRAINING COURSE**

The aim of the LTTC Enter! was to develop the competences of youth workers and youth leaders to contribute to combating the social exclusion of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods through the development of concrete projects.

CHAPTER 4

The Enter! Long-Term Training Course final evaluation

Prepared by Frankly speaking – training research and development: Yael Ohana, with the assistance of Milosz Czerniejewski

The Long-Term Training Course (LTTTC) was accompanied by comprehensive evaluation that focused specifically on the LTTTC, although with links to the overall project. The full version of the evaluation that was finalised in November 2011 is available at www.coe.int/enter.

What is included in the following is quoted from the Executive Summary and the Conclusions and Recommendations of the evaluation of the LTTTC.

The aim of the LTTTC Enter! was to develop the competences of youth workers and youth leaders to contribute to combating the social exclusion of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods through the development of concrete projects.

The LTTTC Enter! provided 33 youth leaders and youth workers active in a variety of civil society based, youth work and non-formal educational contexts with complementary European training in competences essential for supporting young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods to access their social rights. Trainees developed local social benefit projects with a human and social rights education dimension with and for young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Through the development and implementation of these projects and the active evaluation of their experience, participants improved their competences not only for the development and implementation of local educational interventions in favour of the access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, but they also analysed their training needs for conducting their work for young people in respect of quality standards commensurate with those of the youth sector for its non-formal education activities.

The training course was organised in six phases, involving 20 months of active participation on the part of the trainees over three calendar years, and was delivered through e-learning, face-to-face training (three residential seminars at the European Youth Centres) and project implementation and had a training team of five trainers. Participants also benefited from extensive mentoring by the training team, and were able to request an individual project visit or the organisation of a regional mentoring meeting. Projects associated with the LTTTC Enter!, and which met the criteria of the European Youth Foundation, received special consideration under its funding stream for local projects (Category D) whose priority for the period 2009 to 2011 was social inclusion.

In addition to the extensive focus of the LTTTC on project development, implementation and evaluation-related skills, participants received training in many aspects relating to (non-formal) educational work with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods on access to social rights ranging from social rights and the main European mechanisms and instruments for their protection and promotion at international and European level, including the European Social Charter to educational and youth policy approaches for dealing with the challenges faced by young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods (including violence, conflict, exclusion and discrimination). They were introduced to relevant youth and social rights related programmes and instruments of the Council of Europe and some international institutions, and were exposed a variety of perspectives on quality standards for this kind of work. They had the chance to develop their critical thinking skills and to learn how to work across sectors and co-operate with partners in the policy field.

In general, the evaluation found that this first, and therefore pilot edition of the LTTTC Enter! largely reached its aim.

The evaluation was commissioned with the dual objective of providing formative evaluation perspectives to the training team as a means of supporting their process of delivery

and with the summative evaluation of the educational quality, strategic relevance and political impact of the LTTTC Enter! as a complementary European educational intervention in favour of the access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and in relation to the objectives of the overall Enter! project.

In general, the evaluation found that this first, and therefore pilot edition of the LTTTC Enter! largely reached its aim. Participants have gained in competence, capacity and confidence for their work on access to social rights with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Their knowledge and horizons have been extended and they have become sensitised to the potential of relationships with the European level. They have further become aware of the importance of ongoing assessment and improvement of the quality of their work against recognised standards for non-formal education and youth work. The participants' projects have also contributed to the improvement of the awareness of the rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and in some cases have had concrete impacts on the situation of

access to social rights of these young people. At the same time, several aspects of importance for the quality and adequacy of the LTTC as an intervention in favour of improved access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods would require reconsideration or improvement to ensure maximum effectiveness: these range from the functioning of the inter-sectoral co-operation expected to support the effective implementation of the LTTC Enter!, to certain curriculum and approach-related choices made by the training team.

Recommendations

The following recommendations relate to aspects of the conceptualisation, preparation and implementation of the LTTC and the inter/intra-sectoral co-operation supporting it. They are intended to inform the planning of any future edition of this training offer or any other training that might be offered as a means of following up this pilot experience.

Social analysis and choice of course model

The evaluation found that the current course model is well adapted to supporting local youth workers and leaders in developing projects, but that some improvements could be made, as follows:

More in depth social analysis of training needs of the target group. As it stands, the social analysis on which this LTTC concept was developed is based on an understanding of the problems and challenges faced by young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and while this is important, it would also be important to undertake some more in-depth analysis of the training needs of youth workers and youth leaders working at the forefront of this kind of social benefit youth work in the local context. The LTTC has revealed some weaknesses in the general level of competence of this target group in relation to project and financial management and fundraising, but also in relation to the articulation and communication of their work, skills for engaging with the policy sector and even at the level of the practice of non-formal education with young people. It is, therefore, recommended that, in anticipation of further editions of this LTTC, some evidence is gathered as to the needs of relevant categories of youth worker and youth leader. This would also be an opportunity to gather information about the kind of training offers that are missing (at other levels – local, national) and what would receive the most response from the field. To the extent this is possible, such research should be conducted in a “scientific” manner, rather than exclusively relying on the usual partner organisations of the youth sector of the Council of Europe and self-reporting of youth workers and youth leaders.

Make better use of the Youth Department experience. The evaluation found that this LTTC would have benefited from the consideration of some previous experiences from the youth sector of the Council of Europe in training for co-operation across policy and practice sectors (the 50/50 training model developed in the early 1990s) and for educators working in the field of social inclusion (The Long-Term Training Course on Social Inclusion piloted in the late 1990s). Both of these experiences are extensively documented, and some of the key figures involved in the development

of these courses are still active in the Youth Department and the broader community of practice involved in Youth Department training activities. Some perspectives from their development and evaluation would be relevant for the further specification of the approach and curriculum of this kind of course.

Consider specialisation of the training offer. Based on the results of such efforts at collecting evidence of the training needs of the field, it would be relevant to consider whether the “one course fits all” model is the most appropriate for this kind of target group. It is worth considering whether several more specialised courses of a shorter duration, or a more specialised long-term training course with fewer elements, could have an impact on the field in a more visible manner.

Retain the aim; revise the objectives extensively. The evaluation found that the aim of the LTTC as currently formulated is adequate and realistic. However, the objectives of the course as currently formulated are far too focused on strategic concerns of the institution largely coherent with those of the Enter! project as a whole, and require more educational content. These should be extensively revised and specified, taking into account elements of this evaluation specific to this issue and the evidence gathered about the training needs of the field.

Develop and communicate realistic expectations. The evaluation concurred with the opinion of the training team and some others concerned that a training course, even a long-term training course supporting projects, cannot change the situation of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods extensively, or sustainably. For significant improvements, there needs to be significant political will behind local governmental intervention efforts. Civil society and youth organisations have a supporting role to play, as does this kind of intervention. The LTTC has, however, helped familiarise young people with their rights. This is a good starting point for developing their competence to advocate on their own behalf and to overcome victimhood. Supporting youth workers and youth leaders in empowering the young people they work with is a key objective of the course and represents a realistic expectation concerning the potential impact of such a training intervention in relation to the broader context of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Europe. Future editions of this course should not be saddled with unrealistic expectations in terms of their potential impact.

Structure and features of the Long Term Training Course

Duration of the course. The evaluation found that the project implementation phases between residential seminars were very long, contributing to problems in keeping participants involved. Traditional LTTCs have just one project implementation phase between two residential seminars, habitually lasting between six and nine months. The expectation is that the project should be largely completed by the time of the second residential seminar. Such an expectation might be made explicit in the context of future courses, with shorter project implementation phases, even if a consolidation seminar or interim meeting is retained.

Mentoring and regional mentoring meetings (and project visits). While not extensively visible as a key element, these have been of the utmost importance to

the potential of the course in supporting participants, and should be maintained as integral elements of the course with adaptations in terms of the conclusions of the evaluation in this respect, outlined above.

Bilingualism. The evaluation found that, if offering a course in two languages, then it is important that all aspects of the course are available in both languages; in other words, resources (financial and human) should be available to make sure that all course materials are available in both languages, including the contents generated by the e-learning platform, documentation and websites. Furthermore, all team members should have a basic working knowledge of both working languages so as to be able to communicate with all participants to some degree and to ensure that they can follow what is happening on the e-learning platform in their second language.

Involvement of local authorities. The evaluation found that the involvement of local authorities in the course was generally poor. The initiators of the LTTC rightly assumed that their involvement is important for the sustainability of project action, but measures for securing their involvement were not sufficiently well thought through. Largely, securing the involvement of local authorities was left to the initiative and capacity of the participants, for whom it was a significant challenge. On the one hand, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities were not willing or able to convince its members with participants on the course to engage. On the other hand, few members of the Congress had participants on the course.

Some deeper reflection with the members of the secretariat of the Congress and possibly one or two prominent members who were supportive of its involvement in this inter-sectoral project might help to find some answers to the question of how to get the members of the Congress to engage in more depth, whether as supporters of the projects or with participants. This must be done as part of the inter-sectoral planning of any future course and take place well enough in advance of recruitment and selection to have an impact on those procedures.

Secondly, the question of what constitutes “support from a local authority” needs to be reconsidered. The profile of participants as currently formulated states that participants should be “supported by a local authority, if possible”, and many participants selected had a ‘support letter’ stating that they were. However, in practice this support meant different things. In some cases, it meant being allowed to take time off work to participate in the course; in others it meant a commitment to engage with and support the project which the project carrier was planning in the LTTC; in others again the project carrier was able to convince the local authority to provide a support letter in order that their application be taken seriously, but without any undertaking on the part of the authority in question to do anything more. Hence, a further specification of what “support from a local authority” means should be foreseen. This will, at the very least, ensure that candidates engage in some form of discussion with local authorities as part of their application process.

Thirdly, some consideration should be given to the idea of whether local authority representatives should in fact be explicitly targeted as participants – in their capacities as managers of youth work programmes and projects – in addition to youth workers with affiliations to local authorities. While the ideal scenario would be that youth workers and local authority representatives would apply as pairs to develop a

common project, this is likely to be an unrealistic expectation, although it has never been tried out. Doing so would imply several preparatory steps: some surveying of interest on the part of local authority employees in relevant positions, the stronger engagement of the Congress in the planning and implementation of the training, some adaptation of the training to the specific needs of local authorities and a much more targeted and work-intensive recruitment procedure.

Profile of participants. The evaluation found that a large number of participants did not meet the required profile when recruited, although on the basis of the applications, the team could not necessarily have assessed this. While this does have some implications for recruitment and selection procedures (see next section), it should not necessarily be judged negatively. If anything, it reveals some considerations that would need to be taken into account when developing further European educational interventions of a complementary nature.

In the first place, it is an indicator for the generally poor level of competence of NGOs and youth work providers acting locally in some content areas of the course (project management, the European dimension and access to social rights with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods). Secondly, it reveals that the institutions wishing to develop such complementary training offers need to undertake more precise social analysis, so as to identify the training needs of those they wish to target for such course offers and not only the situation of the young people such trainees will be working with. Thirdly, and as mentioned above, it reveals that a “one course fits all approach” may not be as valuable as several courses addressing more specific training needs with more specific target groups. Hence, it is recommended that the profile of participants be specified (in other words, to the extent that it is possible, ambiguities concerning what is meant by specific aspects of the profile need to be eliminated) to ensure that the course can deliver on competence development for its target group(s). A diversity of profiles in one course does have added value, but this needs to be balanced with the feasibility of the training offer.

Recruitment and selection. Ensuring that recruitment and selection procedures provide teams with the wherewithal to compose groups of participants adequately, according to the described profile, has always been a challenge for the Youth Department. On the one hand, measures taken to ensure a larger number of applicants (online application procedure, etc.) have not necessarily improved the quantity of qualified candidates applying for Youth Department courses, and have often only increased the workload involved in selection procedures. Furthermore, accessing relevant target groups does not seem to have become any easier despite the “viral” manner in which information and calls spread through the Internet.

The experience of this course shows that relying on the usual channels for recruitment (organisations already within the networks touched by the Youth Department, Internet dissemination, the website of the Youth Department and even dissemination of information through the statutory bodies) does not guarantee a large number of quality applications from which to make an adequate selection. Other forms of recruitment would be necessary, some of which require extensive effort and time investment by the initiators, including stocktaking of relevant organisations at the local level, acceptance of “snail mail” and email applications, dissemination of

information by word of mouth, by telephone and in person-to-person encounters, and through more informal channels, longer periods of time to ensure recruitment, and so on. In relation to selection, better quality and more accurate information about candidates would be needed than is currently guaranteed by application forms involving a lot of writing. Some simple methods to access such information could be used, but they require a larger time investment than purely documentary application procedures: internal Youth Department pre-selection of a maximum of two candidates per place on the course, followed by a more in-depth selection conducted by the team including interviews (telephone / Skype) and/or an online assessment centre exercise on the ACTHRE platform (for example).

One way or another, in future editions of the course, both recruitment and selection need to be started much earlier than for this pilot experience and need to be conducted in calmness without extensive time pressure.

Quality concept. The quality standards developed for the projects in this LTTC were a good start in the direction of the development of a more in-depth quality concept for this kind of work. However, they need to be prioritised (i.e. differentiated into hard and soft criteria) and further specified (so that differing interpretations of what they mean are not as obvious as in this pilot experience).

They should also be compared to the criteria of the European Youth Foundation so that relevant overlaps and coherences can be highlighted.

E-learning. Some further consideration of how to make the most of the e-learning potential represented by the ACT-HRE platform for complex and long duration courses such as this LTTC has to take place. Either less emphasis should be placed on e-learning (thereby freeing up capacity and energy for investment in other aspects of the course) or more facilitation, technical support and resources have to be invested into it to make it work. Expectations towards the potential of e-learning in its current form to animate the participants' communication and exchange throughout the course need to be lowered. Other measures to ensure the maintenance of the group dynamic between residential seminars should be reflected upon. Aspects of e-learning identified as challenging for the learning styles of participants (at the latest during the first residential seminar) should be reduced in importance, for example, in the case of this group's reading and writing-based assignments. Teams conducting new editions of the course should receive some general training for e-learning and for using the platform in advance of the course launch. Something similar should be organised for the participants (at the latest during the first residential seminar). Reflection on what technical improvements might be made to the platform to ensure user-friendliness and the functions needed on the course for learning purposes (i.e. for group assignments, for collection of relevant statistics, etc.) should be undertaken in the planning of any next edition of the course.

Assessment and certification. Further consideration should be given on how to assess and certify such Long-Term Training Courses. In some cases, the team considered the egalitarian approach taken (i.e. all participants who did not leave the course before the end received a certificate of participation) somewhat unfair, given that some participants worked significantly harder than some others who were rewarded with the same certificate. In addition, the choice of self-assessment tools used in the

context of the course should be reconsidered to ensure the maximum level of even informal recognition of the certification provided.

Curriculum and contents

Approach. The team concluded that as the course progresses, more space should be given to participants to demonstrate what they can and do, and to deliver some of what they know how to do with the young people they work with to the other participants, as a means of giving validity to their work and developing their confidence.

Key concepts. Some key concepts of this course might be rethought, in terms of their general relevance, and might in future editions of the course be given a different level of emphasis. Three main conceptual areas stand out as requiring reconsideration.

‘Youth’ policy: while clearly the youth sector has most competence and capacity to work with participants on improving the potential for youth policy to have a positive impact on access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, youth policy per se may not be the most relevant of policy areas for achieving substantive impact. Hence, it is recommended that the space given to ‘youth’ policy over policy more broadly is reconsidered, and that more attention might be given to specific sectoral policy areas of relevance to the participants, through expert input, for example.

Access to social rights: at the end of the course it has to be questioned whether the concept of access to social rights is as relevant as some other frameworks for understanding the challenging conditions in which young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods find themselves. While the human rights dimension of access to social rights must be reiterated, it nevertheless might be even more difficult for participants to convince authorities of the need to improve the situations of young people in such neighbourhoods when it is framed as a demand for rights. At the same time, broader frameworks for the conceptual understanding of the issues and challenges facing young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods exist and take into account the rights dimension, such as, for example, the quality of life and social mobility concepts currently favoured by the social policy division of the Council of Europe. At the very least, a variety of conceptual approaches to the issue should be presented within the context of any future courses to help participants understand the issue.

‘Disadvantaged neighbourhoods’: the concept of disadvantaged neighbourhoods has been variously understood on this course with mixed results for the development of the participants’ projects and the general relevance of project action. It may be relevant to consider the specification of what is meant by ‘disadvantaged neighbourhood’ in the context of the call for applications and in the quality concept of the course, taking into account, of course, the many pitfalls involved in that (see above). At the same time, it might be worth considering whether a focus on disadvantaged young people with particular attention to the disadvantage caused by geography would be relevant.

Violence and exclusion: it may also be discussed in all earnestness whether the situations of exclusion treated by participants’ projects and in which some of the participants

themselves live in the communities where they are active, do, in fact, constitute forms of violence. While this has not been significantly debated or developed in this LTTTC, it may be a relevant point for the specification and conceptualisation of future courses.

Conflict: this theme has been less prominent in the course (i.e. in the participants' realities) than was anticipated given its importance in the objectives. Its place in the course should be reconsidered. Specifically, it should be reconsidered if it is the multicultural nature of the communities concerned that can be seen as the primary cause of conflicts in those contexts, or whether ideas about conflicts emanating from social inequalities, and exacerbated by racism and discrimination of "Others" would not be a more relevant approach to the issue.

Project funding. The question of whether it is the role of such a course to coach participants extensively in the use of the funding mechanisms available to them so that they will receive project funding should be addressed in the development of the curriculum for future courses.

Project management. The course curriculum should give more emphasis to the development of the participants' project management skills and not only project development competences, given that this was initially identified as a need, and demonstrated as such during this first pilot experience of the LTTTC Enter!

Research. More attention should be paid to research data in the course contents, especially in relation to the social analyses of participants' projects.

Competence for engagement with established structures and bureaucracies. The extent to which the participants of this course continue to have difficulties in communicating and articulating the value (in educational terms and in terms of impacts on access to social rights for young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods) to funders and other partners is noteworthy and questions the extent to which the course has been able to raise the competence of these participants to work in "established" bureaucratic systems, especially those that regulate funding for their work. In the future, and again if this training need is corroborated by further evidence of the training needs of the field, skills for the articulation and communication of the value of the work being done through (non-formal) educational work by youth workers and leaders in disadvantaged neighbourhoods should be prioritised on the list of competences to be developed.

Policy recommendations. The work on the development of the policy recommendations in the evaluation seminar was one of the most challenging exercises in the LTTTC for these participants. Given their difficulties with articulating their work in more abstract terms, especially in writing, this exercise took a lot of time and effort. It should be reconsidered how to do this in the most effective manner in future editions of the course, especially if it is unclear how they will be followed-up. However, this should not become a source of potential tension and frustration on future courses.

Inter/intra-sectoral co-operation

In light of the clear dissatisfaction with the quality and effectiveness of the inter-sectoral co-operation in support of this course, especially on the part of the initiating

partner, the youth sector, the following recommendations concerning how to improve it seem appropriate:

Statutory bodies. The role of the statutory bodies in the LTTC was never really defined, and it seems that involvement at a purely 'supervisory' level, in the usual manner of the statutory bodies' responsibility for elements of the Youth Department programme, did not motivate participants sufficiently for this to actually happen. While the representative of the Advisory Council was a little more involved, this involvement extended to optional consultation with participants whose projects addressed their areas of expertise, rather than direct involvement in the training. It seems reasonable that the statutory bodies should be tasked with ensuring their own representation in any co-ordination body, such as the Reference and Support Group, from the very outset. This requires some facilitation in advance of the first meeting of the co-ordinating body to ensure their nomination and presence. This representation should further be based on the relevant experience of the representatives concerned for the tasks required of them vis-à-vis the course.

As a matter of course, the (representatives of) statutory bodies should receive regular updates about the training and aspects with which they might be able to support the Secretariat or participants. Representatives of the statutory bodies might be associated with different programme elements within the LTTC according to their expertise and experience (e.g. representatives of governments could be asked to share their insights into co-operation with civil society, etc.). An approach to facilitating this might be to invite these representatives to attend the part of the first preparatory meeting for the training course that deals with roles and responsibilities, in order to ensure that they are briefed and fully understand the concept of their involvement in the course. The ways in which these representatives are expected to give feedback from the LTTC to their respective Statutory Committees, and the objectives to be used, should be formulated and agreed in advance.

Other Directorates and Institutions of the Council of Europe. The experience of this course shows that the other institutional partners did not develop a strong sense of ownership for the course. The manner in which the course was planned and later rolled out did not specifically lend itself to such ownership developing: the Reference and Support Group was responsible for the entire Enter! project, and a further level of co-ordination and co-operative planning with the inter-sectoral partners specific to the needs of the LTTC would have been useful. It is acknowledged that civil servants at the Council of Europe already spend an inordinate amount of time in meetings, and that the suggestion to institute another co-ordination method requiring even more meetings would not be met with enthusiasm.

However, the evaluation found that other methods for mutual information and exchange on follow-up procedures, for example communication of written reports by email or information on the website, are simply not sufficiently effective and tend to be ignored. Further communication and co-ordination would also ensure that the partners in other sectors of the Council of Europe have a chance to understand the concept of the training in depth and to contribute with expertise and content suggestions relevant to the actual training. It would provide them with the opportunity to plan effectively for their own participation in residential seminars. In addition,

partners should be expected to make some form of 'investment' in the inter-sectoral co-operation, through the allocation of funds or human resources for the activity. In the purely formal sense, this ensures a certain level of accountability, as their department would then be bound to justify the use of resources.

Finally, in the ongoing development of the course, a Youth Department staff member must be tasked with facilitating inter-sectoral co-operation. This refers not only to the facilitation of the co-ordination mechanism mentioned above, but also to facilitation in the broader sense: regular communication and updating (if necessary by telephone rather than email), timely invitations to participate in residential seminars or to recommend experts, and so on.

Role of the Reference and Support Group (RSG). The evaluation found that the Reference and Support Group saw itself as responsible for the overseeing of the Enter! project as a whole, and had not sufficiently taken its support functions as regards the LTTTC into account. The extent to which the members of the group truly understood the expectations towards them concerning the involvement in the LTTTC is not entirely clear, but it also seems that the Reference and Support Group did not develop a strong sense of ownership for the course. Hence, in the future, such a supervisory and support body must be actively initiated into its responsibilities towards the course. Its first meeting is already too late to deal with the question of expectations in terms of contributions and support. The institutions invited to participate must be impressed upon that they should nominate people with relevant expertise and with the capacity to follow the course from start to finish. Admittedly, this is not easy, given the voluntary nature of their engagement in such a body and the easy misunderstanding that they are "represented": this almost guarantees the bureaucratisation of the process. This might be compensated for by the more active involvement of the members of the Reference and Support Group in course elements: residential seminars, e-learning, project visits and mentoring meetings. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that, without extensive facilitation and some logistical support (i.e. left to the initiative of the group members themselves, based on invitation only), this kind of involvement will not be easily forthcoming.

As in the case of inter-sectoral co-operation, the active support of a body such as the Reference and Support Group requires active facilitation for which responsibilities need to be defined and staffed.

European Youth Foundation. While the European Youth Foundation is also an institution of the Council of Europe, it deserves special and separate attention because the evaluation finds that the relationship between the LTTTC and the European Youth Foundation is one of the only aspects of inter/intra-sectoral co-operation that functioned well. It must also be acknowledged that without the financial support of the European Youth Foundation, many of the 17 projects primarily funded by the Foundation would never have been implemented. Nevertheless, some improvements could be made in how the co-operation functions.

- ▶ Involve the European Youth Foundation in the planning from the outset: In the first place, in future editions of the course in which European Youth Foundation funding is to be extensively used, the Foundation staff should be more actively involved in the planning of the course. In particular, this applies to the

development of the 'quality concept' of the course as it applies to participants' projects. Both the staff of the European Youth Foundation and the LTTC noted that there are significant potential overlaps between the quality standards applied to projects by each and that these should be harmonised, to the extent that this is possible. This would be a first step towards making the European Youth Foundation procedures more accessible to this kind of target group, which had significant difficulty in articulating the value of their work in the manner of funding applications (while the evaluation acknowledges that the European Youth Foundation procedures are much simpler than some others).

- ▶ Reflect on the barriers to access to funding: In anticipation of further editions of the course, and taking its access to social rights or even social exclusion more broadly is established among the European Youth Foundation's priorities in the medium term, then more explicit thought should be given to what makes the use of funding mechanisms such as those offered by the Foundation so complicated for this kind of target group and what more fundamental administrative or procedural changes might be implied by any conclusions drawn. This reflection goes well beyond the planning of future LTTCs and relates more broadly to the role of the European Youth Foundation in the funding landscape. The evaluation has found that the framework conditions for this kind of local "social benefit" youth work are very poor; it seems they neither fit into what is often referred to in German as Jugendhilfe (literally, 'youth help') nor into the more general and common category of leisure time orientated youth work and, therefore, falls between the gap in national funding. Furthermore, as this kind of work rarely has an international dimension, it also falls through the cracks in the international, and especially European, funding landscape which, interestingly enough, is increasingly focused on 'young people with fewer opportunities'.
- ▶ Reflect on whose responsibility it is to fund this kind of work: Hence, the question arises: Whose responsibility should it be to fund this kind local social benefit youth work? In relation to the European Youth Foundation, a reflection is yet to be undertaken as concerns the real potential for impact of the level of funding it is able to dedicate in the medium to long-term to projects addressing social inclusion. On the one hand, we know from this pilot experience that other funding was not available for this kind of project. On the other, it remains questionable whether the European Youth Foundation's role should include the funding of purely local projects, which, to all intents and purposes, should be supported by local or national authority programmes for social inclusion of young people.
- ▶ Develop a mixed funding concept engaging local authorities: One approach that might partially address this question of division of responsibilities would be to make co-funding from a local authority a hard criteria for funding from the European Youth Foundation for this kind of project. However, this only serves to dissimulate the problem of the lack of availability of support for this kind of work in the local context, as, in such circumstances, the European Youth Foundation would probably only receive applications from those youth initiatives who can access funds from local authorities. So, in conclusion, it is

recommended that the proposed reflection on the role of the European Youth Foundation include discussion about how to integrate local authority support into its funding concept. This might require a very different approach, such as that which the European Youth Foundation attempts, with the support of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, to develop a European fund for the social inclusion of young people in disadvantaged local neighbourhoods. This would shift the responsibility for the financing of this kind of work, in part at least, away from the project carriers, and onto a body that is supposed to have some influence on the standards of work and conduct in local authorities. This would also suit the working approach of the Council of Europe, which is not well adapted to making direct interventions at the local level.

- ▶ Leverage relationships across the funding landscape: Finally, the European Youth Foundation is well networked in the European funding landscape, through relationships with other foundations and funding initiatives, and could consider how to leverage those relationships to the benefit of such a fund or to this kind of work in general. This is largely an advocacy task and would require a mandate and a degree of planning, but is not incompatible with the potential role of the more 'proactive' European Youth Foundation implied by its interest and co-operation in the LTTC Enter!

CHAPTER 5

The LTTC in a local context

*“Enter! did not just have an impact on me but it had an impact on my entire surroundings”
Biljana Vasilevska from Bitola, “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, participant of
the Enter! LTTC.*

What did Enter! mean in its many local contexts, and what did it bring to the many individuals and organisations involved in different processes? The Enter! Evaluation Meeting in April 2012 aimed to combine macro and micro levels, the international perspectives with the on-the-ground realities. Biljana Vasilevska was a LTTC participant who took part in the Evaluation Meeting where she was also invited to share her experiences and reflections with the whole of the group. The following text is an edited version of her presentation.

The Centre for human rights AMOS where I work has existed for 11 years and operates in the field of promotion and protection of human rights. Our mission is to help people (especially children and young people), in becoming happy, healthy and responsible citizens in the Macedonian society.

Being a social worker, my work almost always includes services and support for access to social rights for different categories of the population. In the past few years I have mostly focused on the harm-reduction programme for drug users.

In 2009, after receiving the call for participants in the LTTC Enter!, my team decided that I should apply in order to contribute to the strengthening of the organisation's capacities. I was lucky to have been selected to participate in the project. [...] It was the first time I had left my country for a seminar and the first time I had come to work at the EYC, so you can immediately see that Enter! had an impact on me personally: on my own access to information and education, my own youth participation, my own social mobility – in a nutshell, on my own access to social rights.

I was given a chance to improve in project development, both from a technical point of view (how to find partners, develop a needs analysis, plan step-by-step, etc.) and from a conceptual point of view (access to social rights, needs of the participants, etc.), as well as to practise and improve some technical skills (e.g. making presentations, budgeting, time management, project writing).

This phase of the LTTC gave me knowledge on everything related to access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and a clear vision and plan on how to spread that knowledge in practice through a concrete project that I developed. It clarified the steps, taught me how to plan effectively, how to organise the ideas, how to transfer these in actions, how to define them, what to plan, who to involve, and where to address the project.

Through e-learning, we learnt more about youth policy, youth participation, social rights in practice, youth policy recommendation, and so on; these were the things which caught my attention immediately. The assignments made me research our laws and regulations, and made me follow even more closely the situation with youth policy in my country, the state of youth participation. [...] It made me think about things that are missing and research possible solutions for the improvement of the existing situations regarding these matters. It made our organisation work even more closely on improving access to social rights and youth participation in my beautiful Bitola. I started improving my political literacy and political competence, my understanding of policy-making processes, the ability to advocate, to have realistic expectations towards the elected representatives and, by the end, to establish working relationships with policy makers.

I also went to one of the Enter! seminars: "Youth Policy Approaches and Responses in promoting access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods". Being a part of a group that discussed proposals for a policy recommendation made me feel as if I could really participate and contribute in making things better for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, including myself.

At the third residential meeting we continued the work on youth policy, specifically making a list of recommendations that we found important to be noted and heard. Once again, not only did I learn, but I also contributed to and participated in finding possible ways for the improvement of the access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. All of these activities gave me a chance to act as a multiplier of the knowledge I gained. Almost everything I learned I am transferring to my organisation, the young people involved in my project, my community, and local authorities. Enter! did not just have an impact on me but it had an impact on my entire surroundings.

Trying to connect the things I learned and the skills that I have developed with the concrete work that I do at home, a team of young people and I made a project that aimed to prevent HIV infection among young people in Bitola. (The project was a result of previous research on young people's situation and interests.) We wanted to increase the knowledge and skills of 300 young people from 15–25 years of age who live in Bitola about HIV risks, ways of transmission and ways of protection, with the help of the following activities:

- ▶ Five days' training of 15 peer educators
- ▶ 15 training sessions undertaken by the peer educators (each with a minimum of 20 people)
- ▶ Preparing and printing educational materials

- ▶ Two media shows addressing HIV infection and the rights of special protection for young people concerning the infection
- ▶ Street activities with media coverage
- ▶ Distribution of prepared informational and educational materials, and condoms among young people in Bitola
- ▶ Condom party at the end of the project.

The adults in the organisation had a mentoring and supportive role in the whole process. They provided trainers for the training and helped the young peer educators during the whole process. Financial, technical and material support were also their concern.

In the process of the implementation of the project we had several partners, such as the Council of Bitola, the NGO Via Vita, and TV TERA. Through the partnership with the local authorities we managed to improve our co-operation and to contribute to the implementation of a local action plan for the prevention of HIV, and an action plan for youth participation.

Through the work with the media we managed to reach visibility, and impact on the wider community and, thanks to that, our activities are still being implemented in Bitola even though the project is officially over. Some of them are almost like a tradition, for example the condom parties. We have also established a network of young peer educators that will continuously provide information and education related to HIV infection.

More or less, Enter! made an impact:

- ▶ on my organisation – it provided an opportunity for the improvement of existing services and the establishment of new ones
- ▶ on the wider community – it provoked thinking and emphasised the need for action from and for young people
- ▶ on the young people involved – it provided an opportunity for young people to take an active role in the protection of their health and to participate in decision-making processes
- ▶ on the disadvantaged neighbourhood – it meant familiarisation with the possibilities for making changes in the field of social rights and in the state of young people in the city
- ▶ on the partners (for example, local authorities) – it provoked actions on the specified topics, transparency and visibility of their work and responsibility in providing access to social rights of young people and youth participation as well.

This course has helped me to reflect on what I do, why I do it and how I do it. To a large extent, this is thanks to the exchange with other participants and with my mentor. This relates as much to my own personal and professional development as it does to the development of my organisation.

The most important thing for me was the possibility to strengthen my faith and love for the things I do and to be even more motivated and committed to my work!

SECTION IV
**EVALUATIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Review, discuss, analyse and revise ...

CHAPTER 6

The Evaluation Meeting. A brief introduction

While most of the activities included in Enter! were finalised in 2011, the Evaluation Meeting gave all stakeholders the possibility to look back at achievements and shortcomings of the project in view of planning its consolidation and follow-up in the context of today's needs and priorities of young people and youth work in relation to access to social rights.

The Enter! Evaluation Meeting was a three-day meeting gathering 30 participants who had different roles and functions during the Enter! project: participants in the activities, particularly in the LTTC, trainers and facilitators, researchers on social rights and social exclusion, and policy makers involved in the policy development aspects of the Enter! project.

The objectives of the evaluation meeting were:

- ▶ to review the main achievements and shortcomings of the Enter! project, using as a starting point the reports of the external evaluator of the LTTC Enter! and, respectively, of the general rapporteur of the Enter! Youth Meeting
- ▶ to discuss the priority issues and areas of intervention of youth policy on access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, in the light of the Enter! project activities and interventions
- ▶ to analyse critically the main challenges of the Enter! project in order to take them into account in view of a second edition of the LTTC and other follow-up activities
- ▶ to revise the educational and policy approaches embedded in the Council of Europe's interventions for access to social rights of young people, in view of future work for social rights initiatives.

In the following chapter, various kinds of input to the meeting will be presented: firstly, a paper prepared by consultant Yael Ohana on achievements and shortcoming of the Enter! project; secondly a summary of the reports from the different Working Groups of the meeting, on learning outcomes and recommendations; subsequently, two examples of organisations that contributed to the Enter! project and process, highlighting their resources and recommendations; finally, a brief summary of all conclusions and recommendations.

... a series of reflections, food for thought for the further process of development of the Council of Europe youth sector's continued engagement in the area of social inclusion of young people, based on the experience of the first Enter! project ...

CHAPTER 7

The youth sector of the Council of Europe and social inclusion of young people. Getting real and getting back to basics.

Reflection paper for the Enter! Evaluation Meeting, by Yael Ohana

The present document is a series of reflections, nothing more and nothing less. It should serve as food for thought for the further process of development of the Council of Europe youth sector's continued engagement in the area of social inclusion of young people, based on the experience of the first Enter! project, which is currently being brought to a close. Nevertheless, the present document must not be taken exclusively at face value; for a variety of institutional reasons it has been prepared by the evaluator of the Enter! LTTC, not the evaluator of the Enter! project. This certainly limits, to an extent, the perspectives contained here as concerns the achievements and shortcomings of the project as a whole, and the reflections here are necessarily coloured by the experience of the LTTC more than by the other elements of the project, or the project as a whole. It does, however, aim to provide a basis for discussion, and it is also hoped that the participants of the meeting will be able to supplement its partiality.

The paper is organised in three main sections. The first section attempts to shed some light on the main achievements and shortcomings of the Enter! project as a whole, and has been drafted on the basis of the working documents that were distributed to the participants of the meeting.

The second section addresses perspectives and opportunities for follow-up to the current Enter! project which can be inferred from the information available and an attempt to think "outside of the box".

The third section outlines several dilemmas which seem apparent considering my own evaluation of Enter! project 2009–2012 (admittedly much influenced by available documentation and discussions with staff involved in the project) and the current thinking within the sector on an eventual Enter! project 2012–2014. It primarily considers the policy dimension, and there may indeed be other (educational, institutional, philosophical, etc.) dilemmas that would equally need to be confronted. This last section is certainly the most partial of all three, and it is probably best to take it with a proverbial pinch of salt. It is hoped though that the message it attempts to send will be understood as intended, namely constructive.

Achievements and shortcomings of the Enter! project

The Enter! project has been amply documented. The Enter! Evaluation Report and the other documents distributed in advance of the evaluation meeting attest to many achievements, and quite a few shortcomings.

Achievements

Knowledge development. The project developed a significant amount of new knowledge and generated considerable evidence for the situation, needs and challenges of young people in relation to social inclusion, by bringing together people who maybe otherwise would never have the chance of discussing these issues together.

The recommendation. While the recommendation itself is not necessarily a significant achievement for an organisation whose main work is the development of such documents, the participatory process undertaken for the elaboration of this recommendation was something new and was challenging for all the stakeholders involved. We now not only have a potential policy tool for supporting the social inclusion of young people; we have also developed competences for participatory policy making.

Experimenting with inter-sectoral co-operation. While inter-sectoral co-operation in this project and in the LTTC especially fell short of expectations, the Enter! project was an experiment, and has revealed the many pitfalls and some opportunities for inter-sectoral co-operation in the future. This learning experience will serve the further development of inter-sectoral co-operation in the future, and should help make it more satisfactory.

The LTTC and its achievements. The course achievements are many and are well documented between the evaluation of the course and the report of the project. Most importantly, the projects contributed in supporting young people to access their social rights, and the project leaders developed their capacity for working systematically on the question of social rights.

The acquisition of funds for such a project. It is worth mentioning that the acquisition of a voluntary contribution of this size for a project of this nature from a government under the prevailing economic conditions in Europe is an achievement not to be underestimated.

Shortcomings

Involvement of the “usual suspects”. The Enter! project did not manage to create access routes to new target publics as some of the previous large-scale projects of the youth sector have (compare this with the All Different – All Equal campaign, and the human rights education month of action). Most of those involved in a statutory capacity, and those recruited as participants, were already connected in some way to the youth sector or had been involved in its activities previously.

Internal functioning of the “management system”. The project experienced some internal management problems, for example: the poor engagement of the Reference and Support Group especially with the LTTC; difficulties in making inter-sectoral co-operation work, and dissatisfaction with what it contributed for the investment it required; time and workload pressures, especially concerning the online presence and facilitation of inter-sectoral co-operation; difficulties in communication across different stakeholder groups (staff, evaluators, Reference and Support Group, other sectors of the Council of Europe, etc.); administrative and human resourcing problems.

Lack of clarity on key terms, target groups and objectives. The project, and many of its activities, suffered throughout from a lack of clear aims. Key terms were not always used consistently, objectives did not always seem to fit or be relevant, and target groups were not always well defined. Whether it was too challenging or too problematic, the project has, to an extent, avoided taking position by limiting itself to clear definitions, which had important implications for the potential of the project to make a relevant contribution, and to its communicability.

Mismatch between policy objectives and policy opportunities / mandate. The Council of Europe has a limited political and policy mandate. That of the youth sector is even more limited, given its main policy interlocutors are national authorities responsible for youth. Many of the objectives of the project and of its core activities (compare the LTTC) were hampered by being overly ambitious in relation to the potential for policy interventions and change an organisation with such a limited mandate has.

Overly ambitious as regards potential for change. To an extent, the project and certainly the LTTC communicated the ambition to change the situation of access to social rights among young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Laudable as this may be and while the project has certainly made its small contribution, the project was not structurally adapted to extensive potential for change on the ground. In order for this to happen, policy stakeholders with executive power would need to have been actively involved in more aspects of the project, including the development of the recommendation and the projects involved in the LTTC.

Working with the “right people”. As is often the case in the social sphere, those with the “real” expertise and access to the people who are most in need are also those with the least power (in its broadest sense, power to change something). This project was no exception, in that it worked with those who have no power, or rather, it did not work with those who have the power. This limited its potential.

Perspectives and opportunities for following-up

Given the above, based on the available documentation and on a series of conversations with relevant youth sector staff concerning the current state of development of the project, the author could imagine the following opportunities and perspectives for following-up Enter! project 2009–2012:

- ▶ a clearer conceptualisation of what the project is for and the problem it should address: if these problems are, for example, “disadvantaged neighbourhoods”,

or “social inclusion”, then these terms need to be defined more clearly, and participation in the project needs to be developed accordingly

- ▶ fewer and more realistic objectives: perhaps the focus should be on key actions which can ensure the implementation of (some elements of) the recommendation
- ▶ means adequate to ambitions (especially, dedicated human resources to facilitate the internal management structure, namely ensure that the facilities available are sufficient to meet the project’s aims)
- ▶ mechanisms and structures dedicated to facilitating and supporting inter-sectoral co-operation (as this obviously doesn’t happen automatically, and needs pre-planning).

Within a new Enter! project this author could imagine three main pillars of action:

A new LTTC with a stronger and narrower focus, requiring the following:

- ▶ the maintenance of the original aim of the original LTTC, while developing an in-depth social analysis of the needs of the target group before making the selection of participants: for example, what kind of complementary training do youth workers dealing with the challenges of youth social inclusion need?
- ▶ a narrow definition of the target group of the training course
- ▶ the development of a more in-depth recruitment procedure (avoiding online calls for participation), and the use of the recruitment procedure as a means to access relevant new publics to support this work in the future comparison of the pre-recruitment social analysis to the needs emanating from the applications of prospective participants and the adjustment of the course concept and profile of participants accordingly (i.e. a much longer preparatory phase than for the first LTTC)
- ▶ the setting of a few realistic and relevant objectives
- ▶ a revised duration of the course, making the e-learning phases of the course shorter and requiring some project results to be presented at the end of the first project phase (to the extent that this is feasible)
- ▶ the serious reconsideration of how to engage local authorities as participants of the training and in the projects of participants (or in any other supporting role), taking into account the experience of previous youth sector training models in which governmental and non-governmental participants have been trained for partnership working and that require co-operation and common project development as part of the selection criteria
- ▶ that course contents, course objectives and participant needs are well aligned from the outset, namely, that a curriculum is developed in advance, while allowing space for it to be revised as needs emerge or change
- ▶ attempts to access a wider public than only the youth sector, in other words, undertaking outreach work and a much more rigorous selection procedure

(and thus avoiding the recruitment of those who have already been on many youth sector activities, etc.).

Policy related activities, requiring the following:

- ▶ a different course of action to the traditional ways in which the Council of Europe and the youth sector have attempted to influence policy and ensure policy implementation until now: the objective has to be to encourage governments and local authorities to work actively with the recommendation or any part of it that they can deal with
- ▶ a strong emphasis on advocacy for the implementation of the recommendation towards the Committee of Ministers, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, individual governments (not only the authorities responsible for youth) and local / regional authorities
- ▶ the development of specific pilot support projects for those authorities that would like to “take the leap” into approximating the international standards represented by the contents of the recommendation
- ▶ the development of policy-monitoring and evaluation activities, to provide an evidence base for holding governments to account on commitments made (as appropriate).

Making good use of the knowledge and networks developed in Enter! project 2009–2012, requiring the following:

- ▶ adequate management of the knowledge developed during and after Enter! project 2009–2012 (including finding ways to make it accessible to wider publics)
- ▶ the further development and maintenance of networks established, especially the LTTTC participant network through some specific support measures
- ▶ the further development of the inter-sectoral relationships that worked and a proper evaluation of those that did not; their institutionalisation to the extent that it is possible, so that staffing changes do not jeopardise ongoing work.

Five dilemmas to be confronted

Identifying perspectives and opportunities for follow-up activities is certainly easier than actually putting anything into practice. This author’s experience of the Enter! project, partial although it is, nevertheless revealed several dilemmas that will have to be confronted in order to ensure relevant follow-up, as well as the sustainability of the results and action.

Dilemma 1: you can’t just ignore the national level

The national level is usually responsible for making the social and youth policies to which local authorities have to respond. The experience of Enter! and other policy

initiatives in the youth sector shows that while many of those policies are well elaborated, few of them are implemented. How can an international organisation ensure the national level implements its very well elaborated policies, considering its very limited mandate? One or more governments might agree to the development of pilot schemes in co-operation with the youth sector on the basis of its international best practice and standards. Some of the most successful projects of the youth sector, most notably the human rights education programme, have taken this approach of “decentralising” best practice through national and regional training activities. Enter! project 2009–2012 has not taken this approach. Can Enter! project 2012–2014?

Dilemma 2: the instruments we have at our disposal to affect change are not always well adapted to the change we want to affect

A related challenge is that instruments such as a Council of Europe recommendation, as relevant and important as they may be within the Council of Europe system for mainstreaming particular issues, are less effective in the “real world” of a Europe in recession and severe budget cuts in social spending. While the recommendation elaborated within Enter! is very much to the point and very relevant to the challenges of young people experiencing disadvantage, we have to be honest about its shortcomings. It is more than unlikely that the Committee of Ministers will accept it as it is (without amendment) or that, once passed, national, regional or local governments are going to do something about it or with it. The current economic climate is prohibitive and even if things improve, it is likely to be difficult to convince authorities to implement its provisions (partially or fully). It simply asks for too much. Additionally, and causing an even greater problem, is that the Council of Europe is in no position to enforce it. So what can Enter! project 2012–2014 do to ensure that the most important policy product of Enter! project 2009–2012 is not consigned to the dustbin of policy history?

Dilemma 3: the budgets and executive power for changing the social situation of young people are not in the hands of the authorities responsible for youth

Another structural dilemma related to working within the Council of Europe system on youth and social inclusion is that, as much as we all constantly invoke the mantra of holistic and cross-sectoral youth policy, we would be less than honest if we claimed it is actually a reality in most member states of the Council of Europe, or even in most member states of the EU. In the end, the budgets and the executive capacity for social policy implementation do not often sit with the authorities responsible for youth, even those with co-ordinating powers on youth related policy dossiers. Although interesting good practices do exist, it is difficult to mainstream these. How can authorities responsible for youth be empowered to more effective engagement with bigger and more powerful policy making stakeholders? Given this, how can Enter! project 2012–2014 avoid being pigeon-holed and side-lined as a youth policy project such as Enter! project 2009–2012?

Dilemma 4: achieving social rights for young people experiencing disadvantage might mean not using the rights speech

Although this statement may be contrary to the ideological position of all of us working in the field of human rights education and social inclusion, the political climate in Europe today, given the economic and political crisis especially in the EU, does not bode at all well for making convincing arguments about the need to address the social rights of young people. Everyone laments the current state of youth unemployment, but who can do anything convincing about it when social spending has been cut to the bone and investment has dried up? The 'rights' language that the Enter! project has chosen to use is potentially scaring away those who might be in the best position to support this kind of project and without whom there can be little follow-up (given the need for voluntary contributions and for political will to implement the recommendation): the governments. How can Enter! project 2012–2014 maintain its principles without scaring off potential supporters?

Dilemma 5: innovation is the way forward, but we can probably achieve more by doing what we know best

The Council of Europe's youth sector has long standing expertise in working with and through non-formal educational tools to build community capacity for change. The Enter! LTTC has once again proved that. In addition, restating that as the sector's core competence does not mean that it cannot have an influence on policy. It simply means that the best and most effective way to reach one's aim is probably using the tried and tested route. Educational interventions of a complementary nature can have a policy impact in a decentralised way, with the proviso that those engaged in them are educated for engaging with policy. More attention definitely needs to be paid to supporting that part of the community which does not yet competently and effectively work for social inclusion: mainly the authorities with policy implementation power and budgets, but not exclusively. Furthermore, the different stakeholders in the community are not working effectively enough together to produce results for young people experiencing disadvantage. Addressing these two gaps is a huge task for any project undertaken by an institution that has only a complementary mandate.

Thus, even if innovation is constantly expected of the sector, Enter! project 2012–2014 should be looking for ways to valorise the sector's core competence and should focus on the development of adequate educational interventions to support policy change. A further dimension of this dilemma is that there are clear limits as to what an educational intervention, especially a complementary one in the field of non-formal education, can achieve in relation to the social situation of young people: this has also been a lesson from the LTTC. Their value lies in the competence, competence and motivation for change they can and do create, and hence their contribution to the general political will for transformation.

Conclusion. Getting real and getting back to basics

When thinking about this paper and the future of the Enter! project, two things immediately came to mind: “back to basics” and “get real”. In the 1990s, the Conservative Party in the UK under John Major used “back to basics” as an election slogan, and subsumed some rather reactionary programme elements under it, including crackdowns on so-called “welfare spongers” (migrants, single mothers, etc.) and so on. Despite these negative connotations, however, “back to basics” really does seem appropriate as a guiding idea for continuing to think about what Enter! project 2012–2014 might try to do. At the very least, it speaks quite strongly to the last of the dilemmas outlined in the previous section. “Get real” is a little more encompassing, and speaks strongly to the other dilemmas and several of the shortcomings of the Enter! project identified here.

Thinking about how to close this reflection paper, then, it would seem that the main and most relevant contribution of such a project, now and in the future, would be to ‘empower’ relevant (as opposed to irrelevant) stakeholders to be able to implement the recommendation (even partially) and to “enfranchise” those who work with young people who experience disadvantage to address those stakeholders who have the power to support social inclusion and to change something in their life conditions. Enter! project 2009–2012 went some way in this direction. Now is the time to address its shortcomings and fine-tune the good work done, so as to have best effect through Enter! project 2012–2014.

Change takes time.
As one of the working groups wrote, Enter!
needs to be regarded as a step and not a miracle.

CHAPTER 8

Taking stock and looking ahead: working group reports of the Enter! Evaluation Meeting

In the following section, the outcome of two workshops of the Evaluation Meeting will be summarised: the first focuses on the main achievements and shortcomings of the Enter! project; the second focuses on recommendations for the Enter! project 2012–2014.

Learning outcomes: achievements and shortcomings

The first session of workshops was organised according to four main dimensions, investigating the results in relation to youth policy, youth work, training and research.

Youth policy

What gave the Enter! project its special character was that it ventured into the area of policy making, aiming at forging out the essence of social rights for young people, along with recommendations for how these rights could be acknowledged and implemented at international, national and local levels. The Enter! project reached its goal in that it succeeded in producing a policy recommendation for a youth policy, in itself a major achievement. There is now a document on the social rights for young people, a document to promote and to refer to. The contents of the policy recommendation could be described partly as a road map, and partly as a reminder to young people that they do indeed have rights. As important as the document itself, was the fact that the Draft Recommendation was the outcome of a very specific participatory process.

Some of the challenges that the project faced in relation to this particular dimension address the policy contents: the difference between ideals and reality. Bearing in mind the limited mandate of the Council of Europe, there can be no promise for an easy delivery of rights. Quite clearly, the objectives and ambitions of the project were larger than the power to execute. It seems that this was not always clear to the participants. Some words of warning were also raised in that demanding “too much” in times of austerity would perhaps be counter-productive.

Other challenges relate to the working process: for the Enter! participants it was not always easy to understand and cope with the processing of the draft recommendations, to see what happened to suggestions made, and to link the everyday work at the local level to the long-term perspectives of international policy making.

There were also other questions raised relating to the framing and definitions of targets and how they were addressed. One word of warning concerned the limitation of the project to focus young people in disadvantaged areas: we must be aware of the risk of mistaking disadvantaged areas for areas that should somehow have less capable inhabitants. Another concern highlighted the choice of institutions to be mobilised for the improvement of the situation of young people. Youth policy is not the only field where youth matters are addressed, and the youth sector is not the only sector that influences the actual situation for young people. In order to bring about change, general policy and politics are as relevant, and need to be addressed.

One final point that kept coming back in the discussions concerned the difficulties of linking local activities to the European level with, for example, the policy dimensions.

Youth work

From the discussions it was very clear that basic knowledge and the mobilisation of resources was a very central theme to most participants. Many of them experienced not only lack of access to rights, but also had a very limited knowledge about rights. The Enter! project responded to this need on different levels.

Firstly, the project provided opportunities for exchange, and participants gained an insight into the situation of young people and youth organisations in other places and countries, and their needs and life conditions, along with the setting and realities of youth work. Getting together, sharing experiences and exploring things together: all this could be summarised in the one word: "empowerment". Finding similarities in conditions and ambitions when speaking with like-minded people became a real source of strength to participants.

Secondly, the Enter! project provided a wealth of knowledge on youth rights. Resources mobilised included practical examples, and the acquaintance with central documents on human and social rights, as well as with specific contacts with institutions and organisations active within the field of youth work and rights. It was the general opinion that the Enter! project itself had generated experiences and practices that should be shared on the Internet.

The reporting from most of the LTTC projects brought to the fore their extreme difficulties in getting through to politicians and administrative bodies responsible for the support to youth organisations. This is indeed a shared concern for the future. Lack of recognition and lack of support was reported as a major obstacle to the realisation of objectives. The general vulnerability of the voluntary youth sector is also a serious matter since it is often shouldered by young people who have not yet an established, adult working life, or who live marginalised lives. For them to be able to develop their resources and stand up against the stigmatisation of individuals

and residential areas, networking is of major importance. This remark also connects with the words of worry raised about the need for institutional support at the local level. Could the youth sector of the Council of Europe promote better results and sustainability through more active engagement in networks amongst former project participants?

Training for youth workers

The Long Term Training Course, in itself an established activity of the youth sector, had a pivotal role in the Enter! project. It was a comprehensive training course on rights, and how to understand and promote them. As a part of the LTTC, more than 30 local projects reached approximately 16,000 individuals across Europe. This can be described both as part of a dissemination process and as a multi-faceted channel for input to the whole of the Enter! project, and the policy document in particular.

Thanks to the leadership of the Council of Europe, several local authorities started to take an interest in their projects. To the LTTC participants this was a very positive signal of recognition, confirming that youth work counts. Thanks to the active support of the European Youth Foundation, 17 of the LTTC projects received funding.

Among the challenges discussed, some concerned the mismatch between ambitions and resources. Although positive for some people in a number of places, neither the LTTC nor the whole of the Enter! project could by any means change the overall situation of young people's social rights. Although some participants gained local recognition for their work, many more found it difficult getting noticed and drawing attention to their projects. Participants regretted not having more visible support from the Council of Europe, to clarify the links to the international framework.

Shortcomings in relation to the LTTC include the recruitment process, which did not reach out as widely as originally intended. Also, the background and needs of the participants turned out to be very diverse. One shortcoming on the side of the Youth Department concerned the lack of analysis of actual training needs as a pre-requisite for a strategic planning to be possible.

During the course, difficulties included the online part of the LTTC (too time consuming, not bilingual, not used by all participants to the degree intended), and the dominance of the English language (in spite of the course being advertised as being bilingual in English and French). After the course many participants still reported having difficulties with running a project, reporting and evaluating. Likewise, many found applying for funding very complicated. Identifying funding opportunities is one thing; having the skills to apply is something different.

Finally, the LTTC was time-consuming in terms of training, with youth workers having to take time off work to participate in the project. It is possible that some formal recognition of the course could have influenced the efforts made by participants.

Research

Support for the role of research and researchers in the Enter! concept was unanimous. The need to focus scientific dimensions of both preparation and evaluation phases was recognised by everyone.

However important a resource, research did not find its shape and role in this first Enter! project. A lack of clarity regarding roles and expectations probably explains in part why this dimension was never realised within Enter!. Research, along with other forms of institutional collaboration, are thus still resources to be explored and engaged to their full potential.

Recommendations

Based on the three years of experience from the first round of Enter! there are recommendations that should be fed into the planning and layout of the continued process. In the working groups these recommendations focused on three dimensions: education and training, youth work, and finally the European / institutional dimension, including the topic of youth policy.

Education and training

The recommendations for a new LTTC could be summarised in three points:

1. more effort into preparation;
2. more effort into follow-up; and
3. more effort into the dissemination and use of already existing resources.

As for the preparation phase, it would ideally include an analysis of training needs before selecting participants; it would allow for more time and effort to be put into the selection process in order both to involve new people and to enable a group to be able to function and grow together.

In order to promote the relations between authorities and NGOs at the local level, participants could be invited to apply in couples (one young person / youth worker alongside a representative from either the administration or the political field). According to experience, participating youth workers would be helped in their communication with local authorities by having some tangible “proof” (credentials, documents, letters of support) that they were part of an international project.

As regards the content of the LTTC, suggestions claimed that the project would benefit from a narrower focus, with fewer objectives. In keeping with the Youth Department’s field of expertise, non-formal education was suggested as an alternative way of addressing policy issues, by “building community capacity for change”. At the same time, other suggestions pointed to the benefits of greater diversity: “Allow more space for young people, not only a meeting at the end of the project” and “Invite young people at the beginning of the project. During this meeting, use more youth-friendly methodology”.

For contents there were also a number of concrete proposals raised: Plan for a diversity of projects, with more precise themes; facilitate funding for projects from different sources, through information sessions and coaching; initiate more activities such as exchange visits; complement the course with expert seminars on themes relevant to the course; introduce thematic training seminars in line with participants' suggestions on, for example, ethics or conflict management.

On the practical dimensions of the LTTC, some suggested a shorter duration, possibly also shorter seminars. There were also several comments on language(s), and whether another LTTC should or could be totally bilingual, or work in just one language? With both meetings and online parts of the project, there are both practical and financial dimensions to take into account with the language issue.

Some kind of recognition system for participants having completed the course would add weight and importance to the project.

A number of comments addressed the potential in earlier activities and experiences suggesting different types of capitalisation: for example, it was suggested that the Council of Europe should continue to accompany and support the network of youth workers developed as a follow-up to the LTTC; likewise, that the Council of Europe should provide support to organise local / national events to follow-up the recommendation. Other ideas addressed former LTTC and Enter! Youth Meeting participants as resources in themselves, suggesting that they be focal points and facilitators in follow-up activities in Enter! and in sending out a calling message for Enter! project 2012–2014. Participants could play important roles in the dissemination of information, through blogs, for example. Finally, the role of research was once again taken up, as an expertise to be taken advantage of to develop Enter! project 2012–2014.

Youth work dimension

The youth sector of the Council of Europe has accumulated a rich resource of educational materials for youth work, a resource that should not be forgotten or underestimated. Some suggestions concerned the further develop of educational tools, such as a guide for advocacy on the recommendation for access to social rights, a toolbox based on the experiences from Enter!. Concerning future reports of courses, it was also suggested that they be more independent products in order to be of more direct use and benefit to other courses.

With regards to printed or online resource materials, dissemination remains a topic of discussion. How could the Enter! resources reach still wider circles? What could be achieved through educational activities in schools or in collaboration with youth organisations?

One category of suggestions addressed the relationship between youth organisations and local and national levels of administration and policy making. Could an Enter! project 2012–2014 project somehow help the different stake holders to connect more efficiently?

The conditions for youth work, economic, social and other, differ significantly across Europe. One way of targeting this diversity could be to create regional participants'

meetings and facilitate the creation of networks. In this way, exchange could include both dimensions of diversity and of relative sameness, sharing some basic features regarding, for example, economic conditions.

All youth work encouraged and promoted by the Council of Europe has the participatory approach as a common denominator.

There is one final remark, regarding the youth work carried out within the LTTC framework, through the participants' projects: more realistic ambitions for the effects of these projects could perhaps help in terms of focusing on content, experimental dimensions and outcome, without having to worry about an over-ambitious overall goal.

European / institutional dimension

The Council of Europe has, on the one hand, a reputation for high quality work in its fields of expertise, and, on the other, it is an institution that is not as well-known as its work and agenda deserves. Making the most of the highly positive image and making the agenda more visible and more widely known would infuse energy into Enter! project 2012–2014. Today, international profiling is an integral part of how many municipalities promote themselves. It is likely that many local authorities would want to be associated with both the Council of Europe and the Enter! agenda. Seminars at local and national levels involving these authorities could be part of a future agenda.

The difficulties in linking local activities to a European policy level should not be underestimated and it is therefore worth exploring further the possible ways of developing support for participants in bringing the broader framework more alive. Promotion for the work and contents of Enter! could be done with the help of specific pilot projects that could target and support the national and local levels. The creation of good partnerships with organisations not involved in Enter! could also be part of an expanding international exchange. Specifically on ideas for international exchange, the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) Summer University in 2013 could perhaps devote some part of its agenda to include input from the experiences of Enter!

Strategic links with partners such as SALTO–Youth Inclusion Centre, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, UNESCO, and so on, are important for maintenance and development, as is the relationship with the European Youth Foundation.

All forms of exchange aiming at attracting the interest of potential partners and promoters require well-structured information. Clear messages about what is expected and what there is to gain are also helpful. A communication strategy could also be helpful for the future exchange and collaboration with researchers. The same suggestion applies to the Reference and Support Group.

Overall remarks

Change takes time. As one of the working groups wrote, Enter! needs to be regarded as a step and not a miracle. With this project young people started speaking about social rights, realising “what should be provided to us.”

Enter! was a brave undertaking. Reality demands a broad scope and Enter! ventured to combine the practical dimensions of everyday work with the long-term perspectives of international policy making.

Follow-up activities and progress reporting, evaluation and research are all dimensions which are essential for the Council of Europe, for other stakeholders

and for all the individuals involved. What has happened? With what results? Which efforts proved functional and effective? Inherent in every activity is a learning process to benefit from. In a situation where needs are big and resources scarce, it is of utmost importance to choose well what to do, when and how.

Working group suggestions include the use of existing, or the creation of new monitoring mechanisms for social rights at the local level, perhaps after consultation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. One recommendation was to support the course curriculum with research.

Last but not least, the youth policy document needs to be kept high on the agenda, with a significant emphasis on promotion: the same amount of work put into the creation of the policy recommendation is now needed to take it more closely towards its realisation. Local and national level activities are needed to disseminate the recommendations, as well as international activities to exchange good practices. In this process the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, alongside all participants and stakeholders of the Enter! Project, need to join forces to continue the good work.

What gave the Enter! project its special character was that it ventured into the area of policy making, aiming at forging out the essence of social rights for young people, along with recommendations for how these rights could be acknowledged and implemented at international, national and local levels.

The support mechanisms around Enter! and the forms for co-operation and collaboration are an area for further development.

CHAPTER 9

Further resources – exemplifying support mechanisms

The support mechanisms around Enter! and the forms for co-operation and collaboration are an area for further development. In particular the composition, role and functioning of the Reference and Support Group represents a huge potential. Below follows, by way of examples, more information on the working methods and conclusions of two of the organisations that were part of the Reference and Support Group and that provided different types of input to the Enter! project.

The European Youth Foundation. “With and for young people”

The European Youth Foundation (EYF) is a fund established in 1972 by the Council of Europe to provide financial support for European youth activities. Its purpose is to encourage co-operation among young people in Europe by providing financial support to those European youth activities which serve the promotion of peace, understanding and co-operation in a spirit of respect for the Council of Europe's fundamental values, such as human rights, democracy, tolerance and solidarity.

One of the main aims of the European Youth Foundation is to support young people, in particular from disadvantaged backgrounds, to find ways to meet both the challenges they face, as well as their own aspirations. Within its programme of support to local pilot projects, and in order to increase the local impact of the Enter! project, the European Youth Foundation has had a special focus since 2009 on improving the access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In 2010 and 2011 the European Youth Foundation provided financial support to 17 projects proposed by participants of the Enter! Long-Term Training Course. In March 2012 the European Youth Foundation presented its own evaluation of their involvement with the project.

In this evaluation the European Youth Foundation states that “... we have noticed that the Enter! projects do touch upon very serious and important questions and challenges faced by young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and it would be useful for the projects to be built on more clearly defined objectives so they can produce the needed impact”. (*Evaluation Report. Enter! Pilot Projects*, EYF, 2012) Youth projects, being tools for social change community development and strengthening civil society, need to be of a high quality. With regards to the Enter! pilot projects, the evaluation suggests some improvements in their management, among them the following:

- ▶ Ownership: More involvement of young people in every aspect of the project, enabling them to create projects according to their needs, with and for young people.
- ▶ Setting up specific aims, objectives and outcomes for the activities: A more clear analysis of the problems the projects address, in order to avoid vague aims and objectives, and to create solid and strong outcomes.
- ▶ Evaluation and follow-up activities: Progress can be made for a more realistic evaluation of the projects, to ensure that they represent a true and honest picture of internal project realities. As the majority of the projects only mention positive remarks from the participants, we encourage the analysis of aspects that did not have the expected outcome or that can be improved. Follow-up activities need to be more precise and show the multiplying effect, which will be the impact on the organisation in the future.

As a conclusion, the European Youth Foundation expresses a wish to achieve more active co-operation between the training courses.

SALTO-Youth Participation Resource Centre. “helping young people to swim ...”

SALTO-Youth Participation Resource Centre (SALTO being short for Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities within the European YOUTH programme) is a network of eight Resource Centres working on European priority areas within the youth field. Founded in 2000, SALTO-Youth is part of the European Commission's Training Strategy within the Youth in Action programme, and works in synergy and complementarity with other partners in the field.

The role of SALTO in “helping young people to swim rather than carrying them over the water” chimes very well with a polyphony of voices in and around Enter!, stressing both the competence and the right to self-determination among young people.

The general activities of SALTO comprise support to Youth in Action national agencies, the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Co-operation between the European Union and the Council of Europe (EuroMed) and the European Commission in terms of contact-making activities, training and information, advanced learning and training opportunities within Youth in Action priority areas, including publications and methods for the development and dissemination of resources for European youth work.

With regards to inclusion, SALTO's mission statement reads:

The SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre provides resources (training tools, publications, information ...) for persons and agencies supporting young people with fewer opportunities (inclusion workers, youth workers, social workers, National Agencies and coordinators) and provides opportunities for training, exchange and reflection on their inclusion practice. The SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre works towards the visibility, accessibility and transparency of its inclusion work and resources and towards making ‘inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities’ a widely supported priority. <http://www.coe.int/web/european-youth-foundation>

The statement was adopted as far back as 2004 and since then a large number of activities have been initiated. Besides the courses on inclusion, the SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre collects, develops and spreads resources for inclusion activities (e.g. background texts, training methodologies and presentations about social inclusion). A list of experienced trainers in the field of inclusion helps facilitate further training activities on inclusion. Via the European Training Calendar and the Inclusion Newsletter, visitors can access information on existing training activities on Inclusion in Europe. Last but not least, the SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre supports the National Agencies and the European Commission in their Inclusion strategies and activities.

The core idea behind SALTO is to not “reinvent the wheel”, that is, don’t start from zero: make use of all the work that has already been done! There are answers to what works and what doesn’t. This is also the view held by the European Youth Foundation, when noticing in relation to Enter! how “the educational materials of the Council were not sufficiently studied”.

What follows here is a brief recapitulation of the many suggestions and recommendations put forward for the further development of Enter!

CHAPTER 10

Suggestions and recommendations summarised

This report contains many sets of conclusions and recommendations, partly overlapping but all relevant in that they target specific dimensions of topics or the interest and responsibility of a special stakeholder. A brief reminder brings up the following key words.

The recommendations of the **Youth Department of the Council of Europe** were mainly directed at issues that concerned the fields of responsibility of precisely the organiser

- ▶ bringing the project to a closure, and mapping its result
- ▶ seeing that the yield of the work reached the relevant national and international bodies
- ▶ preparing for the continuation of the process by way of an Enter! project 2012–2014, and in this paying attention to participants, contents and forms of collaboration and support
- ▶ continuing the overall engagement in advocating for social rights within youth policy of the Council of Europe.

The message from the **Youth meeting** was directed at the political level, the Council of Europe as well as the member states. It asked for the following:

- ▶ attention to the challenges faced by young people
- ▶ recognition of the potential held by young people hereby arguing for
- ▶ the implementation of youth policies based on social rights
- ▶ a systematic follow-up on both problems and examples of good practice
- ▶ continuous and concrete support at all levels to secure young people's social rights and their full and equal participation as citizens.

The **Policy Recommendation** directed at member states "Recommends that the governments of the member States develop and implement sustainable, evidence-based public policies that take into consideration the specific situations and needs of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods". It lists and explores eight fields of importance:

- ▶ living conditions (including education and training, employment and occupation, health, housing, information and counselling, sports, leisure and culture)

- ▶ segregation and social inclusion
- ▶ promoting meaningful participation opportunities in the planning and management of their living environment
- ▶ participation on equal terms as active citizens without discrimination
- ▶ the role of youth work, youth workers and youth organisations in preventing discrimination, social exclusion and marginalisation of young people and promoting their citizenship notably through non-formal education
- ▶ the gender-dimension in both the development and implementation of youth policies
- ▶ the prevention of violence.

The **LTTC evaluation recommendations** limited themselves to the scope of the evaluation – the Long-Term Training Course itself. The LTTC, however, represents a core activity within the Council of Europe youth field and hence also within the Enter! project, for example in terms methodology and the inherent focus on multiplying effects. The evaluator summarised her recommendations for the LTTC in four sections. Many of these remarks are highly relevant to the project as a whole:

- ▶ Social analysis and choice of course model – suggesting an in-depth analysis of training needs, a better use of the Youth Department’s experience, more concentration on educational content and more realistic expectations.
- ▶ Structure and features of the LTTC – underlining the importance of the mentoring system, of an active involvement of local authorities, of a more elaborate recruitment and selection process of participants and of an improved assessment and certification system.
- ▶ Curriculum and contents – suggesting a rethinking of key concepts (e.g. the focus on youth policies rather than policy in general), a stronger link to relevant research and more emphasis on funding and management competences.
- ▶ Inter/intra-sectorial co-operation – underlining the need to clarify roles and mutual expectations in relation to the statutory bodies, other Council of Europe bodies and the Enter! reference and support group. Relations with the European Youth Foundation, whose active involvement and support was of substantial importance, can also be further developed.

The **Reflection paper for the Evaluation meeting**, written by Yael Ohana, addressed the whole of the project when outlining and suggesting the following:

- ▶ a stronger and narrower focus, more clearly defined and with fewer objectives
- ▶ means adequate to ambitions
- ▶ mechanisms and structure to facilitate and support inter-sectorial co-operation.

The Reflection Paper also highlighted what was called five dilemmas to be confronted:

- ▶ You can’t just ignore the national level.
- ▶ The instruments we have at our disposal to affect change are not always well adapted to the change we want to affect.
- ▶ The budgets and executive power for changing the social situation of young people are not in the hands of the authorities responsible for youth.

- ▶ Achieving social rights for young people experiencing disadvantage might mean not using the rights speech.
- ▶ Innovation is the way forward, but we can probably achieve more by doing what we know best.

The **Working group reports** touched on many different matters, such as:

- ▶ the diverse realities of youth work
- ▶ the importance of coming together and speaking with like-minded people
- ▶ the importance of getting social right on the agenda, and realising “what should be provided to us”
- ▶ the importance of the active interest from the Council of Europe for social rights for young people
- ▶ the difficulties in getting local authorities interested and the additional support that the Council of Europe might give
- ▶ the difficulties with languages for non-English speaking participants
- ▶ the difficulties in understanding and coping with the processing of the draft recommendations
- ▶ the importance of disseminating results and following up on the recommendations
- ▶ the need to find a monitoring mechanism for social rights
- ▶ the value of introducing a research component into Enter!.

The **European Youth Foundation**, focusing on the management and results of the LTTC participants’ projects, proposes a discussion on:

- ▶ the ownership of the projects
- ▶ more specific aims, objectives and outcomes for the activities
- ▶ a more realistic evaluation of the projects.

The EYF also expresses a wish to achieve more active co-operation between the training courses.

SECTION V

**SUMMING UP THE ESSENCE
AND THE LESSONS
OF THE ENTER! PROJECT**

Given the universal tendency among the powerless to take on guilt for their situation, it is vital to establish a baseline value to refer back to and gather strength from. The Enter! project certainly managed to achieve this well.

CHAPTER 11

Project key concepts revisited

What does one best sum up in a process that lasted for three years and that involved so many stakeholders, participants and activities, a process that addressed such comprehensive and complex issues, reaching far beyond what can be captured under a one-word headline “Youth”? In this chapter we will again return to the key concepts of the Enter! project – those contained in its subtitle – relating them to the current state of affairs in Europe as well as to some of the needs and ambitions expressed by the project’s stakeholders and others.

On access

We feel like somebody has stolen our future ...

... and we don't know who this somebody is. So we often blame everybody. And we get aggressive and hostile towards each other. Because we don't know who created this. Breaking cars and windows we know is not the answer. I think young people should be united together in making politics, the way it is meant to be. And when I say politics I mean it in the ancient meaning of the word, to be a part of your community, to be a conscious citizen who actually offers. *Mary Drosopoulos, Greece, participant in the Enter! Youth Meeting, September 2011*

In a film available on the Enter! website, a number of participants of the Youth Meeting in Strasbourg, September 2011, give their comments on what it is like to live as a young person in Europe today, with all the things that make life beautiful and those that make it hard and difficult. On the one hand family, friends, life, music and philosophy; on the other, the economic crisis, the recession, the system, unemployment, loneliness, racism, inequality and an upsurge of different forms of discrimination.

Those who most need their rights to be protected are often the least well equipped to claim them. Legal protection of rights has to be accompanied by determined social policy measures to ensure that everyone in practice has access to their rights. (*White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue 2008, p. 26.*)

The White paper calls for a new approach in order to achieve inclusion, and points out intercultural dialogue as the route to follow (ibid. p. 8). It is worth noting that young people are not among the categories it addresses. The document departs from an understanding of diversity as referring to ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritages (ibid. p. 9). Looking at the challenges side by side – that of minorities and that of young people – clearly demonstrates the inherent inertia of the system and the struggle that awaits all those that are working for a change. The logic of the following passage on gender equality serves well the purpose of illustrating potentially shared interests and challenges:

Gender equality injects a positive dimension into intercultural dialogue. The complexity of individual identity allows solidarities inconceivable within a stereotyped, communalist perspective. The very fact that gender inequality is a cross-cutting issue means that intercultural projects engaging women from “minority” and “host” backgrounds may be able to build upon shared experiences (ibid. p. 20).

Increased equality may sound like a threat for those that would have to share or even to give up their own seats as, for example, political representatives. Nevertheless, a more equal distribution of resources, including the right to be heard and listened to, is the number one feature that promises a better future for any one society – and for all its members. At least this is the message in a study by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett: *The spirit level. Why more equal societies almost always do better* (2009). What the authors, professors in social epidemiology and epidemiology respectively, provide evidence for is that more equal societies are better societies, for everyone.

Evidence is piling up that more equal societies leave smaller carbon footprints and that they handle climate change in better ways. More unequal countries leave larger footprints, produce more waste, consume more water and fly more. Maybe this is because more equal societies promote a stronger sense of shared responsibility, something which in turn has an impact on political action against global warming. (Wilkinson & Pickett 2009, p. 314, Swedish edition, my translation.)

On social rights

To think that there are mechanisms for young people to be heard ...

... it's a really positive thing. But then it takes so much work for a young person's voice to be heard at this level. You know, this is two years on the Enter! project. I have learned so many things that I didn't know before and I'm trying to share that with young people in our community. I think it should be easier for young people to know their things, and easier for them to get to this level of being heard. *Fiona Joyce, Ireland, participant in the Enter! Youth Meeting, September 2011*

In the Enter! project, the topic of social rights can be said to have had two sets of target groups: on the one hand, the member countries and those with power to change and improve the situation of young people; on the other hand, young people themselves. Knowledge and empowerment stand out as central dimensions in this process. The Enter! project brought to the fore a wide range of support mechanisms: the ratified international documents, the methodological guides and the baseline

studies – together with the institutions and organisations working with and for young people and their social rights.

It ends up bearing fruit, but ... At the Youth Policy Seminar which took place in Strasbourg December 2010, Marie-José Schmitt, from the Conference of International Non-governmental Organisations (INGO) gave a presentation on how the Social Charter can support a recommendation on the access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

It is a great privilege for me; firstly, I am very happy to be here and to hear everything that is being said. I am very privileged to be my age, as I was involved, when a law student, in the birth and promulgation of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights. Later I was involved in the first version of the European Social Charter (adopted in 1961), and then, including drafting a small part of it, in the Revised European Social Charter (that came into force 1999).

When I say it's a privilege, it is because it gives me a different perspective on time. You have to understand that the work we do in this building always takes a lot of time. It ends up bearing fruit, but you need to remember that defences take a lot of time. So, be patient. You will make your recommendation. It will not necessarily end up in the waste paper bin; it will end up not exactly as you expected, but it will always produce results. I want to tell you that in my role as a grandmother. [...]

Remember this. The Charter provides you with ways of defending people's rights, as it covers the legal aspect. This concerns migrants too, knowing that there is, with regard to migrants, a damper, a limit, in that it relates to migrants residing legally in a particular country. The Charter as a whole is a set of commitments by the states. These commitments culminate in the final two articles: Article 30 on the protection from poverty and social exclusion, where you will find material to help you prepare your future recommendation, and a no less important article, the final Article 31, on the right to housing. Regarding the right to housing, it was the questioning of France in relation to Article 31 that in the end led to the adoption of the law we in France now call the "legally enforceable right to housing".

I am not saying it is a good law, I am merely saying that it at least led to there being a law. *Marie-José Schmitt, Conference of International NGOs of the Council of Europe.*

Giving a concrete shape to human rights, the Social Charter had a privileged position in the Enter! project. As the White Paper concludes, the socio-economic rights arising from the Revised European Social Charter address many of the issues which can bear particularly heavily on people belonging to disadvantaged groups (access to employment, education, social protection, health and housing) (ibid. p. 25). Again, this phrasing illustrates the resemblances between (many) minorities and (many) young people in being at risk of marginalisation.

As the evaluator of the LTTC comments (Ohana 2011, p. 73), not all countries sending participants to the course have ratified the Social Charter. However, whether or not the Charter holds in national courts, it can still serve to raise awareness on the issue of social rights. Given the universal tendency among the powerless to take on guilt for their situation, it is vital to establish a baseline value to refer back to and gather strength from. The Enter! project certainly managed to achieve this well.

The social inclusion of young people is an imperative to any society. Social inclusion – and exclusion – is a multi-dimensional process and many key issues reach far beyond the scope of the youth sector's mandate. In relation to the Enter! project and

its coupling between social rights and a youth policy, some question marks arise. The dilemma is commented upon by the evaluator of the LTTC when asking if the focus should be “youth policy” or just “policy”.

It also needs to be taken into account that youth policy, as such, may not be the most important policy area for addressing the challenges that the LTTC projects were dealing with – in other words, *specific sectoral policy* areas may be more important for changing or improving the situation of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. As such, the LTTC might have engaged a little more actively with some of those *other policy areas*. This said, through the LTTC, youth policy is a sector to which participants have gained better access and several participants working on policy related follow-up activities are convinced that the development of a new or the improvement of an existing local youth policy is important for redressing some of the challenges faced by the young people they work with in the disadvantaged neighbourhood where they are active. It remains to be seen if they can convince the local policy makers of same. (Ohana 2011, p. 77, my emphasis)

On young people

I would like to find people who think of youth as powerful young people ...

... who can make some changes and make something to improve their country and their town. And not that young people represent a problem. Actually they are not problems. Young people are powerful, smart and young and creative. *Jelena Strugar, Montenegro, participant in the Youth Meeting, September 2011.*

Many European countries have ageing populations. On a continent approaching retirement worries multiply: Who will work and pay taxes and who will take care of the elderly? Clearly these questions are at odds with the fact that such a high proportion of young people are denied access to the labour market. Youth unemployment seems to reach new all-time high levels every day. What's more, the situation of migrants and young people of minority background is similarly bleak across Europe. Even if young people will eventually be needed as labour force they are not paid much attention in the political life at present: firstly, because the elderly represent a larger category of voters; additionally, also most likely because elected representatives can identify more easily with the elderly, bearing in mind that the average age among politicians in, for instance, the European Parliament in 2010 was 54.8 years (Mahidi 2010, p.17).

Not being needed in a period in life when you are about to find your role in society is a disturbing experience and a difficult starting point for entering and exploring an independent adult life. This is quite different from how light-hearted Patti Smith summarises (in retrospect though) what she felt when, in 1966 aged 20, she arrived in New York: “Today was a Monday; I was born on Monday. It was a good day to arrive in New York City. No one expected me. Everything awaited me” (Smith 2010, p. 25).

In the long run, however, young people as a category hold the upper hand – they are the ones that can expand views and visions, adapt to new circumstances, and be future-orientated. The 8th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth discussed the major demographic changes that Europe will face in the coming years, concluding that they will pose “distinct challenges to contemporary social

models and democratic governance. In this context, the youth sector's emphasis on intergenerational dialogue and solidarity should strive to ensure that the 'voice' of young people is still heard", suggesting also that "the question of lowering the voting age could be revisited" (*The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020*. 2008, p. 15). However, for this to have concrete relevance for those that are young today, things will need to move forward fast – youth is a transverse condition, and whether it is a matter of young people's voices to be "still" heard as the quote says, or "finally" heard is maybe best left as an open question.

A summer of disorder: riots or protests? In August 2011 a death shooting by the police sparked a series of riots across England. "Reading the riots" was the headline of the Guardian's initiative to investigate what they labelled "England's summer of disorder" (Internet address in References). Underlying the project was the frustration over the government turning down requests for a public inquiry. The riots were interpreted as self-explanatory looting by hooligans and the response was given accordingly: strict law enforcement. All in all the unrest involved 15,000 people and resulted in a total number of 4,000 people being arrested.

Based on a wealth of material, mainly tweets and interviews, reporters and researchers were able to refute many simplified explanations. Those involved came from poor districts but they were not steered or organised through social media.

"I still to this day don't class it as a riot," said one young man in Tottenham when being interviewed, "I think it was a protest." He was far from alone. Testimonies challenge the conventional wisdom about the riots: that which began as a protest against the police shooting was stripped of political meaning before it spread across the country, fuelled by "mindless" or "copycat" opportunists. At the heart of what the rioters talked about lay a deep sense of injustice. For some this was economic: the lack of money, jobs or opportunity. For others it was more broadly social: not just the absence of material things, but how they felt they were treated compared with others.

For young people in particular what came across was a profound sense of alienation. Those who feel they have little or no stake in society's order, as the archbishop of Canterbury put it, feel "little obligation to sustain it". Or, as one north Londoner in his mid-20s said: "When no one cares about you, you're going to eventually make them care, you're going to cause a disturbance".

Tendentious interpretations of motives and reasons are also familiar from other contexts. In July 2011 there were the mass murder attacks in Oslo and at Utöya island in Norway. In March 2012 there was another series of murders in Toulouse, France. In both cases the outcome was terror, violence and death. In Norway the discussion is still ongoing as to whether the perpetrator is mentally ill, something he himself protests against. In Toulouse the framing has been very different. Here the murderer has been described as an "Islamist", a full-fledged ideological fundamentalist.

Diversities and commonalities. Quite clearly, young people in Europe today are far from a homogeneous group. Diversity is an ever-present ingredient in the work of the youth sector. The All Different – All Equal campaigns not only promoted this attitude but were in themselves testimonies to something today inherent in the organisation. Even if there were no direct references to these campaigns it is probably

fair to say that many diversity dimensions, including the diversity of diversity, are today mainstreamed in the youth sector.

Alongside diversity, young people also share some common features, for instance the experience of being subjected to well-intended but still very regulated, paternalistic and fragmented intervention. More often than not, it seems, young people are described as being part of the problem, rather than part of the solution.

In her report from the Enter! Youth Meeting, Filipa Menezes addresses this dilemma, concluding that when young people feel they are being treated with disrespect they will not take invitations seriously. Furthermore, young people in situations of exclusion defend themselves against being defined with something

Alongside diversity, young people also share some common features, for instance the experience of being subjected to well-intended but still very regulated, paternalistic and fragmented intervention.

they hope is just a phase. As she states: "The latest perspectives on social exclusion highlight that it constitutes a process. This means that it is not a general unchangeable characteristic of the individuals but a consequence of accumulated ruptures relative to precise domains." Young people deserve to be portrayed with their potential, not just their "problems" (Menezes 2011, p. 13).

Immature, unreliable, inexperienced? In his thesis *The young and the rightless?* (2010), Mourad Mahidi discusses young people as a category in relation to age. There is no one clear-cut definition, he concludes. Traditionally, youth could be said to encompass the time "between puberty and marriage". Departing from that same notion of social age he finds that different Council of Europe activities have used different definitions for different activities. The All Different – All Equal campaign defined people between 12 and 30 years as its target group; Youth in Action addressed those between 15 and 28 years, sometimes 13 to 30 year olds.

In relation to participation in formal political systems, age is not open to interpretations. Maturity is measured in years but not in a coherent way. Mahidi points to the conflict in that young people can be legally liable but still not able to stand for elections. Where is the logic in somebody being able to be a voter, but not an actor? Mahidi's main argument for the active participation of young people is that it could change or broaden the agenda to include matters of importance to young people.

The way things stand at present, young people in one important aspect qualify to be called a minority. They are a minority not in numbers maybe, but most definitely in power.

On disadvantaged neighbourhoods

In my opinion they have to listen, it's not a choice anymore.

I mean in five, ten, twenty years, if they want Europe to become a better place for people to live in, it's not a choice. And these are the things we see and have seen in Africa – and this is the question I get from people in Sweden, Rami do you think that the things happening in Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt, could maybe happen in Europe one day, or Sweden?

Maybe they will. Because we the young people who live here we see that there are so many things that are not equal to everyone. We have our rights. Don't talk about Africa and forget the countries that we live in. *Rami Al-Khamisi, Sweden, participant in the Enter! Youth Meeting, September 2011.*

Geography has a very concrete impact on people's lives. How and where we live, where we are able to travel to, visit, or move, without feeling out of place or being physically hindered. All this is part of what shapes our lives and our possibilities to understand the position of the other(s).

Given this, it is not surprising to find that space is one of the dimensions addressed by the White Paper. The headline reads "Recommendations and policy orientations for future actions: the shared responsibility of the core actors":

Creating space for intercultural dialogue is a collective task. Without appropriate, accessible and attractive spaces, intercultural dialogue will just not happen, let alone prosper. Public authorities and all social actors are invited to develop intercultural dialogue in the spaces of everyday life and in the framework of the respect of fundamental freedoms. There are an unlimited number of possibilities for creating such space.

Public authorities are responsible for organising civic life and urban space in such a way that the opportunities for dialogue based on freedom of expression and the principles of democracy proliferate. Physical places and the built environment are a strategic element of social life. (*White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue 2008*, p. 45)

Reality, however, shows that the principle guiding the White Paper is not the only force at work in urban planning. In many countries what we see is instead tendencies towards increased segregation. The privatisation of urban space alongside "gated communities", and housing projects designed for privileged population categories are tendencies visible across Europe. None of this facilitates everyday interaction on equal terms between members of society.

In the novel *Kiffe kiffe tomorrow*, Faiza Guène, aged 19 when the book was published in 2004, lets Doria, her main character, relate how it feels living only a few metro stops outside of Paris but in a whole different kind of France. One media voice described the novel as "a tale for anyone who has ever lived outside looking in, especially from that alien country called adolescence".

When I was little and Mom took me to the sandbox, none of the other kids wanted to play with me. I called it the 'French kids' sandbox,' because it was right in the middle of a development with houses instead of towers and there were mostly full-blooded native French families living there. Once, they were all making a circle and no one would hold my hand because it was the day after Eid, the festival of the sheep, and Mom had put some henna on the palm of my right hand. Those morons thought I was dirty. They didn't understand the first thing about social diversity and cultural melting

pots. There's still such a well-drawn between the Paradise Estate where I live and the Rousseau housing development. Massive wire fencing that stinks of rust it's so old and a stone wall that runs the whole length of the divide. Worse than the Maginot Line or the Berlin Wall. (Guène 2004, p. 82)

Yael Ohana, in the LTTTC Final Evaluation, puts a question mark after the project's territorial dimension:

One might also debate the extent to which it made sense to conceptualise a course for those working in disadvantaged neighbourhoods rather than for those working with disadvantaged young people with a specific focus on the geographical dimension of their disadvantage. (Ohana 2011, p.75).

The choice of including a dimension of space into Enter! was discussed repeatedly in different contexts of the project. As one of the working groups of the Evaluation Meeting asked: "Is it right to use the term 'disadvantaged' as it carries with it a lot of baggage?" Likewise, as Filipa Menezes concludes, "The participants in the project live in disadvantaged areas but they are not disadvantaged and they want to make a stand on this! [...] They also want to make clear that not all young people in these neighbourhoods are looking for trouble as the mass media portraits" (Menezes 2011, p. 25).

What is obvious from both these remarks is the fear among young people for being stigmatised and alienated as a result of the focus on and interpretation of what certain neighbourhoods represent. The stories from across Europe are too many to be dismissed when it comes to the cost of having the "wrong" address, the "wrong" background. It gives rise to demeaning comments and attitudes; it can easily land a job application in the waste paper basket.

Turning voices into noises. This drift from seemingly neutral geography to highly biased interpretations of residents' motives and ambitions is supported also by research.

The tendency for instance, to strip actions of political meaning, which we saw in the analysis of the events in the UK in summer 2011, is central also to the research of Mustafa Dikeç, presented in the study *Badlands of the republic. Space, politics and urban policy* (Blackwell 2007). His focus for research is 'space', more specifically the French suburbs. The banlieues, he argues, are not a given entity but conceived as part of policy processes. Pointing out areas as problematic is a contagious labelling that easily sticks with the population, in particular with young people, who are consequently met with disbelief, mistrust and fear, when, as he puts it, voices are turned into noises. Dikeç exemplifies with how a police order "highlighted less the difficult situations in banlieues than the 'threat' posed by them, contributing thus to the gradual disappearance of the political significance of revolts" (ibid., p. 173). This in turn paves the way for a shift of focus, from growing inequalities and discriminations to menaces to "the values of the republic", French identity and the authority of the state.

Rather than the 'ethnic' origins or alleged religious affiliations of those who revolt, attention should be given to the fact that revolting geographies [...] are also geographies of inequalities, discrimination and repression. (ibid. p. 177)

While not dismissing the problematic sides to the focus on “disadvantaged neighbourhoods”, the geographical dimension indeed has some positive features as well. Coming back to the descriptions from the Kyiv Conference 2008, on The Future of the Council of Europe Youth policy (see page 14 above), about young people caring about democracy and engagement while at the same time being critical towards institutions and less likely to become formal members of associations, the neighbourhood framework is definitely a potential to explore. Young people are not uninterested in society. They care about contemporary and future issues, but they organise differently from the generations before. Similarly, they do not necessarily vote just because it is required by duty. However, they do engage and act.

Neighbourhood-based work represents a different way for young people to get involved in civic matters. For institutions that want to address and mobilise young people it could be a more open kind of invitation. Therefore, it seems a wise strategy to identify issues that can be of shared interest to institutions as well as to different target groups among young people.

Young people (most people!) tend to be highly loyal to the neighbourhood where they live. Several of the LTTTC participants’ projects revolved around notions such as pride and dignity: standing up for a neighbourhood under constant threat for being marginalised by institutions and majority community. This is the case with the setting of Megafonen in Sweden, the LTTTC project of Rami Al-Khamisi, which he describes as follows in a debate article:

We believe that only local people have the knowledge to get the right measures and practices in place for the Järvalyftet [the Järva neighbourhood lift] to really take off. Therefore, the local steering groups and an increased dialogue with the residents is crucial. (*Svenska Dagbladet*, 4 May 2012.)

Human rights issues as well as matters of quality of life have very clear connections to environmental issues, in particular if we include not only the young generation of today but also future generations in the picture. Young people are highly aware of the threats that the modern, Western lifestyle represents to our shared future. They are also more likely to let their knowledge and ideology inform their choices. Energy costs for both production and consumption have very obvious connotations to geography, which again lands us in the neighbourhood.

While not negating any of the difficulties pointed out, there are also definitely dimensions of geography

that can suit local needs and young people’s ambitions, as with Megafonen and its engagement for social justice. Their goal of increased citizen participation and better conditions for people is clearly based in the local setting, in the neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood-based work represents a different way for young people to get involved in civic matters. For institutions that want to address and mobilise young people it could be a more open kind of invitation.

On the pivotal role of non-formal education

You cannot solve somebody else's problem for them ...

... but you can show them the way, you can give them ideas. *Nelson Rosa, Portugal, participant in the Enter! Youth Meeting in Strasbourg, September 2011.*

Without being part of the project title itself, the methodology of the youth sector of the Council of Europe constitutes the basis for the whole of the project.

Acknowledging young people as active subjects and as indispensable co-creators of sustainable solutions for the future is key, both for credibility and for the success of a project like Enter!. The participative methodology that the Youth Department has developed over the years was tested in new ways during Enter!, particularly through the coupling of local experiences and activities with the development of a youth policy recommendation. To make these different contexts really interact, with full respect to the differing frameworks, is a process that will take time to develop: on this road, the Enter! project was an inventive first step. Young people themselves need to feed their experience into baseline studies and diagnoses, and they need to be active carriers of interventions in the implementation of conclusions and recommendation.

In this context the participatory methodology of the Youth Department is very important. Active collaboration is the way both to knowledge and to mutual confidence and respect. "By giving young people opportunities to create their own programmes of education and information, qualities like commitment, loyalty and idealism can be engendered." (*Domino 2004, p. 9*) Ideally, one would hope that the presence of young people within established institutions of political power would inspire increased attention for these same qualities among the traditionally powerful as well.

One interface of particular importance to the youth field is that of education, with its formal and non-formal dimensions.

The Directorate of Youth and Sport, especially through the European Youth Centres and the European Youth Foundation, has acquired an undisputable reputation for expertise in developing educational approaches and materials suitable for use both in formal and non-formal contexts as well as in different cultural environments. (*Compass 2002, p. 10*)

Non-formal education enjoys far from the same resources or recognition as the formal education system. Whereas schools and universities make up part of the backbone of any society, non-formal education is in many contexts almost invisible, and in other contexts thrown suspicion on for being subversive. The potential for reaching out with important topics from the Council of Europe agenda, such as for instance human rights education, or – as in Enter! – the issue of social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, is one factor behind the recurring discussions about a closer collaboration between the non-formal and formal sectors of education. Also the very fact that the target group of the Youth Department activities are both youth workers or members of associations and, very often, students, inspires the discussions about inspiration and exchange.

The formal education system, however necessary, has a dual face in relation to the fostering of individuals. It aims to prepare children and young people for an independent

adult life and for a life as responsible citizens. However, the very system also serves to grade students and create hierarchies in ways that is not easily combined with participatory working methods. Still another difference between the two systems, the formal and the non-formal, is that the formal education system works with given curricula that for most of the time leave little space for initiatives from the student themselves, just as with Mahatma Gandhi, who, when asked about what he thought about Western civilisation, said that it would be a good idea. Along the same line of thinking, maybe one could say that non-formal education has a potential to infuse more of democracy and participation into the formal education system. In doing so it must, however, stay true to its own principles of participatory methods based on the belief in young people as able co-creators.

In a context of economic crisis, the solutions that are needed cannot only be based on economic resources but should also take into account citizens themselves as a source of ideas for innovative solutions based on local needs. For this shift in thinking and acting to occur it will also take a shift of generations. Young people are much more open to social, economic and environmental needs and they are more open to change.

CHAPTER 12

Conclusion. The Enter! legacy in view of its continuation

Rights are for all. Young people are entitled to being included on equal terms, as beneficiaries from and contributors to a society respectful of all its members. For these simple facts to be remembered, respected and applied, the Enter! project promises good for the future, being a vehicle for both shared dreams and hard work.

The need for a redistribution of words and wealth

How can the access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods be secured? The Council of Europe youth sector is addressing an unacceptable situation identified by international bodies as well as by countless youth organisations where young people, on a local and daily basis, strive to secure their basic rights and their rightful positions as co-responsible citizens.

Within this context, what can a project like Enter! achieve? What should the priorities of Enter! project 2012–2014 be, given the experience gathered?

No one project can change the world. Needless to say, there are many forces at work when it comes to the distribution of words and wealth. In particular in times of austerity the importance of securing a good infrastructure for all – especially the children that will in no time become young people – is regularly neglected. A fire-brigade strategy can never be the adequate reaction to situations that need not have occurred (cf. *Some still more equal than others? Or equal opportunities for all?* 2011, p. 10). In well-off segments and regions young people get a lot of attention, but mostly as consumers. Where poverty rules they are instead at risk of being consumed, as cheap labour. In either setting, much too little attention is given to young people's potential and right to have their say and contribute to society.

The value of a broad scope

In the eyes of this author, the broad scope of the Enter! project can be seen as an attempt to map the totality of the current situation, allowing thinking and action, dreaming and protesting to coexist and to take place against the background of the other. The dynamics were summarised by Head of Education and Training Unit Rui Gomes in his presentation at the Youth Information and Counselling seminar.

To sum-up, the Enter! project wants, between 2009 and 2012, to move in the following directions:

- ▶ From practice to policy
- ▶ From the local to the European
- ▶ From young people to the institution
- ▶ From awareness to action
- ▶ Social rights as an essential part of human rights
- ▶ Social cohesion as a shared objective – ensuring well-being of everyone, minimising disparities and avoiding marginalisation
- ▶ Living, learning, acting for human rights ...
- ▶ Non-formal education principles
- ▶ Intercultural learning practice
- ▶ Young people as a resource, as actors for change and part of the solution, rather than a cost or the problem. (Youth Information and Counselling. Seminar Documentation, 2010, p. 17)

Meanwhile, the very same broad scope of Enter! receives many comments for maybe being too broad, too vague and difficult to review. These comments do make sense, both in relation to the general difficulties in relating details of activities to the full picture, and in relation to the need to use limited resources (human and financial) strategically. In the above there are many good suggestions about clearer definitions and narrower objectives. Directed at sub-targets and specific activities, the suggestions could be very helpful in setting the level and character of expectations for different project dimensions.

The need for follow-up, evaluation and research

When it comes to determining needs, setting achievable goals and evaluating results, there is much to be gained from deeper and more systematic interaction with research and researchers. This is a point underlined by numerous voices: the working groups of the Evaluation Meeting, the Enter! Secretariat, and the evaluation of the LTTC. The Draft Recommendation specifically mentions that public policies need to be evidence-based and that member states report regularly on the implementation process; in a nutshell, research and evaluation (see this report, p. 45). “The ‘magic triangle’ of youth education, policy making and research”, as it is called in the Background document for the 8th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth Kyiv, Ukraine, 10–11 October 2008, “The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020”, encourages further investments in interaction with researchers. However, to complicate matters, research comes in many shapes and forms. It can even be counter-productive, says David Fryer, professor of community critical psychology, advocating that,

social scientists should engage in praxis: an irreducible social practice which is simultaneously knowledge construction, critical reflexivity and emancipatory social action to promote public mental health and collective social justice through contesting, intervening to reduce and prevent material, subjective and ideological oppression. (Fryer 2011, p. 26)

Out of the many experienced, engaged and constructive comments throughout the report, this author suggests the following grouping of three core dimensions of the Enter! project: challenges to be taken care of within the Enter! project 2012–2014.

Challenge 1: The recognition of youth and youth work

Young people and the work that they do together in formal and informal contexts, in NGOs, in political assemblies and in their neighbourhoods is of great value both for those directly involved and for those targeted by activities. At the same time the voluntary youth sector is extremely fragile, shouldered as it is by young people that are themselves frequently both unestablished and/ or marginalised (cf. LTTC Evaluation final report 2011, p. 76). Cutbacks in investments in the youth sector are also a risk right across Europe.

Within the Council of Europe youth sector, young people play a role that differs substantially from most other settings: “The youth sector has engaged with young people in civil society as fundamental partners. This is evident not only in the co-management system, but in the specific character of the European Youth Centres and the European Youth Foundation, where an enormous range of activities which are conceived and implemented by young people are supported” (The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020, 2008, p. 5–6).

For young people to form for once the majority, the norm, being just normal is a very important source of strength. However well intended many of the steps are that aim at giving young people their rightful role, there is still the risk for the establishment to remain paternalistic: to think in terms of helping or fostering. Empowerment can no doubt be helped by active promotion, for instance a lowering of the voting age. However, probably just as important also is not to stand in the way of processes of empowerment.

The need to build self-esteem and knowledge for this empowerment makes young people themselves an important target group for the Draft Recommendations as well as for different national and local youth policies. Along with the Revised European Social Charter, these policy documents are statements of what it should be possible to expect: statements of human value and dignity. Knowing that you are valuable, that you have rights, is the basis from which both actions and strategies for their realisation can then depart.

Challenge 2: The involvement of local authorities

The realisation of social rights for young people cannot be secured by or within the youth sector alone. The involvement of national, regional and local level authorities is key for an implementation that improves in any substantial way the positions and living conditions of young people.

Enter! had difficulties in reaching and engaging these bodies, both at the international level and through the LTTC local projects. One possible way ahead could be to go more deeply into strategies for how to engage “an enlightened self-interest”, seeing things through the eyes of the member state or the municipality: “what’s in

it for us". In a time of constant branding of identities, of "putting places on the map" through, for example, events or buildings, a joint undertaking with a well-reputed division (Youth Department) within a prestigious organisation (Council of Europe) could be an attractive option for partners.

In the planning for activities and exchange several suggestions have been put forward to strengthen activities and long-term effects, among them the idea for participants to apply in pairs, for example, grass root activists together with representatives for the local authority. Local authority representatives could also be explicitly targeted as participants, in their capacities as managers of youth work programmes and projects. Other possibilities could be to systematically build on both diversity and similarity among participants. The meeting between people of different professional, regional, cultural and other identities and backgrounds is a given characteristic and richness of the Youth Department context. However, in parallel to this, regional subgroups of participants sharing resembling conditions (political, economic or other) could be a way to explore more specifically how to interpret and advance at the national or local level.

Challenge 3: The promotion of youth policies and of rights for all

"There are decisions and norms for human rights, many of them integrated in national legislation but they are not respected. We have a gap of implementation," says Thomas Hammarberg, former Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, in his book *Human rights in Europe. No grounds for complacency* (2011, p. 9).

Talking about rights, social rights for young people, demands that there is a part that acknowledges an obligation and shoulders a responsibility. Neither at the international level nor at the national is there any mandate to exercise power or to prescribe what member states must do in relation to a potential youth policy, a Draft Recommendation. Therefore, the better equipped young people are to exercise pressure, put forward good examples and advocate the benefits for all in a society that respects and counts on its young members, the more hopeful we can all be.

Since the mid 1990s a discussion initiated from the Council of Europe has focused the need to review the GDP, Gross Domestic Product, as the number one measurement of standard of living. A reinterpreted method should rather be built from below, and focus the well-being of all citizens.

Over the last 60 years, the idea that the creation of material wealth is essential for ensuring the well-being and fundamental rights of citizens has been broadly predominant. In this organisational model, based on an increase in quantitative wealth, there is an implicit link between growth, individual well-being and collective well-being. This view of constant improvement presupposes a commitment by states and businesses to the fair distribution of the benefits of growth. Accordingly, states – as guarantors of the collective well-being – have focused their efforts on improving gross domestic product (GDP). Today, globalisation has destroyed the ethical link between growth and national well-being. (*Involving citizens and communities in securing societal progress for the well-being of all*. Council of Europe 2011)

In a context of economic crisis, the solutions that are needed cannot only be based on economic resources but should also take into account citizens themselves as a source of ideas for innovative solutions based on local needs. (cf. Jon Bloomfield *The emerging relationships between councils and citizens*, 2012) For this shift in thinking and acting to occur it will also take a shift of generations. Young people are much more open to social, economic and environmental needs and they are more open to change.

Indeed, change is needed. For young people across Europe to obtain their human and social rights, traditions must be challenged and borders transcended, between the restricted area of youth matters to policy and politics in general. Nevertheless, as Thomas Hammarberg writes about human rights in Europe:

There can be little progress without honest, concrete monitoring. Non-governmental organisations play a pivotal role here, as do the mass media. Ombudsmen and other independent national human rights structures exist nowadays in most European countries: when truly independent, they cast light on problems which have to be addressed. Reporting about violations is of course insufficient. Monitoring must be followed up with measures of implementation. Three types of action are required of governments: that they themselves respect human rights standards, that they protect people from human rights violations perpetrated by others, and that they take the necessary steps to fulfil rights. All require pro-active efforts. Capacities must be built to ensure that human rights are made a reality in all walks of life. (Ibid., 2011, p. 10–11)

SECTION VI
APPENDIX

CHAPTER 13

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Enter! is an inter-sectorial project of the youth sector of the Council of Europe aiming to develop youth work and youth policy responses to exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The project was launched against the background of the current situation in Europe with the deteriorating social situation of young people in ageing societies affected by economic crises.

The report collects and capitalises the experiences and learning outcomes of the Enter! project 2009-2012. It represents the most relevant learning points from the various project activities, reflections around the impact and value of youth work in improving the access to social rights for young people and recommendations for the future of the Enter! project in the coming years.

www.coe.int/enter

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