

COLLECTION OF EXPERIENCE OF YOUTH WORK, BASED ON THE APPROACHES AND STANDARDS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE,

in the Context of the Armed Aggression
of the Russian Federation against Ukraine



MINISTRY OF
YOUTH AND SPORTS
OF UKRAINE



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**THE COLLECTION HAS BEEN LAUNCHED
IN NOVEMBER 2022
WITHIN THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT
"YOUTH FOR DEMOCRACY IN UKRAINE: PHASE II"
UNDER THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE ACTION PLAN
FOR UKRAINE 2018-2022
AND PREPARED
WITHIN THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT
"YOUTH FOR DEMOCRACY IN UKRAINE: PHASE III"
UNDER THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE ACTION PLAN
FOR UKRAINE 2023-2026**

**Collection of Experience of Youth Work, Based on
the Approaches and Standards of the Council of
Europe, in the Context of the Armed Aggression of
the Russian Federation against Ukraine**

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The collection has been launched
within the Council of Europe Project
“Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II”
under the Council of Europe Action Plan
for Ukraine 2018-2022
and prepared
within the Council of Europe Project
“Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase III”
under the Council of Europe Action Plan
for Ukraine 2023-2026.

The translation is sole responsibility
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Cover photo is the illustration of an activity in the
shelter for internally displaced people in Kremenchuk
“Mission (im)possible” (“Місія (не)здійсненна”),
organised by “Kremenchuk informative-elucidative
centre European club”

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INTRODUCTION

Youth work is a broad term covering a wide variety of activities of a social, cultural, educational, environmental and/or political nature by, with and for young people, in groups or individually. Youth work is delivered by paid and volunteer youth workers and is based on non-formal and informal learning processes focused on young people and on voluntary participation. Youth work is quintessentially a social practice, working with young people and the societies in which they live, facilitating young people's active participation and inclusion in their communities and in decision making.

Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 on youth work.¹

The Council of Europe Project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II" has collected in November 2022 and described the experience and practices of youth work in the context of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine in the period after 24 February 2022.

The collection includes twenty stories of experience and reflection, both team projects, initiatives of youth centres and non-governmental organisations etc., and individual experience directed at social, cultural, educational, environmental transformations implemented by, with and for young people.

On 12 October 2022, the Council of Europe Project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II" together with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine published an open invitation to share the experience and practices of youth work in time of war.²

1. <https://rm.coe.int/cmrec-2017-4-and-explanatory-memorandum-youth-work-web/16808ff0d1>

2. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/-/invitation-to-contribute-to-collection-of-experience-of-youth-work-in-time-of-war>

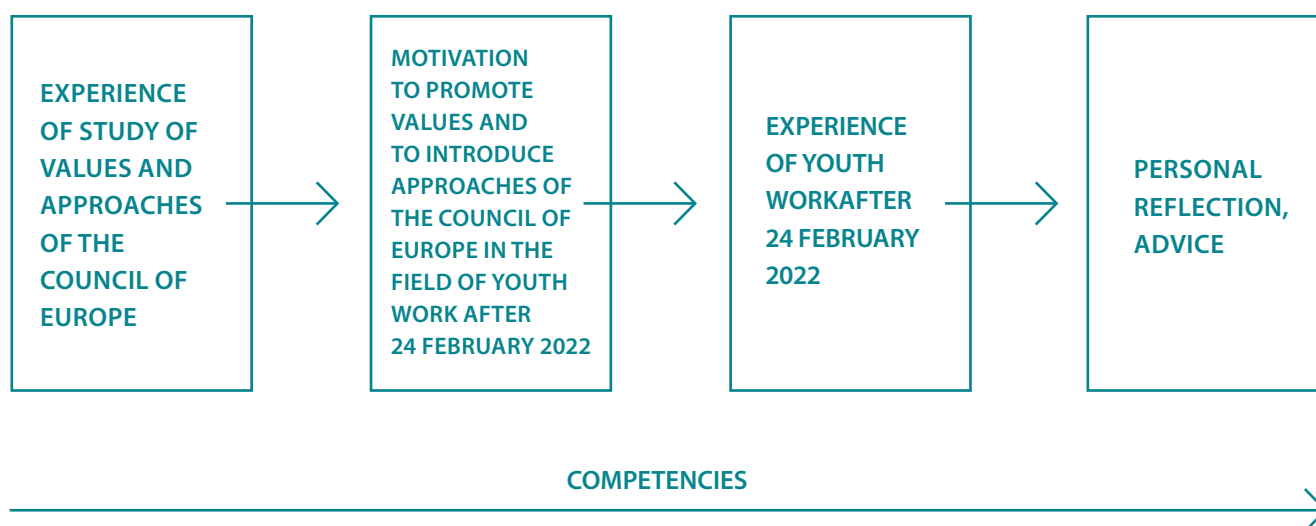
In order to create and spread the **collection of experience and practice of youth work, based on the approaches and standards of the Council of Europe**, in time of war for the purposes of recording, training and inspiration of youth workers in Ukraine and other member states of the Council of Europe, in accordance with the methodology, the following persons were invited to participate in creating the collection of experience:

- participants of the events and trainings held by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe;
- partnering organisations of the Council of Europe Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine” (Phases I and II of 2020-2022).

Collection and description of the experience of youth work do not provide an assessment and do not claim representative nature and coverage of all the youth work in Ukraine in 2022. The experience and reflections are presented in the collection in the free order.

Each story in the collection is first presented with a brief overview, followed by a full interview about the experience, which describes in detail practices, considerations, resources and approaches of the Council of Europe that have promoted the youth work, based on principles of human rights and youth participation.

Structure of description of experience for the collection



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT “YOUTH FOR DEMOCRACY IN UKRAINE: PHASE II” IN 2022 IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ARMED AGGRESSION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AGAINST UKRAINE

«Youth work must **support** young people in the situations in which they are, **adapt** them to the new reality. What can replace youth work? There is so much uncertainty now: it is not clear where young people are, what they do, where and how they study, which information environment they are in. **Young people are in a complex hazardous environment.** Therefore, who can support them now but for youth work?»

Quote from the interview, Research for Development of the Draft Occupational Standard “Youth Specialist (Youth Worker)”³



On 1 January 2022, the Council of Europe Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine” started its second phase. The Project was based on the results and experience of the first phase in 2020-2021. The Project emphasised the importance of the Youth sector strategy 2030⁴ and reflected the National Strategy of the State Youth Policy 2030⁵, the State Targeted Social Programme “Youth of Ukraine” for 2021-2025⁶.

During the first phase in 2020-2021, the Project strengthened youth participation and civic engagement in the villages and cities of Ukraine (in particular, by young people with disabilities, young representatives of national minorities as well as young migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons) by developing the capacity of the youth policy stakeholders and improving the quality of the youth policy and youth work in accordance with the standards of the Council of Europe.

Implementation of the Project has been materially affected by the consequences of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine since February 2022. With account of the situation and Priority adjustments to the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2022⁷ adopted by the 132nd Session of the Committee of Ministers, the Project was focused on assisting in implementation of the participatory youth policy to consider specific needs of young people in time of war.

3. <https://rm.coe.int/-08-2022-ydfuiai/1680a8e55b>

4. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/youth-strategy-2030>

5. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/94/2021#Text>

6. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/579-2021-%D0%BF#Text>

7. https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=0900001680a694b6

It was made possible owing to *ad-hoc* response of the Project to the needs occurring in the field of youth work and youth policy in Ukraine after 24 February, and the measures taken to enhance the capacity of stakeholders of youth work and youth policy in time of war in order to satisfy young people's needs based on the standards and approaches of the Council of Europe.

According to the Situation report by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), on 27 April 2022, the International Organization for Migration reported⁸ that 7.7 million people in Ukraine had been displaced. More than 8.3 million had left the country. It was noted by the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine that more than 1.9 million young people had been displaced due to the hostilities in Ukraine, and more than two million had left the country.

The **survey** conducted by the Project at the end of **March 2022** in co-operation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine and UNDP Ukraine demonstrated that 60% of the youth workers were internally displaced persons. According to that survey, 51.35% needed to exchange experience with other youth workers; 50.27% — information support regarding opportunities in the youth sector; 47.03% — funds to provide humanitarian assistance; 30.27% requested financial assistance for team work and team support, and 27.03% — for programme activities in the youth sector.

Since March 2022, the Council of Europe Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II” has ensured evidence-based approach to all of its activities **by studying the needs and challenges of the professionals working with young people** during the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES OF YOUTH WORK NOW?

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE / ARE YOU DOING TO SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE?

WHAT IS NEEDED FOR THIS AND FROM WHOM?

The series of four weekly meetings was conducted in **April 2022** in response to the findings of the survey about current issues and needs of youth workers in Ukraine. The research at the end of March and the series of meetings in April was organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, the Council of Europe Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II”, the UNDP in Ukraine and the State Institution “State Institute of Family and Youth Policy”.

Because it is important to feel and maintain the connection with the community, to share experience and discuss opportunities together; to support each other and to be inspired by each other.”

Youth worker, participant of the series of meetings in April

8. https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/116339192/Podcast+on+Ukraine_bakground+info.pdf/6e756207-92ee-a3e3-f1b4-778a8b673085?t=1652107921000

During the first meeting, the youth workers were presented the findings of the survey about the current needs of youth workers as a result of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine; they were provided with information on support and humanitarian assistance that could be obtained in time of war.

The second meeting was dedicated to the experience of youth work in other countries in time of war and after war as well as possibility of adaptation of such approaches by youth workers in Ukraine in response to the challenges arising out of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The participants were presented the guide [“Step-by-step together. Support, Tips, Examples and Possibilities for youth work with young refugees”](#) and suggested translating it into Ukrainian so that more youth workers all over the country could read it. (Looking ahead, it should be noted that the guide was translated upon the Project’s request in co-operation with the EU – Council of Europe Youth Partnership).

During the third meeting, the youth workers presented the experience of humanitarian and youth work in different regions of Ukraine in time of war.

The participants **of the fourth meeting** discussed various grant opportunities for youth work in time of war, in particular, the competition for the pilot [activity of the European Youth Foundation](#) and its special competition within the European youth campaign “Democracy Here. Democracy Now”.

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND STRENGTHENING OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Starting from **April 2022**, the Project has developed weekly and conducted the series of trainings and educational events for youth workers, representatives of youth departments at the regional and local levels to help them respond to new problems and challenges in the youth sector, namely mass displacement all over the country, reduced access to electric power and the internet, and hazards (occupation, missile strikes).



On 13 June 2022, there was a **partnership meeting of youth centres to share the experience of youth work in time of war** and to discuss further steps in the work necessary to strengthen youth participation, including internally displaced persons, in operations of the youth centres being partners of the first phase of the Project.

On 14 June 2022, the **training “Youth work during the war. How to make (un)usual formats meaningful and relevant to strengthen youth participation?”** was held in order to strengthen youth participation and the capacity of youth workers to implement youth work in time of war. The participants discussed the formats of youth work with young people during the war, shared their own experience of youth work during the war. In particular, they discussed how the format of youth work corresponded to the mission and purpose of the work/project, the needs of the target audiences.

On 15 June 2022, the training **“The value of youth work: how to reflect on the experience of volunteer work with a young person?”** was held. The participants explored the value of youth work as an activity that contributed to the formation of active citizenship competencies in young people. In particular, they recalled the value and characteristics of youth work in accordance with the approaches of the Council of Europe in the field of youth and discussed how youth workers could help reflect on the experience of volunteer work with a young person and transform that experience into a description of competencies in a young person’s CV.

On 27 to 29 September 2022, the Project **held the three-day workshop “The sense is principal: introduction to training”** for the representatives of youth centres and youth organisations, youth departments of the local level and young people. Following the three-day workshop and analysis of the participants’ needs to improve their training capacities, the Project announced the private admission for those who had joined the workshop for the five-day training for trainers “Introduction to training: continued”⁹, which was held on 24 to 28 October 2022 online. The purpose of the training was to strengthen youth participation by raising the capacity of the youth workers to implement non-formal education activities during the war.

NOTES FOR GROUP DISCUSSIONS

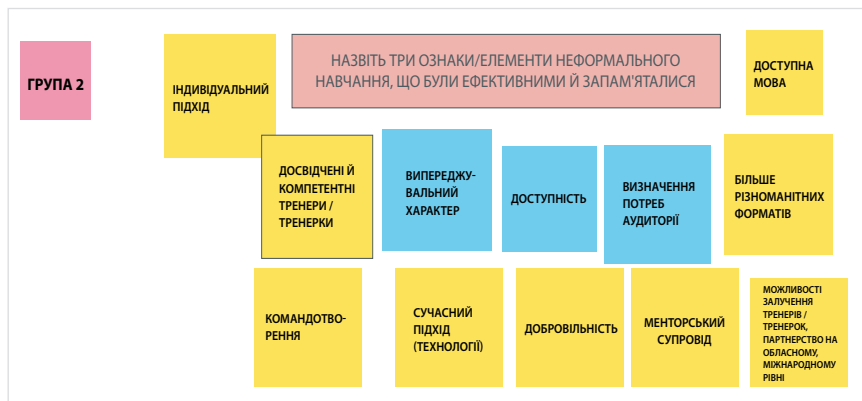


Name three characteristics/ elements of non-formal learning that were effective and memorable?

GROUP 1: Consistency in learning, correct arrangement of learning units; Submission of information from trainers; Master classes and professional development courses; Experts-practitioners; Meta level (development of part of the training in pairs); Interactive games; People that are interested in the topic of learning in one or another way; Games, energizers; Information that will be really needed in life; Bright visualization of educational material; Invited guests; Games and practical knowledge; Storytelling; Comfort - you can go make yourself a tea and take a cookie; Communication with interesting people, exchange of experience; Exchange of experience between participants; Interactives; Productive communication with interesting people; Practical experience; Theory + practice = successful learning; New acquaintances; Useful information for further life.

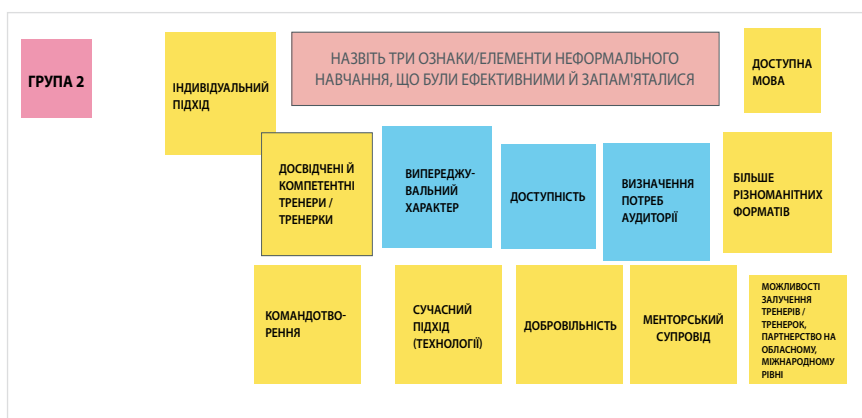
9. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/-/the-council-of-europe-project-youth-for-democracy-in-ukraine-phase-ii-run-a-5-day-training-for-trainers-in-the-field-of-youth>

NOTES FOR GROUP DISCUSSIONS



Name three characteristics / elements of non-formal learning that were effective and memorable?

GROUP 2: Individual approach; Experienced and competent trainers; Team building; Anticipatory character; Modern approach (technologies); Accessibility; Voluntariness; Determining the needs of the audience; Mentor support; Available language; More diverse formats; Possibility of attracting trainers, partnership at the regional and international level.



Name three characteristics/ elements of non-formal learning that were effective and memorable?

GROUP 3: New acquaintances / new partnerships / further co-operation; Benefit; Team, connections; Live communication; Relevance and sustainability; Long-term partnerships; Sustainability of practices and relevance of knowledge; Interactive presentation of information; Non-standard provision of information; Peer to peer; Teamwork; Real changes based on work results; Visualization; Communication: interaction and dialogue; Take an interesting experience; Voluntariness (you are not forced with knowledge); Creativity, creative thinking.

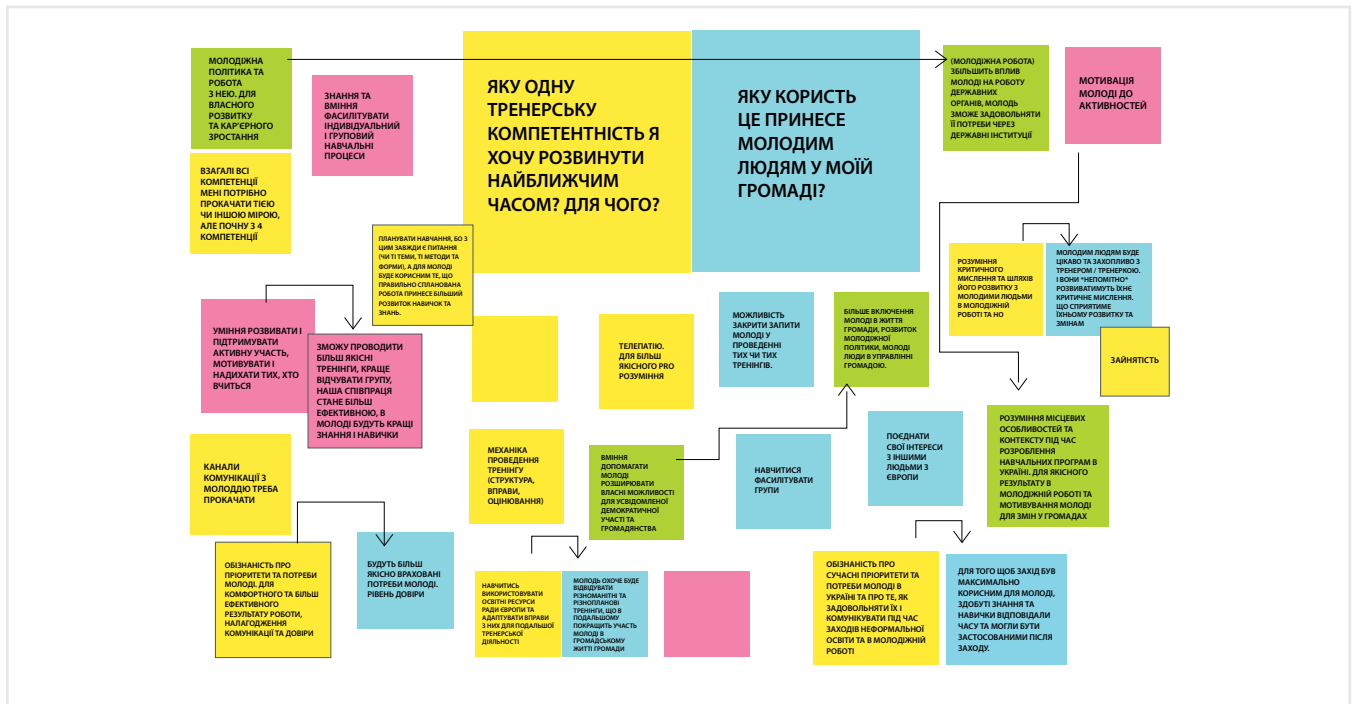


Name three characteristics/ elements of non-formal learning that were effective and memorable?

GROUP 4: Clear structure and timing; Detachment from notes; Formation of skills, practicality; Voluntariness; Relaxed atmosphere; Use of simulation work formats; Trainer learns from the participants; Acquaintance; Creative approach, creativity; Teamwork; Emphasis on community formation; Different people; Interesting subject, roles; Content generation by participants; Interactive: games, quests, challenges :).

On 17 to 19 August 2022, the Project held the three-day **educational triptych “Youth participation: from personal experience to planning changes in youth work to strengthen youth participation”** for representatives of youth centres, youth organisations and departments that implemented the youth policy. The purpose of the training was to strengthen youth participation and the ability of the youth workers to perform youth work during the war. While studying, the trainees examined, namely by painting, their own experience of youth work, analysed the experience of youth centres and organisations to ensure and enhance participation of the youth, planned changes in work of the youth centres and organisations to ensure and strengthen youth participation in their work.

NOTES FOR GROUP DISCUSSIONS



Which one training competency do I want to develop in the near future? For what? How will this benefit young people in my community?

Youth policy and youth work. For personal development and career growth; (Youth work) will increase the influence of youth on the work of state bodies, youth will be able to satisfy their needs through state institutions; In general, I need to pump all the competencies to one or another degree, but I will start with 4th competence; Knowledge and ability to facilitate individual and group learning processes; Ability to develop and maintain active participation, motivate, and inspire learners. I will be able to conduct higher quality trainings, better feel the group, our co-operation will become more effective, the youth will have better knowledge and skills; Channels of communication with young people must be pumped; To plan training, because there are always questions with this (or those topics, those methods, and forms). And it will be useful for young people in the way that properly planned training will bring greater development of skills and knowledge; Awareness of the priorities and needs of young people. For a comfortable and more effective work result, establishment of communication and trust; The needs of young people will be better taken into account. Confidence level; Telepathy. For a better PRO understanding; Mechanics of training (structure, exercises, evaluation); The possibility to close the requests of young people in carrying out certain trainings; The ability to help young people expand their own opportunities for informed democratic participation and citizenship; Greater inclusion of youth in community life, development of youth policy, young people in community management; Learn how to facilitate groups; Learn to use the educational resources of the Council of Europe and adapt exercises from them for further training activities; Young people will willingly attend various and diverse trainings, which will further strengthen youth participation in the public life of the community; Combine own interests with other people's from Europe; Motivation of young people for activities; Understanding local characteristics and context during the development of educational programs in Ukraine. For quality results in youth work and motivation young people for changes in communities; Understanding critical thinking and ways to develop it with young people in youth work and social work; Young people will find it interesting and exciting with a trainer. And they will «invisibly» develop their critical thinking, which will contribute to their development and change; Employment; Awareness of the current priorities and needs of young people in Ukraine and how to satisfy them and communicate during non-formal education activities and in youth work; In order for the event to be as useful as possible for young people, the acquired knowledge and skills corresponded to the time and could be applied after the event.

The Project **individually supported in expert and guidance terms** twenty-two youth centres and youth organisations in order to help them satisfy the current demand for services, humanitarian assistance for the youth, internally displaced persons, returnees and persons affected by the war. The Project ensured continuous support upon the organisations' request via public announcement and online form to describe and submit a request.

On 16 November 2022, the representatives of the youth organisations in Ukraine took part in the online **information session on support of the pilot activities for young people from Ukraine from the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe**.¹⁰ Pursuant to the decision of the Joint Council on Youth (CMJ) of 12 October 2022, the European Youth Foundation (EYF) announced the special competition to support young people from Ukraine. This initiative is consistent with the current needs stated by the Ukrainian government and stakeholders in the youth sector.

10. The presentation of the information session in Ukrainian is available here: <https://rm.coe.int/eyf-presentation-sc-ukraine-v-3-pppt-ukr-1-/1680a90297>

EXPERT TEAM



The Project **expanded and enhanced the informal pool of trainers and experts in the youth sector**, which ensures quality and sustainable training in Ukraine in time of war at the national, regional and local levels in accordance with the standards and approaches of the Council of Europe in the youth sector.

On 29 – 30 June 2022, there was **a training for experts** of the Project in order to prepare the team for efficient and substantial planning, implementation and assessment of the activities performed to enhance the capacity, support actions and other events within the Council of Europe Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II”, in particular, as regards organisation of the activity to enhance the capacity of youth workers to assist internally displaced persons, returnees and vulnerable groups in time of war.

In November and December 2022, the local expert team of the project, which conducted the key series of trainings for young people and youth workers within the Project, took part in **workshop on evaluation of educational activities**. The workshop included a series of practical assignments, modules for autonomous training at the educational platform of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, the online synchronous session, and individual mentor support sessions.

OCCUPATIONAL STANDARD OF THE NEW PROFESSION “YOUTH SPECIALIST (YOUTH WORKER)”



In co-operation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine and the work group, the Project conducted **two stages of the research in order to develop the occupational standard “Youth Specialist (Youth Worker)”**¹¹ – in February and March and in August and September of 2022.

«A youth worker is any person who works with young people and is a guide for a young person; who works with young people in a more individual manner (on an individual level) and facilitates development of a young person based on his or her needs. Therefore, the principal function is assistance, guiding, support of the young person in the fields in which he or she wants to open up; assistance in determination of these fields.»

Participant of the in-depth interview during the research.

The activities of the work group in order to draft the occupational standard of the new profession “Youth Specialist (Youth Worker)” started on 2 February 2022 under the guidance of Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports Maryna Popatenko. Development of the draft occupational standard of the profession “Youth Specialist (Youth Worker)” became a new strategic direction in development of the programme “Youth Worker” and a tool to consolidate abilities and skills (to develop job description), to train young specialists, to advance their qualifications and ensure professional development.

11. <https://rm.coe.int/-08-2022-ydfuaji/1680a8e55b>

The Project took part in the work group's activities and conducted the research to perform the following tasks:

- to collect the data that will serve as reference points for development of the occupational standard "Youth Specialist (Youth Worker)";
- to determine the expected labour functions and labour actions of youth workers in the local authorities, businesses and civil society organisations;
- to characterise the actual condition of the professional activity of youth workers, to determine professional development barriers and prospects;
- to analyse the needs in the field of the local youth policy regarding competence of youth workers.

The research methodology was based on the methods of participatory research, which provided for participation of representatives of the target groups in the research; inclusion of common ideas and practices in the research; focus on expanding opportunities of the participants of the research; no hierarchy to consider interests and opinions of those with less power or representation authority; value-based attitude to different views and opinions.

The workers of regional and district state administrations, local self-government authorities, state institutions in charge of implementation of the youth policy, managers and staff of youth centres and youth spaces, managers and staff of non-governmental organisations that implemented projects for and/or together with young people, youth workers and/or those identifying themselves as such, and young people were invited to participate.



In 2022, the Project participated with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine and [the work group](#) and, without limitation:

- translated the corresponding occupational standards of the other countries into Ukrainian: [“Youth Work in England: Policy, Practice, and National Occupational Standards”](#)¹², [“System of Competencies for Youth Work” \(Austria\)](#)¹³, [“Occupational Standard. Social Work and Mobile Youth Work” \(Germany\)](#)¹⁴, [“Occupational Framework for Social Work with Teenagers and \(Young\) Adults Consuming Psychoactive Substances” \(Germany\)](#)¹⁵;
- organised the [focus group discussion of the participants of the four-month programme “Trauma Informed Youth Work”](#)¹⁶, who developed their proposals on the list of competencies for the occupational standard “Youth Worker” and discussed adaptation of the state programme “Youth Worker” with account of the programme participation experience (August to November 2022).

22 березня 2023 року Національним агенством кваліфікацій в Україні затверджений професійний стандарт за професією «Фахівець з питань молоді (молодіжний працівник)» та внесений до Реєстру 29 березня 2023 року.

NEEDS AND CHALLENGES OF THE YOUTH CENTRES

“The Ministry of Youth and Sports believes it is important to support the youth infrastructure, namely the network of youth centres, hubs and spaces as the regional platforms that are now capable of being most flexible in response to crises of the civilians caused by the war. We would like to emphasise that the war has repeatedly shown the importance of youth work, especially involving the youth into participation in the war against the Russian aggressor. That is why the youth centres are and will remain important environments that develop responsible young citizens.”

Maryna Popatenko, Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports of Ukraine

The Council of Europe Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II” in co-operation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine studied the needs and challenges of the youth centres of Ukraine of different ownership forms at the local, regional and national levels.

Public discussion presentation of the report* on the needs and challenges of the youth centres in Ukraine was held on 18 October 2022 online. The discussion presentation was attended by the representatives of the youth departments of the local and regional levels, the youth centres of different ownerships forms and levels, youth spaces, youth councils, non-governmental organisations and international organisations.

* <https://rm.coe.int/-08-2022-yfdua/1680a8e55a>

12. <https://rm.coe.int/-ukr/1680a9bf41>

13. <https://rm.coe.int/-aufzaq-competence-framework-ukr/1680a9bf40>

14. <https://rm.coe.int/street-youth-work-germany-ukr/1680a9d97b>

15. <https://rm.coe.int/basics-of-street-social-work-germany-ukr/1680a9d97a>

16. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/-/youth-work-focus-on-recovery>

The discussion presentation of the research provided for:

- presentation of the research findings, namely with the focus on different ownership forms and types of activity;
- discussion of the forms and types of activity of the youth centres, their peculiarities, namely based on the geography and needs of young people;
- discussion of necessary support for the youth centres, in particular, by the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine and the Council of Europe Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II”;
- creation of the space to share experience, working ideas with account of young people’s needs.

TRAUMA INFORMED YOUTH WORK

“...Because it is the third time I have to leave home. First in 2014, and twice in 2022. And I could not understand why it had to be me?! Like... why?! The positive thing is... that I travelled abroad for the first time! I found the place called Space of Ideas, very similar to our Free House in Kramatorsk. It gave me an opportunity to communicate with people, travel abroad as a part of youth exchange... It was cool. I met lots of people. I have really wanted to organise the dramatic speech workshop... and I’m working on it. Mostly for teenagers to help them adapt to the environment so that they will have a place to come, to do something and get distracted from the war.”

Masha, young person, Kramatorsk, Kremenchuk¹⁷



The cover page of Guide on the Educational Course of Trauma Informed Youth Work

17. Story from the project “Voices of young people in Ukraine”, which is being implemented by the Donetsk Youth Debate Centre with the support of the EYF of the Council of Europe within the European youth campaign called Democracy Here. Democracy now. The project is being implemented in partnership with the Youth Centre “New Wings” (Novovolynsk), the Non-Governmental Association “Kremenchuk Information and Awareness Raising Centre ‘European Club’ (Kremenchuk), the Nizhyn Youth Centre (Nizhyn), the Okhtryrka Youth Centre (Okhtryrka), the Donetsk Regional Children and Youth Centre (Kramatorsk).

In response to the expressed need of the youth workers, **on 11 and 12 May 2022**, the Council of Europe Projects “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II” and “Internal Displacement in Ukraine: Building Solutions. Phase II” organised the training on the fundamentals of prevention of **the burnout and compassion fatigue and development of psychological support skills in the context of the stressful events “How to help yourself and young people?”**. The training was conducted by the Israel Trauma Coalition.

“As for me, I can say that before the training I had only had general knowledge of the matters considered. However, I had never heard of the specific conditions, such as application of the psychological first aid protocol, but I have often found myself in such situations for the last two months.”

Trainee, youth worker, 28 years old.

This and other feedback from the trainees confirmed the existing priority and need to develop the separate educational programme for the youth workers. The Project developed the **guide on the five-day training programme “Trauma Informed Youth Work”**¹⁸ and implemented the four-month educational and practical programme in August to November 2022 to prepare the pool of trainers among the youth workers in order to organise educational activities for the youth and those working with them. The programme provided for the eight-day training for trainings, development and holding of educational and training events in their youth centres with the personalised mentor and technical support by the Council of Europe, and the two-day consolidation meeting to assess participation in the programme.

“The long war in Ukraine has provoked numerous problems with mental and physical health of the Ukrainians. Continuous stress and traumatic events are affecting everyone. That is why the training programme is a timely and essential practical tool for youth centres and youth workers of Ukraine. It gives an opportunity to help lots of young people and internally displaced persons, and also to control your own condition and succeed in organising youth work.”

Participant of the four-month educational and training programme “Trauma Informed Youth Work”

The guide “Trauma Informed Youth Work” can be of use for youth workers in the youth centres and spaces, youth councils, humanitarian organisations as well as a wide range of professional communities that deal with young people.

The four-month educational and practical programme “Trauma Informed Youth Work” was implemented in co-operation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine and the Council of Europe Project “Internal Displacement in Ukraine: Building Solutions. Phase II”. Twelve youth centres at the regional and local levels have applied the approaches of the Council of Europe to organising and holding educational and training events in order to prevent burnout and fatigue, to express compassion and render first psychological aid in the communities (including the hosting communities) in different regions of Ukraine for the specialists who work with the youth.

18. <https://rm.coe.int/eng-trauma-informed-youth-work-yfdua-digital/1680aa9073>

Youth centres participating in the programme “Trauma Informed Youth Work”:

1. Non-Governmental Organisation “Youth Centre of Kirovohrad Region”.
2. Municipal Institution “Vinnytsia Regional Youth Centre ‘Square’.
3. Municipal Institution “Nizhyn City Youth Centre” of the Nizhyn City Council, Chernihiv Region.
4. Municipal Institution “Chernihiv Regional Youth Centre” of the Chernihiv City Council.
5. Municipal Out-of-School Educational Establishment “Donetsk Regional Children and Youth Centre”.
6. Non-Governmental Organisation “Okhtyrka Youth Centre”.
7. Youth Centre “Space of Ideas” (Non-Governmental Organisation Kremenchuk Information and Education Centre “European Club”).
8. Non-Governmental Organisation “Centre of Innovation, Social, Physical and Intellectual Development “People.ua”.
9. Municipal Institution of the Kyiv City Council “Plast Training Centre”.
10. Everything Will Be Fine, Khmelnytskyi (Non-Governmental Organisation “Events”, Mariupol).
11. Non-Governmental Organisation “Volunteers of the State Higher Educational Establishment “Uzhhorod National University”.
12. Municipal Enterprise “Dnipro Youth Centre” of the Dnipro City Council.

BARRIER-FREE ENVIRONMENT FOR SOCIAL COHESION

The Project raised the issues of enhancing competencies of youth workers and representatives of youth departments at the regional and local level as regards elimination of barriers with a view to ensuring participation of young people in social cohesion and their contribution.

“I have realised the importance of understanding the concepts of ‘having rights’ and ‘having access to these rights’. I mean the connection between me as a youth worker and the youth is enhanced in terms of my role in ensuring access of the youth to their rights and opportunities.”

**Participant of the five-day workshop training
on social cohesion and barrier-free environment, October 2022.**

In co-operation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, the Project conducted the five-day workshop training on social cohesion and barrier-free environment in the youth sector. The guide on the five-day training programme was developed by the Project upon the participants’ request in order to increase the training results and methodological support of the youth workers all over Ukraine, in particular, to implement the National Strategy for Barrier-Free Environment in Ukraine up to 2030 in co-operation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine in 2023.

PRESENTATION OF THE EXPERIENCE, CHALLENGES AND NEEDS AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

With account of the war against Ukraine, EU – Council of Europe Youth Partnership has launched a special **series of Under 30' podcast episodes dedicated to the impact and solidarity with young people and the youth sector in Ukraine**. In March and May 2022, the Project assisted in preparing two episodes “Young people and the war in Ukraine: stories from Lviv and Moldova” and “Youth work and war in Ukraine”, and the local partners of the Project were invited to exchange the experience of their youth work in time of war against Ukraine at the international level.

On 30 March 2022, the Project presented the **findings of the research** into the needs of youth workers in Ukraine held in March 2022 together with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine **to the Trainers Pool of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe**¹⁹ during the online meeting.

On 10 May, the Project presented the **findings of the research** of the needs of youth workers and current activities in Ukraine **to the participants of Enter Long-Term Training Course**²⁰ **2021 – 2022**, which was implemented by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. The course was supposed to train 33 participants from 23 countries, and implementation of the projects which put in practice Enter! Recommendation²¹ and Youth Work Recommendation²² and innovate youth work activities with young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

On 14 and 16 June 2022, there was a training for the young people involved into humanitarian response in Ukraine and abroad. The Project co-organised the event; in particular, it prepared the presentation of educational resources and approaches of the Council of Europe in the field of social cohesion and peacebuilding in communities, including the ones hosting internally displaced persons. The event was co-organised by UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR, NRC, ActionAid, Gooddler Foundation and the Scouts in co-operation with the Global Refugee Youth Network, the Youth Compact Champions and the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action.



Учасники та учасниці Тижня дій молоді у Страсбургу

19. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/trainers-pool>

20. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/enter/ltrc-2021-2022>

21. <https://rm.coe.int/168066671e>

22. <https://rm.coe.int/cmrec-2017-4-and-explanatory-memorandum-youth-work-web/16808ff0d1>

The Project supported **the participation of the Ukrainian youth delegation in the Youth Action Week in Strasbourg**, which was held on 27 June to 2 July 2022. The Youth Action Week is the main event of the youth campaign called Democracy Here. Democracy Now and celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Council of Europe youth sector. The event was organised under the auspices of Irish Presidency of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers and in partnership with Strasbourg.

On 21 September 2022, the Project **presented²³ the experience of its work in Ukraine after 24 February 2022 for the representatives of the youth centres that have already received or are planning to receive the Council of Europe Quality Label**. The presentation was held within the annual meeting of the [European Platform of Youth Centres on 20 – 21 September 2022 in Youth Centre Marttinen \(Finland\)](#). The ideas for further co-operation between the Ukrainian youth centres and the youth centres of other countries holding the Council of Europe Quality Label included the need of personal support on a peer-to-peer basis (from a youth centre to a youth centre), a series of workshops on organisation of the supervision and intervision process in the youth centre, youth work at the location of young people, namely internally displaced persons (detached youth work), search for opportunities to invite representatives of the youth centres from Ukraine to educational visits and activities to the youth centres with the Council of Europe Quality Label.

On 12 October 2022, the Project **presented the experience of work in Ukraine after 24 February 2022 to the representatives of the Joint Council on Youth**, the 47th meeting of which²⁴ was held in Budapest on 11-12 October 2022 in Budapest. Iryna Bieliaieva, the Director of the Youth Policy Department of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine who officially represents Ukraine in CDEJ and CMJ, took part in the meetings of the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) and the Joint Council on Youth (CMJ).

In October 2022, the Project together with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine **launched the research to create the collection of experience and practice of youth work in time of war after 24 February 2022**. The purpose of the research is to create and disseminate the collection of the youth work experience and practices based on the approaches and standards of the Council of Europe in time of war in order to record, train and inspire the youth workers both in Ukraine and other Member States of the Council of Europe.

23. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/-/the-council-of-europe-quality-label-for-youth-centres-network-ideas-for-co-operation>

24. The detailed information on the results of the 47th meeting of the Joint Council on Youth is presented here:

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/-/democracy-campaign-roma-youth-participation-ukrainian-youth-climate-change-rural-youth->

LESSONS LEARNT

Based on the reports on assessing the key educational and training activities of the Project and commentaries by the external experts, the following lessons were learnt within the Project in 2022 during the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine:

- studying needs of both youth workers and young people must be a basis for development of the project, especially in time of war;
- regular educational activities (including in an online format) for youth workers, young activists must be organised as a part of other support measures so that they will be helped to have a safe environment to meet and share their views on the reality and problems;
- improvement of the partnership culture in the youth sector can be developed via expert and technical support of development and implementation of joint initiatives of the youth workers, youth centres and youth non-governmental organisations;
- responding to the need of the youth centres and youth NGOs to establish connections with each other and to exchange experience both inside (in Ukraine) and outside (Ukraine and other Member States of the Council of Europe) to have the third-party perspective that enables organisations to have a broader perception of their own work and possible solutions to be considered;
- developing and introducing training courses for youth workers, young activists in time of war must be based on the training needs and can be focused on 1) trauma informed youth work, 2) social cohesion, and 3) non-formal education (especially for those who join the youth sector for the first time);
- development of training opportunities at online platforms for asynchronous training must be a part of all educational activities in time of war, namely for those who would like to study, but are unable to participate in training due to limited access to electric power and the internet;
- long-term personalised mentorship and expert support of the Project participants and partners must be introduced for all the activities within the Project;
- public discussion of the role to be played by youth work in time of war and in reconstruction of Ukraine after the war and of how to position the voice of young people in these decisions (not only for their voice to be considered, but also to enable them to take their own decisions on reconstruction) must be organised at the national, regional and local levels.



According to the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2023 – 2026²⁵, the Council of Europe expends effort to support youth policies and youth work, in particular to:

- 1) reactivate and update local youth participation mechanisms and processes associating young people for reconstruction efforts and inclusive local policy-making;
- 2) review and update competence frameworks, including inter alia leadership, planning and management, strategic thinking skills, and support structures enabling youth workers and youth leaders, as well as youth managers and youth administrators to respond to the needs of young people affected by the war, and facilitate their access to rights;
- 3) support peer exchange and international co-operation with the labelled youth centres having been awarded the Council of Europe Quality Label in order to strengthen institutional capacities of Ukrainian youth centres;
- 4) ensure responses to emerging challenges and needs of youth centres providing services for young people particularly from those vulnerable groups such as IDPs, returnees and the war-affected people;
- 5) support youth policies and programmes at national and regional levels so as to take into account the war and post-war realities of young people;
- 6) provide institutional support to youth organisations as platforms of civic engagement and democratic participation, capacity building, and to mitigate the effects of the war (including by European Youth Foundation grants).

25. https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680a96440



STORIES OF EXPERIENCE



OLENA GLAZKOVA

Non-Governmental Organisation "Kremenchuk
informative-elucidative centre European club",
Kremenchuk

JOINING OUR EFFORTS AND BELIEVING IN VICTORY

"We are writing a manual. We have used lots of materials of the Council of Europe on youth participation. We have applied the methodology of work of the Council of Europe to train the team and implement the pilot project. It was not the direct project by the Council of Europe. But my colleagues and I felt like working with the Council of Europe. The standards, guidance and planning were based on the approaches of the Council of Europe".



PURPOSE: to enhance the institutional resilience and social integration of the community of Kremenchuk by organising psychoemotional support of and interaction between internally displaced persons and local citizens in order to counteract to the Russian threat.

AREAS OF ACTIVITY:

- **mobile youth work** and **non-formal education** based on three shelters (Kremenchuk and Hradyzk) in order to support young people via self-identification, study of their own strengths and weaknesses, art therapy and body practices for recovery, provision of employment information, and creation and implementation of own initiatives;
- **psychological support** of young people via consultations by psychologists;
- **leisure activities** at the youth centre: organisation of regular activities of young people (board games, English language club, documentaries on human rights with discussions, music and art lessons conducted by internally displaced young people);
- **non-formal education** to develop soft skills.

KEY ADVICE: be patient. It can be difficult. Anyone is needed. We are returning to work two weeks after the start of the war. People have questions. People need connections, communication. It seemed in the beginning that we were doing unnecessary work, with all the situation outside. But once a person came and said that we were doing a great job, we were what he was looking for...

Try to organise youth work. Youth activities are now always directed at humanitarian assistance. Turn to classic youth work, adapt youth work in communities, meet new people, expand their opportunities, give them the sense of being useful and having a purpose.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- the Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio;
- standards, guidance and planning of activities based on the approaches of the Council of Europe;
- approach of the Council of Europe to youth participation.



OLENA GLAZKOVA

Non-Governmental Organisation “Kremenchuk informative-elucidative centre European club, Kremenchuk

ON MOTIVATION

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

I co-operate with the Council of Europe projects a lot: during the first phase of the project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine”, I was engaged as an expert into development of the **Curriculum for the Experts of the Project**²⁷; planning, organisation and conducting of the *training* for the project experts, **training** for the teams of the youth centres and **training** for the teams of Opishnia, Prysyvaska and Uzhhorod communities; **mentoring** of the teams of the youth centres and communities; planning, organisation and conducting of **final meetings** for the teams of the youth centres and communities. During the second phase of the project, I took part in planning, organisation and conducting of different **meetings dedicated to youth work and non-formal education** for youth workers; **individual mentoring** for youth workers.

We are writing a manual. We have used lots of materials of the Council of Europe on youth participation. We have applied the methodology of work of the Council of Europe to train the team and implement the pilot project. It was not the direct project by the Council of Europe. But my colleagues and I felt like working with the Council of Europe. The standards, guidance and planning were based on the approaches of the Council of Europe.

I mean we are building our activities based on the youth work guidelines of the Council

of Europe, the standards and principles of guidance and planning of activities by means of the approaches of the Council of Europe; we are implementing the approach of the Council of Europe to youth participation.

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

It is important to understand how many people are in our communities, and what conditions they live in. We consider the young people's readiness for changes since everything is unstable now and keeps changing every instant. We realise that everything might change, and we can change our methods.

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

The process of adaptation of internally displaced persons is long and difficult. Some people find their path faster if you show them opportunities. Some young people still remain at the same level. They just need more time. They leave shelters, and we cannot look after them. Some move because they have problems with the local authorities. Some young people feel more capable since the very beginning of their displacement. Some of the participants have taken part in the youth exchange, and it was their first experience of staying abroad. That first experience gave us the understanding of how to move on and keep working with the internally displaced young people. And now we can offer them more projects to engage them into activities and co-organise events.

26. Youth for Democracy in Ukraine. Council of Europe Office in Ukraine. URL: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/youth-for-democracy-in-ukraine>

27. Curriculum for the Experts of the Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine”, Project (2021). <https://rm.coe.int/curriculum-draft-youth-for-democracy-in-ukraine/1680a40ea6>

ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

It all started with the project **“Introducing mobile youth work in the communities of Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lutsk, Novovolynsk and Kremenchuk with children and young displaced persons in these communities”**. In fact, that project resulted in launching the new project: **“Joining our efforts and believing in victory — integration of internally displaced persons and assistance to victims in Kremenchuk”**. I would probably like to add that the activities in both projects were based on our permanent operations in the youth centre, classic youth work to which we had returned two weeks after the start of the full-scale invasion on 24 February.

Mobile youth work was performed by the non-governmental organisation “Donetsk Youth Debate Centre” with the support of the UN Reconstruction and Peacebuilding Programme and financial support of the European Union, in partnership with the Youth Centre “New Wings” in Novovolynsk, Volyn Youth Centre, Lviv Youth Centre “Molodvizhtsentr”, the youth policy division of the Department for Youth Policy and Sports of Ivano-Frankivsk City Council and us, the Non-Governmental Organisation “Kremenchuk informative-elucidative centre European club. At the local level, we partnered with YMCA Kremenchuk within the project; our clients (our regular target audience) helped us get around, organise meetings with internally displaced persons and hold discussions. We co-operated with the library in the urban-type settlement of Hradyzk and their active librarian. We also co-operated with our local library.

As for the project on joining affords, we co-operate with the library, engage as many

young people as possible from among our clients, both regular and new ones, and give them opportunities to gain experience of organising and holding events.

We are planning the work for two more shelters. It was quite difficult to work with one shelter. We launch public events and invite anyone who wishes to come. The approaches are the same. We try to reach out to young people among the internally displaced persons, to give them more attention, but events are held for everyone.

The principal idea of both of our projects was to enhance the institutional resilience and social integration of the community of Kremenchuk by organising psychoemotional support of and interaction between internally displaced persons and local citizens in order to counteract to the Russian threat. In fact, we wanted to enhance the capacity of the internally displaced persons and to help the young people adapt to the living reality in our community.

Within the project on mobile youth work, we organised the events at two shelters in Kremenchuk and the shelter for internally displaced persons in Hradyzk. The meetings were dedicated to self-identification, personal strengths and weaknesses, with art therapy and body practices for recovery, to employment and creation and implementation of own initiatives. We also offered consultations by psychologists.

As for the project on joining affords, we keep carrying out regular activities of the youth centre for the youth (board games, English language club, documentaries on human rights with discussions). We have also organised music and art lessons conducted by the internally displaced young people, and educational workshops to develop soft skills.

Therefore, the following main areas of activity can be listed in our projects:

- **mobile youth work** and **non-formal education** based on three shelters (in Kremenchuk and Hradyzk) in order to support young people via self-identification, study of their own strengths and weaknesses, art therapy and body practices for recovery, provision of employment information, and creation and implementation of own initiatives;
- **psychological support** of young people via consultations by psychologists;
- **leisure activities** at the youth centre: organisation of regular activities of young people (board games, English language club, documentaries on human rights with discussions, music and art lessons conducted by internally displaced young people);
- **non-formal education** to develop soft skills.

ON OWN VISION

In the end, if you were to give the key or fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

Be patient. It can be difficult. Anyone is needed. We are returning to work two weeks after the start of the war. People have questions. People need connections, communication. It seemed in the beginning that we were doing unnecessary work, considering the situation outside. But once a person came and said that we were doing a great job, we were what he was looking for...

Try to organise youth work. Youth activities are now always directed at humanitarian assistance. Turn to classic youth work, adapt youth work in communities, meet new people, expand their opportunities, give them the sense of **being useful and having a purpose**.





HANNA RIASNA

Regional Municipal Institution "Luhansk
Regional Centre for Supporting Youth Initiatives
and Social Studies", Dnipro

YOUTH WORK IN TIME OF WAR

"I would like to explain to the youth that if we wish to build the modern and strong European state, we must keep taking little steps and working day by day, set major goals and try to reach them; in other words, we must take little steps to major goals. If we just wait and fail to contribute, we will get what we have."

IDEA: On 24 February 2022, it was hazardous for the Centre to stay in Luhansk region, so they decided to be evacuated to Dnipro. Having moved to Dnipro, the regional youth centre focused its efforts on volunteering, the humanitarian component in order to help the residents of Luhansk region who had stayed at home as well as those who had moved, on co-ordination of youth hubs. There are around ten thousand internally displaced persons from among the youth of Luhansk region in Dnipro, so the pressing need has arisen to open the free site, the volunteer hub for the youth from Luhansk region where they could be supported in hardships and find something to do to their liking.

AREAS OF ACTIVITY:

- **hub for the youth from Luhansk Region**, which has a lounge area where young people can get together, hold events and where volunteers can take a rest; a humanitarian area; and an area for volunteers.

- **shelter for IDPs from Luhansk Region**, which provides temporary accommodation to internally displaced persons;

- **mobile offices of youth councils** in different cities of Ukraine (Chernivtsi, Ivano-Frankivsk, Dnipro) as sites for young people to work; it is planned to create youth media content and non-formal education;

- **non-formal education:** there are regular trainings on project management, starting own business, and psychological trainings.

KEY ADVICE: to consider the young people's opinion; to enable them to express their opinion, to try and lend a helping hand to those who do not even believe that they are capable of something. The practice has shown that they are capable of more in comparison with those who claim to be capable.

Be open, co-operate with different organisations.

Be open to new things, keep studying and invest into your own development. Life has proven that even if you work stably and everything is fine, it can change in a day, and you will have to do something new and gain new skills.

No pressure helps create effectively together with the youth and makes the working process and results much better.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- international co-operation;
- non-formal educational events of the Council of Europe;
- practical training of youth workers.

HANNA RIASNA

Regional Municipal Institution
“Luhansk Regional Centre for Supporting
Youth Initiatives and Social Studies”, Dnipro

— ON MOTIVATION

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

We have the team members who have been to the European countries to exchange experience, and we try to create our projects based on this experience. We want to be integrated into Europe to show the people European youth work experience.

We are now preparing the project “Mobile Offices of Youth Councils” with account of the practical experience of youth hubs in the European countries.

We share the European values — we are open to everyone and tolerant to different people and representatives of various minorities. We have reached the level where we support general European values.

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

If you just keep sitting and thinking about stress, you will feel even more stressed, which is terrible. We were really stressed for the first two weeks, but then we came to realise that we had a long life ahead, so we must create and do something. The activities of the state are now directed at working with the military, liberating territories. As youth leaders, we must work at another front, the youth one.

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

I was impressed that the young people’s opinion was taken into consideration. When there were first explosions on 24 February, we wrote in our youth chats that we were leaving and asked friends to help find accommodation for the night. Owing to the **power and unity of the youth centres and youth councils**, lots of people who were getting evacuated had an opportunity to go somewhere, were met by someone (namely youth workers and youth leaders) and sheltered: some were offered to stay at home, some spent a night in the youth centre; a lot of such work was performed at the level of the youth.

As for our plans for 2022, one of the unreach goals was that we did not open the region youth centre as a site for youth that would enable young people from Luhansk region to spend a night there (a hostel for young people). It is sometimes unreasonable to spend lots of money for a hotel, and such centre would be a cheaper option for young people. But it did not happen.

I have been working as a director only since November, i.e. for a year; I had only worked in Luhansk region for several months when the full-scale war broke out. Our plans were to spread non-formal education for young people in small villages, to start showing how project management could change youth work, the cultural sector and other sectors to develop villages and cities. We were going to show at our example how youth centres could be created, and that they were still necessary. The war has deprived us of doing a lot.

I did not expect the people to get so consolidated and help each other. We have been living in war in Luhansk region for eight years, and I have never seen such level of consolidation and aid before. When I go to any city and write on Facebook that I need a place for a night, I am 100% sure that that there will be friends who will help.

ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

When we were still in Luhansk region, in Sievierodonetsk, we were getting ready to open a large site to consolidate young people, **Luhansk Regional Youth Centre**. But it did not happen since the full-scale war broke out on 24 February 2022, and most of our team moved to Dnipro; some other team members went to different cities. In general, the youth have been scattered around different cities, sometimes abroad.

When we came to Dnipro, we created from scratch the new team of single-minded people who have stood the test of time. We were unable to pay salaries, so the volunteers joined their efforts for the sake of sooner victory and development of youth work. Our first-priority task was prompt **aid to people in Luhansk region**. We sent humanitarian assistance, both food and personal hygiene products, helped the utility services that kept working there.

When we realised that occupation was inevitable, it was necessary to create a **site to work in Dnipro** and help the people who had been evacuated. We opened the **Hub for the Youth from Luhansk Region** with the USAID support “Democratic Governance in the East of Ukraine”; these are four rooms where humanitarian assistance can be unloaded, given out to people from Luhansk region, **a hall for non-formal education where you can come and hold any event for free, use our equipment** received within the project because we had left with empty hands.

When we had opened the hub, we realised that, in addition to the working site, we also needed a place for people to live. Lots of people asked to help with housing and accommodation during the evacuation. People from lots of regions were evacuated to Dnipro so nothing was available. Therefore, our team decided to try to open **the Shelter for IDPs from Luhansk Region**. We filed the project application to “People in Need”, which was granted, so our

shelter has already hosted more than 2,000 people.

We keep implementing **non-formal education** actively. Several months ago, we went to the strategic session “Youth Development and Work in Time of War” to Bukovel (conducted by the Non-Governmental Organisation “Svitlo Kultury” within the grant to support councils of internally displaced persons within the programme “Power” — Unity via Joint Actions of the Youth with the support of the Youth and Sports Department of Luhansk region state administration, Luhansk Region Youth Centre, Luhansk Region Youth Council), won the grant to gather the active youth for rest in a safe place and to develop the youth work plan for two years, which is being implemented now.

As the head of the Luhansk Region Youth Council, I actively promote creation of mobile offices of youth councils so that different cities of Ukraine (Chernivtsi, Ivano-Frankivsk and Dnipro to start with) will have **sites for young people to work at**. Most initiatives are grouped in Dnipro, but there are lots of young people from Luhansk region, and we want to cover them in different cities so that they will be able to keep working. Our active members of the youth council have undertaken responsibility to find the partners who will provide free premises with utility services for those members to work.

Before we started our activities, we had created a Google form **to communicate with young people and understand what exactly they need**. The first thing young people are interested in is volunteering in time of war; every second person wants to volunteer and contribute to our victory. Therefore, we invited and engaged the youth to help **work in the hub** and package food products. We want a lot to join the SpivDiia Hub²⁸, but it did not happen because of the fast occupation and no opportunity to work with communities.

28. SpivDiia Hub is regional spaces based on youth centres and spaces, active volunteering organisations. The hub provides a package of services to support the civilians affected by the war in Ukraine. <https://spivdiia.org.ua/en>

Therefore, based on the cool example of SpivDiia, we created the same **non-formal youth movement** where the youth from Luhansk region work for residents of Luhansk region.

I guess lifelong education is a good thing, and the war must not prevent young people from training. In time of war, the youth join non-formal education even more actively, in particular, the one focused on the future that will enable them to occupy a specific niche and start their own business.

We have conducted a series of **trainings on project management, on starting own business, and psychological trainings** are regular. As a result of that training, twelve young people have already started their own business and work as individual entrepreneurs, in particular, in the field of youth work, and participate in different projects.

As for our active team, there are thirty people, with almost 50% of them already having their own business.

Young people's needs in time of war have also changed and become more global. Most young people have already found accommodation and a source of income. The pressing need is to find a regular, stable job, something to do.

I believe that youth have already overcome the fear of war. Young people are now ready to contribute to recovery of the liberated territories. It is especially applicable to the specialists and project managers who see **strategic directions of recovery and development of specific spheres**.

When it comes to less active youth, their basic needs do not change — young people need financial and material support, the same way as other internally displaced persons, they need employment opportunities. Active youth will find a job on their own. It is more difficult

to work with less adapted young people, to involve and encourage them to live a new way since they cannot keep living the old way.

As for the team of the Luhansk Region Youth Centre, which unites eight people, five of them work in Dnipro and the others — in other places, but it is not an issue for communication and working after Covid-19.

Most people we work with are volunteers. Volunteers in Dnipro, volunteers in mobile offices in Ivano-Frankivsk and Chernivtsi. We also communicate via heads and representatives of the youth councils of Luhansk region.

We **co-operate with the youth centres**, which have moved and, despite no physical space, keep working and performing their activities. We work owing to the modern communication technologies.

We share information on our activities on social media (Instagram, Facebook). The region administration always helps us and shares our information, when necessary. There is a Youth and Sports Department, a non-governmental organisation "Svitlo Kultury". We also use channels of our partners, single-minded entities, including the international organisations with which we co-operate, as well as youth councils and youth centres.

We have been joined by our partners, youth councils from other settlements to which we have moved. They also help us share the information and find necessary aid.

When necessary, we can always contact the Association of Youth Centres, the Youth Councils Association, the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine; they never refuse to share information or help, especially Maryna Popatenko:²⁹ she is open to work 24/7.

29. Maryna Popatenko, Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports of Ukraine. <https://mms.gov.ua/persons>

We used to work mostly with young people under 23, the students who wanted to move on, get together and work; and now the people aged 25 to 35 are joining youth work more often. As they are often unemployed now, they are getting more active in non-formal education and volunteering movement. It was not like that in the past because that age group always worked and had no interest in various non-formal movements. There were only single cases when people took part.

And now we have realised that our team is made of the audience we have almost never dealt with before. I guess it is a great advantage because these people are not going to leave us even when everything is fine.

We have involved people owing to our reputation. When we write and make posts on social media, people respond because they understand where they are going, and that it will be of use.

I also guess that we have been consolidated by the trouble. We share this trouble, so everyone who joins understands that it is a small step to our victory.

Let me give an example of Dnipro. What did it start with, and how did it start? As the head of the Luhansk Region Youth Council, I came to the youth centre of Dnipro and met the head of the Dnipro Youth Council. He said, "Let's start working together. Come to us, the lobby of the Palace of Culture is yours. Come and work, we are on the same boat, so let's work together". That's what we started with — the hosting community lent a helping hand and keeps helping. Then the Department of Youth and National Educational of Dnipro contacted us; we signed the memorandum of co-operation and were given free premises for the Hub for the Youth from Luhansk Region. In other words, **the hosting community is helping us a lot, and we have always been heard.**

As the youth centre that has moved, we keep paying salaries to our staff, we haven't reduced them a penny; when the people had no idea of what the future held in February, we helped them decide where they wanted to live and work. The region authorities did everything we suggested to support the people. We preserved all the positions, contrary to other cities; all the people retained their jobs.

As for what the youth wish to implement, we contact the region administration, and they hear us and consider our offers. Our young leaders are now in work groups in different areas managed by the military and civil region administration; it used to be much harder. Representatives of the authorities always attend meetings of the youth councils and other youth events.

If young people have any problems, for instance, with medical aid, it is easier to contact the authorities now — everything is done faster to help. We had to wait longer in the past, but we have joined our efforts, and issues are resolved faster now. **The barrier that used to exist and make people fear authorities has been destroyed, it is not there anymore.** Now we can easily call the acting deputy governor at 10 p.m. and ask for help — I know that it will not be postponed until the morning, that there will be help here and now.

The youth council continues its work. We started our activities on 10 February 2022; it was our first meeting where we elected the head and presented the strategy of where we were going and what we wanted. However, it all broke down, and our team has also changed. Now we have developed the youth work strategy for two years, and our activists in different corners of Ukraine, our agents of youth changes of Luhansk region are implementing the strategy and getting ready to **open mobile offices of youth councils.** It means that the mobile offices will be the sites where work will be performed in different directions. Media content will be created in Dnipro; we are going to create the sound recording, video recording studio and to

introduce information videos for the youth. We have already organised practical training at TV channels for young people. There will be a focus on non-formal education in Ivano-Frankivsk as it is their choice. In Chernivtsi, we are going to increase the scope of humanitarian work since there are lots of humanitarian hubs to support Luhansk region there.

The purpose of the mobile youth centres will be to consolidate the youth of the hosting community and the youth of Luhansk region, to create active coalitions, to support young people, to create the site for establishing mini-businesses, working and holding events. We ask where a young person who is asking us for help is from, but it is not a basis for not helping. It is the same as the shelter: when we opened the shelter for people from Luhansk region, people from Kharkiv and Donetsk region starting coming, so we cannot reject people in trouble. The youth work is organised the same: if a person is ready to work, it does not matter which region he or she is from. We help those in need, we are open to everyone, we join our efforts and work all together.

The youth work strategy has changed by 90% since 10 February. The only thing we have left is our team and our division by areas of activity. The former composition of the youth council had a head, a deputy and a secretary. Now we have managers responsible for different areas: a project manager, an SMM manager, an event manager. We have preserved the principal areas (non-formal education, events), but the content of our activities has fully changed.

— ON OWN VISION

In the end, if you were to give the key or fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

Do not forget to take the young people's opinion in consideration.

Do not forget to enable them to express their opinion, to try and lend a helping hand to those who do not even believe that they are capable of something. The practice has shown that they are capable of more in comparison with those who claim to be capable.

Be open, co-operate with different organisations. Even if you are not sure yet or do not understand why you need this or that training, you will see its use and benefits later, in a year or two or three.

Be open to new things, keep studying and invest into your own development. Life has proven that even if your work stably and everything is fine, it can change in a day, and you will have to do something new and gain new skills.

No pressure helps create something together with youth. We are free to decide where to go, and nobody can tell us we can't. No pressure makes the working process and results much better.

IVAN SAPSA

Municipal Institution of the Lviv Region Council
"Lviv Regional Youth Centre", Lviv

MOBILE YOUTH CENTRE OF LVIV REGION "IMPACTBUS 2.0"

"Last year we took part in the project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine" as a youth centre team. I heard of the things that were very important for me at the project: the values on which youth work must be based, and the values of the Council of Europe which they recommend as a basis for youth work and youth activities. These things were fundamental for me when I started to develop this project later. The project is based on the focus on needs of the youth, democratic values: the right to own opinion, the right to self-expression, the right to being different, to tolerant treatment, to respect to each other, to satisfaction of needs and solutions of problems of the youth. I mean, the activity is based on the values which I heard of then. Let me explain what it is like in practice."



PURPOSE: to provide support, the feeling of safety, affiliation and unity to young Ukrainians from different corners of Lviv region (including internally displaced persons) via the methods of non-formal education and by training them in the fields of personal development, national identity, leadership, development of emotional intelligence and youth participation.

AREAS OF ACTIVITY:

- **non-formal education:** from May to October, the team of the youth centre had more than forty visits to the youth of the region, including the most remote communities, within the project “Mobile Youth Centre of Lviv region”. During the visits, we studied needs of the young people, talked to them in the informal environment, trained them on national and patriotic education, leadership, tolerance, team work, emotional intelligence, co-operation with the authorities and many other themes;
- **mentoring,** mentor support by our youth centre: personal meetings of leaders for an hour once a week with an employee of the youth centre; eight young people from four communities are now engaged in individual

youth work, two young people for each employee.

KEY ADVICE: there are two principal aspects: 1) to speak openly (do not be afraid to speak and discuss everything from the beginning to the end because you will create inter-personal relations of great value); 2) to be focused on values (consider needs and problems of young people, which are a basis). The third aspect is to remember about your own value (value of your work, your effort, energy; remember what it is for). **It has enabled us to survive the toughest moments.**

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- guides of the Council of Europe (namely “Compass”);
- youth work values of the Council of Europe as the framework for work;
- The Council of Europe Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine”.



IVAN SAPSA

Municipal Institution of the Lviv Region
Council “Lviv Regional Youth Centre”, Lviv

— ON MOTIVATION

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

As for recommendations by the Council of Europe, we have used “Compass”³⁰, the cool instrument with the full package of games. Young people love studying their problems and discussing their roots as a game.

Also, the youth work values are our basis. I heard of those values at the training during the project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine”, and they sank into my heart. These are values, but not a tool; it is something we want to achieve, something we want to be a basis for our practices. No matter what a purpose is, it must be based on values.

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

First, it is **budget content** of the practice since a car will not go if there is no fuel. The same applies to people if they do not get paid. We are supported by the Lviv Region Council and our region administration, despite huge defence and national security costs. This funding has been preserved owing to the Resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine; there would be no practice otherwise.

The second aspect is **people**: employees and volunteers of the youth centre, people from other organisations who have driven together with us. We would not manage to share the experience and cover such number of spheres of interest for young people on our own.

Another resource is our **knowledge, abilities, experience and books**. “Compass” is a resource as well. It is also video materials on how people perform youth work in other countries or what else we have in Ukraine. We often lack them, there are not so many of them, but you can always find something on YouTube or on the internet.

What we have in the youth centre (**accessories, equipment**) is also a resource of our centre.

We cannot avoid the theme of war during our trips. Our meetings sometimes took place during air raid alerts, so we went to the bomb shelters or basements and worked there because the lethal Russian missiles were coming.

People fear, people are scared, people are in danger. Just sitting down and talking is sometimes enough to feel safe at least at the moment. To take a little break.

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

There is nothing from what we planned at the beginning of the year. Nothing because the new reality emerged on 24 February 2022. We had volunteering offices that gathered humanitarian assistance; we made camouflage nets. One office keeps working: SpivDiia Hub³² offers humanitarian, psychological and legal support and helps find a job. We did not plan it. It was our response to humanitarian crisis.

30. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. URL: <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>

31. Youth for Democracy in Ukraine. Council of Europe Office in Ukraine. URL: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/youth-for-democracy-in-ukraine>

32. SpivDiia Hub is regional spaces based on youth centres and spaces, active volunteering organisations. The hub provides a package of services to support the civilians affected by the war in Ukraine. <https://spivdiia.org.ua/en>

Together with almost 2 000 young people, we made the largest camouflage net in the country. That record was registered, I was given the floor and said, "It was supposed to be another record. A record in poetry, science or sports. But definitely not a camouflage net. Of course, this net will save boys and girls in the area of hostilities. But we were not supposed to do that, we did not want to do that, but we must do that because our country is attacked with bombs."

Our practices in the youth centre were cool, heartwarming and efficient. **We have developed a better understanding of what we do.** We used to say that we were short of money. We had our own budget, but needs more money, a lot of money to do more. Now it is clearer what can be done without money. It is important for large-scale work. But we have grounded ourselves. There are salaries and a place to work at — it is enough.

My fear is that the Ukrainians will have the condition similar to the one the people had after the Second World War, when their motto was, "At least there is no war." We will have to consider the effects of such trauma. I have heard very important words from one person, "Our country is now united against the enemy, but we as the country still have not decided how we will continue to live together". We will face this period after the war when there will be some new information on hostilities and people's actions in time of war. We are also considering another aspect — how to reconstruct the country after the victory; we are already thinking how it can be done, what we should start with. We are already negotiating with UNICEF to get funds for development of youth spaces. It is work for the future because creation of infrastructure takes years. I mean reconstruction. Such things might not appear but for 24 February 2022.



ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

Last year, the Lviv Region Council granted us one million hryvnias (**around 25 000 euros**) so that we could buy a car for the youth centre. The car was presented in the project as a mobile youth centre of Lviv region. The idea was supported by the deputies, who granted us a million hryvnias, and we purchased the car and some accessories: sports tools and board games. We wanted to develop the programme that would be fully focused on young people.

Young people from the communities in Lviv region file applications and invite us instead of us going to them and offering something.

They see the form³³ in free access, it is available at all resources; we regularly update it on the website of the region administration so that people can see this information. Young people also have access to the form on our social media pages. The form has the exhaustive list that can be chosen by young people to invite us. The programme itself states: the **basis is training or non-formal education**. However, young people are free to decide what kind of training it will be, what they want; themes can be different. If I am not mistaken, our form has around 15-20 different themes we can offer. We have also added the field "Other", so young people can offer something on their own. It is written in the form itself what we expect, what we would like. In particular, we want **young people to start speaking, not to afraid to speak the programme to ensure values** I have already mentioned.

We often ask representatives of the authorities and teachers attending the training to leave because young people are afraid to speak in their presence. On the other hand, we often ask

them to stay or even invite them when the level of communication with young people is well established, and they are not afraid to speak and say what they need: either the youth space or youth infrastructure or something else.

Another important element is to **study needs**. During each visit, we ask young people to fill in the form, to go to our special website from their phones and to answer the following question: "What do you need for development in your community?" There are five lines to describe their needs. The programme gathers similar answers and visualises them. Common answers are lack of youth events; youth infrastructure; youth space or site where people can get together. The very frequent answer is **"we just lack support, understanding and respect"**. These are three principal elements I have noticed. They were there last year, and they have not changed this year. There could even be a stronger focus on the third element of safety, understanding, respect, non-condemnation, you know, such basic human things. They are young people aged 16, 17, 18. I see that such basic human needs of the youth are not fully satisfied in Ukraine, in Lviv region. It might result from heritage of the Soviet Union. Or our society has not changed with account of such important element of human life. As basic human needs of the young people are not satisfied, they grow up without knowing how to satisfy these needs because they have not been taught to. They feel the pressure, they feel something is wrong with them, they fear some things. We have these effects, and we or other institutions will have to deal with them in the future. Of course, these people are afraid to assume responsibility, to manage some processes, to administer something; they fear lots of things. The farther from Lviv, the stronger the fear. It is not that obvious in large cities, but the smaller the village, the stronger the fear and pressure.

33. https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1AiNIJRFqerNZOGDG9sURdwT_8S4TNadQ9hU_ggQtz8/edit

I have not sensed abrupt changes in young people's needs. The only difference is the psychological condition of young people: they have more fears and become more reserved. Proactivity is not the main thing now; the current purpose is to survive, and other more "spiritual" things will be discussed later. I guess, if my words are read in other European countries, I want them to understand: it is more than a war, people's lives are ruined.

This practical programme has been preserved from the last year, when it was awarded by the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine as the best youth work practice in Ukraine.

However, we have added some aspects this year. The elements of the previous project are still there. But this year they are used as the first stage of the other project. We have added the second stage: during each meeting we tried to **identify the young people** who were active and pro-active, who wanted to assume responsibility, who were not afraid to express their opinion, who had leadership or management skills, who wanted to achieve something or at least understand what they wanted. After each visit, we offered three of four young people to come to our youth centre for training. It was organised as follows: if there were six visits to six communities during a month, we invited the young people from those six communities to come to us for half a day. When they come to us, we train them; we engage the Ukrainian Academy of Leadership, our Department of Youth and Sports, non-governmental organisations of Lviv region or commercial organisations that offer services to young people and can provide them for free, can teach them something valuable. We invite everyone. We present the themes of **leadership, mentoring, personal responsibility, and personal brand** because our purpose is to **raise the generation of leaders** with new standards, **to create the network** so that **youth centres, youth spaces and teams** can be created in Lviv region.

You can work with the infrastructure, but centres and spaces are one stage. Another stage is people, teams, you, young people. If you are ready to work, we will work. If the young people were ready to work, we offered the third stage: **mentoring, mentor support by our youth centre.** Those were personal meetings for an hour once a week with an employee of the youth centre. Everyone could select a mentor at their own discretion; we have four employees, including me, who can consult. Therefore, we started a series of such **personal meetings** on a weekly basis, in the confidential environment, often in Zoom since it was hard to get to Lviv. We discussed very delicate issues with young people. There are eight young people from four communities who are now involved into the individual youth work, two young persons for each employee.

What do we offer to the young people? Firstly, it is **human connection and human communication** in time of war. It is safety in the first place. Trust is based on this practice. Secondly, there is **understanding, support and guidance** they wanted. There is **development of relations** that are positive to us, to the youth centre, since these youth can become youth leaders or a basis of the youth space or centre in their communities in the future. It is working for the future. On the other hand, young people get what they were looking for and satisfy their need of support, understanding and contact.

You can often hear about youth work in numbers: how large the event was, and how many people came. However, such things as individual youth work are almost never mentioned.

ON OWN VISION

In the end, if you were to give the key or fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

Do not be afraid to be open, do not be afraid to call things what they are. Tell the truth, say what you feel in this work as it is of value for the young people your work with as colleagues and for the young people for whom this work is done. Do not be afraid to speak and discuss everything from the very beginning to the end because you will create **inter-personal relations** of great value.

The second aspect is that focus on needs and problems of young people is a basis. You cannot tell young people how to develop and what to do. You should create conditions, provide resources and offer — young people will do it better than you offer.

Two principal aspects are to speak and to remain focused on values. The third aspect is to remember your own value. The value of your work, effort and energy. To remember the purpose. **It has enabled us to survive the toughest moments.**





KATERYNA PRIAZHNIKOVA

Non-Governmental Organisation
"Development and Initiative", Dnipro

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY LIFE

"Implementation of projects in time of war might have been our most difficult, but also useful challenge! The youth need the most support in crisis, and we believe that our activities have helped increase motivation, involvement and belief of young people into the future. They have gained new knowledge, hard and soft skills, met other active young people for networking and potential co-operation and brought necessary changes in their local communities."



PURPOSE: to give the youth workers the competencies necessary for active participation and development of the local democracy and promotion of media literacy; to give them the tools and legal mechanisms for youth participation, to assist in promotion of the manual “Have Your Say!” and the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life; to encourage them to share that knowledge and experience with campaigns, co-operation, local networks and other tools.

AREAS OF ACTIVITY:

- **creating the network of leaders of changes** – owing to the project, we have created the network of active youth non-governmental organisations, youth centres and youth councils of Dnipro region, which includes active and single-minded youth looking for opportunities to develop local communities and the young generation of the Ukrainians;

- **educational and awareness raising campaigns**, practices at the local level: imitation game “inverereP stereotypes”; game “Dignityland”; region youth event “Discrimination. Why it is (not) funny”.

KEY ADVICE: implementation of projects in time of war might have been our most difficult, but also useful challenge. The youth need the most support in crisis, and we believe that our activities have helped increase motivation, involvement and belief of young people into the future. They have gained new knowledge, hard and soft skills, met other active young people for networking and potential co-operation and brought necessary changes in their local

communities. So our last tip is to keep going and to try to do even more! Hard times are also the times when you can influence most of all.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- manuals of the Council of Europe (“Compass”, “Have Your Say!”);
- European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe;
- Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life;
- supporting youth participation in democracy and engagement of young people based on the youth work methodology of the Council of Europe.

34. “Have Your Say!” Manual on the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. <https://rm.coe.int/t/16807023e0>

KATERYNA PRIAZHNIKOVA

Non-Governmental Organisation

“Development and Initiative”, Dnipro

ON MOTIVATION

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

Our youth work became possible in time of war owing to the support by the Council of Europe and local authorities. The resources and materials provided by the Council of Europe helped us develop the well-structured programme that met all the purposes of the project and created the safe educational environment for the participants of the project “Literacy in the Community”. The programme was developed in the manner that enabled us to considerably influence lives of our participants and their local communities. The participants of the project “ParAMOUNT Literacy” are now planning their future actions.

As for the results of the project “Girls4Democracy”, we are sure that all the work performed at the local level to support youth participation in democracy and engagement of young people has encouraged young people to volunteering and civic engagement, which influences the incredibly resistance of the Ukrainian society at the national and local levels. Moreover, development of non-governmental organisations and youth councils has created the powerful network to support evacuation and humanitarian assistance.

We highly appreciate all the support provided by the Council of Europe and the European Youth Foundation to Ukraine and the Ukrainian youth in such hard times. We see the payback and motivated eyes of the young people.

We understand that the local youth need implementation of local projects right now, not after the victory, so it is necessary as never before. The important thing is for our region not to fall another victim to propaganda.

You can follow the link and watch the final video from the completed training course “Parallel Literacy”³⁵. The last training activities, including awarding of certificates, were held without electricity (there were power cuts all over the region), but we managed.

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

We believe that the key elements that have made our projects and local events successful even in time of war were the following: experienced team of co-ordinators, youth workers, trainers and their efficient communication (with account of experience gained during implementation of previous projects); detailed preliminary planning of the project programme and risk management (by means of the practices and experience of the pilot activities and organisation of further activities); thorough selection of participants for events (created network of organisations); long-term partnership with the local authorities supporting us at different levels.

The approaches and standards of the Council of Europe are unique and adapted to our realities, so they were easy to use and explain.

When it comes to the key resources, the leading role in most local events was the fuel we could use for generators to have electric power and heating for our activities.

35. ParAMOUNT Literacy! Dnipro, Ukraine, Nov 2022. URL: <https://www.facebook.com/developmentngo/videos/835756520868553/>

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

We assess the activities performed within the Pilot Activities conducted in 2021 and 2022 as efficient and successful ones. We have managed:

- to develop the competencies of the youth workers necessary for active participation and development of the local democracy and promotion of media literacy;
- to give them the tools and legal mechanisms for youth participation, to assist in promotion of the manual "Have Your Say!"³⁶ and the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life³⁷;

- to encourage further distribution of the knowledge and experience by means of campaigns, co-operation, local networks and other tools.

As for the problems we expected, but still hoped to avoid, there were power and water disruptions at the training sites as well as all the changes we had to make in the programme due to such disruptions. Both the trainers and the participants managed to adapt to those changes quite well, so it did not influence the quality of the project. Of course, huge inflation, the migration crisis in Ukraine and the region and daily risks of missile strikes were not provided for at the project application stage, but we managed to overcome all the challenges owing to quality risk assessment and preliminary planning.



36. "Have Your Say!" Manual on the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life.

<https://rm.coe.int/16807023e0>

37. Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/168071b4d6>

ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

We have been working to promote active youth participation, higher social inclusion and better digital skills and competencies of young people via non-formal education as a large Ukrainian non-governmental organisation for more than seven years. We have been active both at the local and international levels for this period: we have participated in youth projects, co-operated with the local university, developed the broad network of local organisations in the region and established co-operation with the international colleagues. We have successfully implemented the project “Girls4Democracy” dedicated to democratic development with the support of the Council of Europe and the European Youth Foundation. One more project “ParAMOUNT Literacy” dedicated to media literacy is under way.

Girls4Democracy was implemented in the following directions:

1) creating the network of leaders of changes – owing to the project, we have created the network of active youth non-governmental organisations, youth centres and youth councils of Dnipro region, which includes active and single-minded youth looking for opportunities to develop local communities and the young generation of the Ukrainians;

2) educational and awareness raising campaigns, practices at the local level:

- imitation game “inverereP stereotypes”;
- the participants watched the videos on gender inequality stereotypes; had an interesting imitation game, identified the gender inequality problems and had an opportunity to experience them at the example of their characters; discussed the effects of prejudiced attitudes in the society. The game was created by the project

participants as follow-up activities and results of training group work;

- exercise “Dignityland” — the participants discussed equal opportunities for different social groups; the obstacles existing in our society; considered different problems and life situations from the point of view of other people. The participants practised the ways of improving the situation by creating their own Dignityland where the residents felt comfortable and safe;

- at the premises of the region state administration together with the members of the region youth council and active youth, the event was held for the young people of the region: “Discrimination. Why it is (not) funny”. Lots of issues connected with equal rights of women and men, displays of discrimination were considered at the event, and it was discussed why jokes might not be tolerant.

Follow-up activities were conducted using “Compass”³⁸ and other activities based on the methodology of the Council of Europe.

Our organisation has taken active part both in on-site and online projects and initiatives from the very start: we have the experience of virtual national and international exchange, experienced staff to support the youth in such activities. We develop our social media pages by announcing different competitions for various offline and online opportunities, and then share our participants’ results and feedback, including webinars and online lectures, social media campaigns. This tool has enabled us to cover the wide local audience, but it is getting more difficult after the last mass attacks against the power infrastructure since different parts of the region can have no electricity and internet for two to eight hours a day. The registered participants are provided with materials for home work as lots of events have to be rescheduled. Offline activities are conducted in the shelter for the participants who are ready and able to come to Dnipro.

38. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. URL: <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>

ON OWN VISION

In the end, if you were to give the key and fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

Implementation of projects in time of war might have been our the most difficult, but also useful challenge! The youth need most support in crisis, and we believe that our activities have helped increase motivation, involvement and belief of young people into the future. They have gained new knowledge, hard and soft skills, met

other active young people for networking and potential co-operation and brought necessary changes in their local communities.

So our last tip is to keep going and to try to do even more! Hard times are also the times when you can influence most of all.



YULIIA IELFIMOVA

Non-Governmental
Organisation "Centre for Euroinitiatives", Sumy

"My participation in the Youth Peace Camp helped me greatly to prepare and respond to the needs that arose in the youth work in Ukraine. The work within the Project 'Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase I' helped me develop a better understanding of the context of the Ukrainian youth work. The key positions of the Council of Europe regarding youth participation are very useful. The approaches of the Council of Europe I use in my work are human rights-based approach, youth work focused on values, the youth, and the participation approach."

THE EXPERIENCE OF YOUTH WORK is personal experience of involvement into transformation processes and adaptation of the youth work to the war in Ukraine and support of the processes of youth participation in response to the war-caused crisis.

The purpose of the experience I would like to share in my story is to show **the important role of the youth work in response to the crisis caused by the war in Ukraine, in support of the youth and their participation in crisis response.**

I have initiated several events directed at transformation and adaptation of the youth work and support of youth participation in response to the war-caused crisis since the beginning of the war, and I have taken part in such events by myself. They were focused on **working with the Ukrainian youth workers, analysing their needs, developing various tools for youth workers** to support their activities.

KEY ADVICE: the youth must be in the spotlight. The youth must **be involved into decision-making.** At the same time, we must consider changes in reality of traumatic situations and **pay attention to trauma in the youth work.**

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- Quality standards in education and training activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe;
- Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls³⁹;
- Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to member states on supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood⁴⁰;
- Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on youth work⁴¹;
- Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on young people's access to rights⁴²;
- Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights⁴³.

39. <https://rm.coe.int/prems-092222-gbr-2573-recommandation-cm-rec-2022-17-a5-bat-web-1-/1680a6ef9a>

40. <https://rm.coe.int/recommendation-cm-2019-4-supporting-young-refugees-transition-adulthoo/168098e814>

41. <https://rm.coe.int/cmrec-2017-4-and-explanatory-memorandum-youth-work-web/16808ff0d1>

42. <https://rm.coe.int/1680702b6e>

43. <https://rm.coe.int/168066671e>

YULIYA IELFIMOVA

Non-Governmental Organisation
“Centre for Euroinitiatives”, Sumy

— ON MOTIVATION

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with the youth during such hard times?

Competencies of the youth workers: the ability to assess young people’s needs, to understand the profile of young people, media literacy, psychological support skills; knowledge of: how to work with young people; how to create safe conditions for youth work; understanding of what is happening to the youth, how the youth work can promote engagement, how the youth can be involved into development of the local community, how to establish connections with the local organisation, and how to use community resources.

Personal **well-being** of the youth workers and the youth.

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with the youth in time of war?

My experience of co-operation with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe within such activities as the **Youth Peace Camp** and **Youth Peace Ambassadors** helped me greatly to **prepare for and respond to the needs** that arose in the youth work in Ukraine. This experience of youth work, which was also gained during the war, helped me understand what work needed to be done in Ukraine now.

The work within the Project **“Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase I”** helped me develop a better understanding of the **context of the Ukrainian youth work**.

The key positions of the Council of Europe regarding **youth participation** are very useful.

The approaches of the Council of Europe I use in my work are **human rights-based approach, youth work focused on values, the youth, and the participation approach**.

I use the quality standards in education and training activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe as well as:

- Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls⁴⁴;
- Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to member states on supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood⁴⁵;
- Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on youth work⁴⁶;
- Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on young people’s access to rights⁴⁷;
- Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights⁴⁸.

44. <https://rm.coe.int/prems-092222-gbr-2573-recommandation-cm-rec-2022-17-a5-bat-web-1-/1680a6ef9a>

45. <https://rm.coe.int/recommendation-cm-2019-4-supporting-young-refugees-transition-adulthoo/168098e814>

46. <https://rm.coe.int/cmrec-2017-4-and-explanatory-memorandum-youth-work-web/16808ff0d1>

47. <https://rm.coe.int/1680702b6e>

48. <https://rm.coe.int/168066671e>

ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

Humanitarian headquarters in different communities were the first to act in time of war in response to the specific needs. Existing youth centres and spaces, as well as youth workers, focused their activities on providing humanitarian aid and omitted the prospects of youth work. Activities that were implemented at that time cannot be underestimated however, it was extremely necessary **to get back to direct youth work and to engage the youth into the process of response to humanitarian challenges.**

The purpose of the experience I would like to share in my story is to show **the important role of the youth work in response to the crisis caused by the war in Ukraine, in support of the youth and their participation in crisis response.**

I have initiated several events directed at transformation and adaptation of the youth work and support of youth participation in response to the war-caused crisis since the beginning of the war, and I have taken part in such events by myself. They were focused on **working with the Ukrainian youth workers, analysing their needs, developing various tools for youth workers** to support their activities, and working with the young people who supported their participation in response to the war-caused crisis.

The series of four meetings with the youth workers from different regions of Ukraine, which was focused on analysing and responding to the needs of youth workers in April 2022, was organised in co-operation with the Project

“Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II”, the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, and UNDP.

The international “IASC Youth Guidelines Training for Young Humanitarians Responding to the Ukraine Crisis”, organised jointly with the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action, UNICEF, FNPA, UNHCR and the Council of Europe, was held. The training was focused on supporting the role of young people in humanitarian response and involved the young people who participated in humanitarian campaigns in response to the crisis in Ukraine, from Ukraine and the countries that offered most support to refugees.

Development of tools and recommendations for youth workers in the work with internally displaced persons by ensuring mobile youth work in shelters in different communities of Ukraine that host internally displaced persons.

Support of the young people who share their stories and voice the needs of young people in time of war. In May, the Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth initiated the social media campaign to give opportunities to unfiltered voices of the Ukrainian youth and life experience of the displaced youth and to intensify efforts of the young people working at the front line/offering humanitarian support. As a result of the campaign, four young people who had shared their stories from Ukraine initiated the idea of the project “Voices of young people in Ukraine”, which was implemented in July – November jointly by the Donetsk Youth Debate Centre and other youth organisations from five communities of Ukraine within the campaign “Democracy Here. Democracy now” of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, with the support of the European Youth Foundation. The project idea was to spread the voices of the youth from five regions of Ukraine about

impact of the war in Ukraine upon youth. The young people collected twenty stories from the unfiltered young people of different origin in their communities within the project.

Co-operation with the international community of youth in how to treat the theme of war in youth work. In July, I was a facilitator at the international seminar organised by SALTO EECA, the purpose of which was to consider how to talk about the war situation and its effects with young people and youth workers and how to influence the local and international youth work. Online training at SALTO platform “HOP online learning” is developed based on the workshop results. Co-facilitation of the international training course “Peace Multipliers” with the focus on the youth work for peace, conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

Support of the youth in the fight against disinformation, fake news and propaganda about the war between Russia and Ukraine and ways of their identification (Media Sharks: Media Literacy Upskilling). The young people surveyed the youth in Sumy regarding the media they mostly used and trusted, analysed those online media, developed recommendations for the local stakeholders in the field of information, youth and education on how to help young people develop literacy and resilience to disinformation about the war, made the presentation for the local stakeholders in the field of youth, education, information, and developed the joint activity with representatives of the stakeholders on implementation of the recommendations.

“Education in emergencies” – creation of safe non-formal education spaces in five communities of Ukraine based on training on trauma informed youth work, for children and

the youth, in co-operation with the Donetsk Youth Debate Centre and Street Child (UK).

Lots of youth centres are now unavailable since they have turned into humanitarian centres. Moreover, many territories have been ruined by the war, and lots of people are moving to other regions. We are launching the project to work with the youth in shelters and with internally displaced persons. We need to give them the tools to resolve these situations, and to bring normal life back to the young people so that they can find themselves in these shelters. We are developing the tool kit to work with the youth in time of war, the practical tool kit with practical recommendations, different examples, access to human rights, approach to media literacy etc.

All my experience shows that problems of youth workers and young people need to be discussed, that the youth work is important, and community is important for inspiration, theoretical and psychological support etc. One of the aspects I believe to be very important is to watch the transformation process and support; interaction is extremely important. The necessary transformation is **to return to the youth work and needs of young people.**

— ON OWN VISION

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

These activities were very positive. I see good perception. The **youth work is finally back.** All the experience I have described was response to external events. We are now thinking of

a way to maintain these practices and make them sustainable. Sustainability is about youth workers at the local level who have gained certain competencies and keep working; it is about young people who come to youth centres, work as volunteers in youth centres etc.

In the end, if you were to give the key or fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

Young people must be in the spotlight. Young people must be involved into decision-making, they must be a part of the creative process, and their voices must be heard and considered regardless of the situation.

At the same time, we must consider changes in reality of traumatic situations and **pay attention to trauma in the youth work.** Apply practices to support young people and make life as stable as possible...



LIDIIA INDYCHENKO

Municipal Out-of-School Educational Establishment "Donetsk Regional Children and Youth Centre", Vinnytsia

IDPs acting together

"Our youth workers have already been displaced twice (2014, 2022); almost all of them are from Donetsk. This traumatic experience does not tolerate any sorrow; it must be transformed into use. If you have overcome something, and you have positive experience, you must share it rather than accumulate it. You understand how the others feel, and how you can help. This is our fundamental motivation. Owing to the training and support of the Council of Europe, we have already complied all this knowledge into trainings, meetings and words that can help young people."

PURPOSE: social integration of the youth among internally displaced persons into the local communities by improving their mental health, preventing conflicts and setting up joint actions with the youth environment in Vinnytsia and Kropyvnytskyi.

AREAS OF ACTIVITY:

- **non-formal education** for the youth among internally displaced persons. The centre offers **speaking English language courses; Ukrainian language courses, Ukrainian language for children, art therapy, business skill development trainings, yoga, cookie painting, bead weaving and other workshops; parent club, social cohesion trainings;**

- online social and psychological support of the youth workers of Donetsk region by implementing the programme **“Trauma Informed Youth Work”;**

- **“Cohort”** project directed at supporting professional activities of the youth workers in their job.

KEY ADVICE: youth work in time of war must be **safe**. **Physical safety** – is about bomb shelters and alerts. **Information safety** – because our youth centres have been occupied, and youth workers had to hide all the information on their activities, hide their social media pages. **Life safety** in general – since the youth workers have been treated violently by the occupants due to their professional activities.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- manuals by the Council of Europe (“Compass”, “Bookmarks”);
- website of the Council of Europe;
- programme “Trauma Informed Youth Work”;
- mentoring support in the Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine”.

LIDIYA INDYCHENKO

Municipal Out-of-School Educational Establishment “Donetsk Regional Children and Youth Centre”, Vinnytsia

— ON MOTIVATION

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

The Council of Europe has a large procedural framework for the themes of social cohesion, human rights and anti-discrimination. We use this framework, available at the website. We consult “Compass”⁴⁹ and “Bookmarks”⁵⁰, because we know that **they have been created by professionals, and that these materials have stood the test of time.** We have the highest degree of trust to the materials of the Council of Europe as a reputable source. When we want to work with the challenging theme, we check the entire website to start with, see whether there are any materials available, and use them as a basis; we will never invent something or use some information from the internet — we use the website of the Council of Europe instead.

We have been trained a lot, I try to engage all the colleagues into the training since it is about attitudes and views rather than knowledge as education. We have never felt bored at the training because we knew all the material. We have been working with the youth for eight years and have studied lots of different specialised themes, but what we get at these classes is always of use. I love the latest programme “Trauma Informed Youth Work”⁵¹, because it is super relevant now.

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

Our principal resource is experience. We have worked with the traumatised young people and young people who have been living at war for the last eight years in Kramatorsk. We have had lots of projects for the youth from the cities and towns located near the front line, psychosocial work projects. We know this youth personally; we know what they feel; we are the same.

Our youth workers have already been displaced twice; almost all of them are from Donetsk. This traumatic experience does not tolerate any sorrow; it must be transformed into use. If you have overcome something, and you have positive experience, you must share it rather than accumulate it. You understand how the others feel, and how you can help. This is our fundamental motivation.

Owing to the training and support of the Council of Europe, **we have already complied all this knowledge into trainings, meetings and words that can help young people.**

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

Our main insight is that we **have survived, have maintained our institutional sustainability.** It is our great victory.

We have raised this theme among our colleagues at the Ukrainian level: **60% of Donetsk region has been occupied, so will we be able to survive?**

49. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>

50. Bookmarks — Combating Hate Speech Online through Human Rights Education. <https://rm.coe.int/bookmarksen2020-web2/16809e5789>

51. Trauma Informed Youth Work. <https://rm.coe.int/eng-trauma-informed-youth-work-yfdua-digital/1680aa9073>

Our second insight was **that youth co-operation and youth support among youth workers of Ukraine were very strong**. I was once asked during an interview whether I was afraid of competition. And I wondered what competition can be in youth work. We are not commercial organisations fighting for profit. Even if you gather all the youth from the specific region and build ten other youth centres, we still will not cover everyone. There is no competition among youth workers; there is co-operation that has become obvious in time of war, when the people started helping each other.

— ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

The problem of an internally displaced young person is that when he or she comes to a new community, there are integration and acceptance problems. We had had lots of internal conflicts in Ukraine before the war, and when the society gets so mixed now, these conflicts emerge. In order to simplify these events, to help a young person integrate with maximum comfort, and also to make it most comfortable for the community as well, social integration projects are implemented.

Our centre has the target audience — the youth and youth workers of Donetsk region, it had been like that before 24 February. After the full-scale invasion, our audience is the youth among internally displaced persons scattered all over the world and Ukraine; they are all around except for Donetsk region. So we are in Vinnytsia now, we know there are lots of them here, and we have decided to work with these people here.

The purpose of the programme **“IDPs acting together”** was to integrate the youth among

internally displaced persons into the local communities by improving their mental health, preventing conflicts and setting up joint actions with the youth environment in Vinnytsia and Kropyvnytskyi. The programme was implemented in partnership with the youth centre of Kirovohrad region, we implemented it together online. Our centre had practically not opened then, we worked online. The training course is made of seven online themes (trainings on self-identity, conflict prevention, anti-discrimination and stereotypes, prevention of the hate speech, and project management), and art therapy in Vinnytsia and Kropyvnytskyi offline.

The trainings united lots of young people from Vinnytsia and Kropyvnytskyi; half of the participants were local young people, and the other half — internally displaced young people, not only from Donetsk region, but also from different regions: Kherson, Kharkiv, Kyiv regions, from everywhere. Social integration means that the target audience does not have to be clearly specialised (for instance, internally displaced persons only), because then there will be no integration. So we tried to gather different people. We discussed the themes of self-identity, understanding of conflict and prevention of the hate speech — these themes are applicable to everyone, not some specific groups of people.

The Donetsk Regional Children and Youth Centre was established in 2009 in Donetsk. The staff of the centre only managed to take the seal in 2014 when the city was occupied. We had a huge building in the city centre with lots of property, but everything was occupied and stolen. The centre moved to Kramatorsk, Donetsk region. The centre was in Kramatorsk for eight years, conducting its activity, working with young people and youth workers of Donetsk region.

We are the centre of regional significance, our principal target audience was youth workers of Donets region, since Donetsk region had the most developed youth infrastructure in Ukraine: there were more than 120 youth centres, and the centre had more than a hundred youth workers. According to the three-tier youth work system of Ukraine, we were a regional centre, and our task was to help the local youth centres.

Remaining in Kramatorsk got dangerous as the city is very close to the front line, is regularly shelled, and has no utilities (water, electricity, internet), so it was impossible to work there. Moreover, there was no more our target audience: some youth centres had stopped working, many of them had been destroyed, the others had the downtime, and the youth of Donetsk region had left. Therefore, the centre started to work online.

We actually opened the doors to our centre in Vinnytsia in October 2022. The process took the entire summer and two months in autumn. It was a new experience for all the people in our team, we found out everything on our own, established and clarified everything we could or could not do, and who was supposed to pay, how it was to be registered.

Now we have lots of **non-formal education** events for the youth among internally displaced persons. Our centre is conducting the **speaking English language course** – the educational interactive course during which young people do not attend lectures or formal classes, but the teacher shows them the special series of videos, movies, bloggers, television series, and young people watch and discuss them, make conclusions and learn this way. These classes are directed at development of language skills and competencies. While the English language is mostly studied by teenagers aged 14 to 17, our **Ukrainian language courses** are attended by people aged 20 to 35. The Ukrainian language courses are directed at creating conditions for

people “to speak out” since they have this need. The classroom has couches, a TV, tea and coffee. The teacher shows the latest piece of news on the screen while the participants discuss it together and enable everyone to express their opinion; their language skills are practised this way. We also have **the Ukrainian language for children**, also with classes in the verbal format based on fairy tales and cartoons. Moreover, we have regular **art therapy** courses, which are attended by adults, children and young people. We just make groups out of everyone who signs up, and courses are held three times a week. Moreover, we have **business skill development trainings**, since it is now important to develop the Ukrainian economy; we train the youth on the principal business, legislation and tax rules. We also offer **yoga, cookie painting, bead weaving and other workshops**. We are also planning to hold the parent club — the psychologist will work to explain what it is like to be parents and not harm children; the course includes the psychological first aid and burnout.

We hold **social cohesion trainings** where we would like to conduct our programme “IDPs acting together” offline. We were going to start the next week, but we are worried that we will be unable to gather a group due to technical electricity issues, so we are starting soon.

Moreover, we work **online** since our youth workers have asked us to. They say that they are mostly dealing with humanitarian assistance, and that it is very hard. Lots of youth centres work as humanitarian assistance offices now. The youth workers who used to work with young people have been dealing with humanitarian assistance for half a year: they receive, give out, record products and sort things out with old ladies. They are stressed and need help. Owing to the Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine” of the Council of Europe, two workers of our centre have studied and become certified trainers of the programme “**Trauma Informed Youth Work**”; we have launched this programme for our youth workers.

We have gathered our people online three times already, tried to cover them all and offered the training on how to work with young people being informed of trauma. The programme created by the Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine”, which considers differences between stress and trauma, ways of their identification, help and therapy, was extremely efficient, and our youth workers really appreciated it and wondered why they had not known that before.

Therefore, we support our workers on-site. We have done our best for the people to retain their jobs. We had “**Cohort**” Project where we got together and discussed how we could live on; we tried to find ways to satisfy basic needs; we wanted youth workers to have some confidence that they were needed in this profession.

To sum up, we work **offline** in Vinnytsia and **online** for those who are in Donetsk region now; these people perform humanitarian work or work in the hubs created by Donetsk region all over Ukraine.

— ON OWN VISION

In the end, if you were to give the key and fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

Youth work in time of war must be **safe**. **Physical safety** is about bomb shelters and alerts. **Information safety** — because our youth centres have been occupied, and youth workers had to hide all the information on their activities, hide their social media pages. **Life safety** in general — the youth workers have been treated violently by the occupants due to their professional activities.

There were lots of safety challenges. I guess that the main thing is that youth work in time of war must be based on safety. It is our current reality. Safety is all around now, and it has to be diversified.

OKSANA MALCHENKO

Non-Governmental Organisation
"Space of Equal Opportunities", Sumy

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION CENTRES IN SUMY REGION

"It seems to me now it is not about youth work. It is rather about social cohesion and communication needs. No matter what we do. I guess if it was only about education, there would be fewer people. I have a feeling that people now come to our events in the communities because they need normal human communication."

PURPOSE: to develop the action plans that will be meaningful, useful and associated with non-formal education together with the communities; to provide them with financial and material resources, to support non-formal education centres in organisational and psychological terms; to unite and consolidate people in communities.

AREAS OF ACTIVITY:

- **communication** with territorial communities in Sumy region regarding the needs and resources of youth work and non-formal education;
- youth work in **eleven territorial communities near the border** – psychological and methodological support, consulting, training sessions, provision of resources, which enable working with young people in different areas;
- **non-formal education** for young people, children, young mothers and fathers, older persons in the communities;
- **networking** of cultural, educational and other establishments in village territorial communities, support of their activities to satisfy cultural, educational and sports needs of young people, children and young families;
- teambuilding, financial and methodological support.

KEY ADVICE: follow the needs. Remember that needs change, people change and situations change. The things that worked out yesterday might not work out today. There was no demand yesterday, but it might emerge today. There was no need yesterday or, on the contrary, there was a need, but it has changed today, it is different. It is probably mostly about **the ability to be flexible, the ability to recognise that something might not stick to the plan.**

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- manuals of the Council of Europe (“Compass”, “Compasito”, “Dignityland”);
- use of documentaries in youth work;
- assessment of needs and further corresponding training.

49. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. URL: <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>

50. Bookmarks — Combating Hate Speech Online through Human Rights Education. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/bookmarksen2020-web2/16809e5789>

51. Trauma Informed Youth Work. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/eng-trauma-informed-youth-work-yfdua-digital/1680aa9073>

OKSANA MALCHENKO

Non-Governmental Organisation
“Space of Equal Opportunities”, Sumy

— ON MOTIVATION

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

To start with, we always use “Compass”⁵² and “Compasito”⁵³. We even have the group of youth workers who love these publications, and we keep putting them into practice.

Secondly, we had three or four copies of the “Dignityland”⁵⁴, which we have handed over to the communities together with the board games and showed the girls how they worked. We taught them to use the game, they liked it and said that it was very efficient for high school student.

Thirdly, although it is not a tool of the Council of Europe, the approaches are correlated: we have created two DocuClubs, and are going to establish two more by the end of the month. We teach the communities actively how to **use documentaries in youth work**. I would not say it is an easy task, there is often lack of understanding of difference between documentaries and fiction, but we keep working in this direction.

Also, as for the approaches of the Council of Europe, we use the most fundamental approach in our activity — we never impose anything on anyone. We **communicate with people and ask what they want, what they are ready to do, what internal, time and psychological resources they have now**. Therefore, we

consider their desires on this basis. We follow the path of gradual assessment of needs and further training.

At the beginning of the full-scale invasion, we tried to offer non-formal education to communities, launched numerous trainings, important and useful ones, but people turned out to be not ready. We felt the internal resistance, nobody wished to study. Everyone wanted to mould, paint and practise yoga. Everyone, including children and adults, painted with great pleasure; there was demand for workshops like “make something out of something”. We painted bags, vests, table cloths. Then we realised that people were ready for something different: web design and media literacy courses, a series of training games “World of Communities”. We were happy to see the progress in comparison with quilling. However, we did not force the communities, we did not try to get rid of that somewhat infantile activity, and we realised that the people had no internal resources for anything else. We just waited for them to pain, mould and play as much as they wanted.

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

As soon as we could, after Sumy had been deoccupied, we started visiting the territorial community in Sumy region: Trostianets, Boromlia, the villages where we had contacts. First, we brought humanitarian assistance. However, we met our graduates from the Youth Worker Programme, participants of our projects there. They asked us, “Oh, here you are. Are you planning any activities here?”. We responded, “What do you want?”. They said, “We think as soon as we are over with humanitarian assistance, we will have to do something, get back to work.”

52. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. URL: <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>

53. Compasito. Manual on human rights education for children. URL: <http://www.eycb.coe.int/compasito/>

54. Card game of the Council of Europe “Dignityland”. URL: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/enter/enter-dignityland-1>

We started a discussion, “What do you want? How do you see it? What obstacles are there?”. And we faced all the real challenges. We started thinking how that reality could be “fixed”, where we could find resources, how we could present the communities’ needs in a grant application. We found an interested organisation.

We spent lots of time. In July, we spent almost a month training our team. Our people completed the courses of first psychological aid, first medical aid, land mine and explosive safety. We developed the emergency action plan together: what to do if there was a shelter, and what to do if there was none. Our youth workers signed the plan consciously. It seemed important for the people to feel confident in what they were doing.

Even now we keep thinking that we have to change something. We started in certain conditions, but they have utterly changed. We have had lots of power cuts for the last two weeks, and the people from the communities call us and say they are sitting in the darkness. They keep holding events without electricity. We say that they do not have to. However, one librarian in the area in the very north says that the people have already come. The people come themselves and say, “Let’s do something.” We cannot make them leave.

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

Firstly, we were really surprised that we had achieved the project targets; the number of the events under the project was achieved. We were surprised because we were not sure that people would come in such safety situation. We set the target of numbers of people at the very moderate level deliberately, but the people exceeded it since it turned out that they **really needed to**

do something and to communicate. People come with pleasure. We did not expect that.

Secondly, we expected the people to be more proactive in volunteering or prosocial activities. However, the people come and say that they are already volunteering, making camouflage nets and trench candles. They want **to come, take a rest and do something pleasant.** It was also unexpected.

Another pleasant unexpected result we have realised is that despite hazards and different situations the educational and cultural employees have the very **strong desire to act**, they do want to work, they miss doing something they can do so much that they are ready to do that all day long. The people have the need, the say, yes, it is cold in the house of culture now, yes, we are not doing what we would like to do or what we are used to doing in culture now. But even the fact that we had held the board game championship, and then someone said, “Why don’t we meet to sing? Let’s sing together.” And that girl was so happy because she thought nobody needed that anymore. But it turned out they did. We definitely did not plan that. We did not set such tasks.

As for unexpected minuses we have seen is that people do not want to study. They did not need trainings and non-formal education during a certain period. They needed psychological, communicational support and activities.

ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

We started those activities around mid-summer, as we had been performing volunteering and humanitarian activities before that. In July, we resumed **communication** with our communities with which we had interacted within other projects. We started to discuss what was happening in the communities, how they survived in time of war, and what had changed cardinally. In Sumy region, we saw that the border communities had a problem. The problem is obvious: they all are shelled in turns, some almost daily, some every two days, some once a week. In addition to the infrastructural damage, including schools, houses of culture, leisure centres where they used to work, another problem is that **people are scared, people are reserved, they stop going to school (there is remote learning), and sports clubs and houses of culture stop working.**

In addition to the safety component, this situation has been affected by the fact that almost all the communities in Sumy region have **ceased to finance** all these services. There is some minimum funding, such as education, but all the other budget funding (of sports, culture and youth) has been suspended. In the end, even if our youth workers want to work, they have no resources.

The activity is shrinking rapidly. We have started to discuss what we can do.

The youth work is now performed in **eleven territorial communities near the border**; we have developed the project and submitted it for a grant and financial support. We have support for certain furniture, equipment,

generators; for shelters where backup work can be performed; the lion's share of money is now spent to pay the financial reward or support to the people who perform this youth work. Also, lots of funding is used for materials (board games, sports equipment, fitness and yoga equipment, quilting materials; everything they think of in their communities for non-formal education is supported by us).

Actually, owing to the fact that we regularly **support them morally – consult, visit and hold training sessions for them**, on the one hand, and they have the resource that **enables them to work with young people in different areas**, on the other hand.

Owing to this, we already have good achievements: three months of the project have passed (August, September and October), two communities joined us last month (because two other communities have ceased their activities due to heavier shelling). We **regularly keep in touch**, we **keep varying our activities**. Also, it is hardly a piece of news, but some of the people who conduct activities have started to work in the **micro-format**. I mean, there are people who hold events literally at home, for three to five people. It is done to avoid emphasis on the venue of events, not to show that it is mass activity. The central building (I am talking about village communities now) is often unsuitable for youth work, which means that the people organise activities where they live.

Moreover, we are thinking how to increase the number of communities because five to seven communities are ready to join the project, but the resource is necessary. We would like to present what our people do in December at the region level since the authorities have turned out to have a poor capacity to work against such risks.

The number of the youth in the communities keeps changing. Lots of people have left some communities, so few children go to school there. Moreover, lots of families with small children have left. In its turn, young specialists are leaving, which results in cease of operations of different organisations. For instance, the Off-School Educational Centre in Myropillia is fully not functional now; there are six teachers with children who have left for Sumy and hold lessons online. We are also involving them into the project work so that they would gather in Sumy the women and children from Myropillia who are planning to return when they can, because this way **they will not feel separated and abandoned**. So they work in Sumy instead of their community, but this work is for their community. We are looking for any **ways to consolidate people**, even if they have left for other territories. The point is that in most cases our IDPs are the people who have moved from one settlement in Sumy region to another one in Sumy region. It means the people still feel separated.

We have places, for instance, village libraries, where activities are performed now. The **proactivity** of young people is appreciated; they have already understood it, so they keep initiating different activities: let's do this and that; we don't want the games on the programme, we need some others. Also, they are already wondering about educational opportunities: could you organise a workshop or training for us? We can already see that **there is good feedback from young people**.

The idea of experience is that networking of cultural, educational and other facilities is created in village territorial communities along the border. These facilities have had to cease their activities and programmes for a number of objective reasons while this project allows supporting their activities to satisfy cultural, educational and sports needs of young people, children and young families. The main activity includes teambuilding, financial and methodological support.

Our main tasks are to develop the action plans that will be meaningful, useful and associated with non-formal education together with the communities; to provide them with financial and material resources, to support non-formal education centres in organisational and psychological terms; to unite and consolidate people in communities.

We can see in our communities that they have finally got a grasp of this idea; the communities that have recently joined have not understood it yet, but I guess they will in some time.

According to our project, the priority target audience is young people. However, we have discussed it with the donor that we will also work for children and older people. We have given a sincere promise that we will also have activities for such categories. So the children's themes are up to 40% of the activities in some communities. We understand it as indirect youth because we enable young mothers to do something. As for older persons, our workers deal with pensioners in Hlukhiv and Bereza. They have joint activities I would call culturological — they organise tours, sing old songs and study together.

Another target audience is young mothers, who are interested in sports activities such as yoga and fitness. The reason could be that things like that have never been done in village communities. We managed to deliver equipment, the people were happy and said they would visit.

So we are not dividing the target audience. In general, most visitors are children (up to 40%), high school and university students (40%), pensioners and mothers, both young and middle-aged. I have checked the category of mothers on the lists: these are women aged 30 to 45. There are men as well, but few of them.

While organising non-formal education activities, we rely upon what our co-ordinators who hold events can do. If they already have the audience they work with, we do not insist on changes. Of course, we offer new tools and opportunities —

we give some games, guidelines, urge them to find encouragement to engage new people.

— ON OWN VISION

In the end, if you were to give the key and fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

The key thing is to **follow the needs**. Remember that **needs change, people change and situations change**. The things that worked out yesterday might not work out today. There was no demand yesterday, but it might emerge today. There was no need yesterday or, on the contrary, there was a need, but it has changed today, it is different. It is probably mostly about the ability to be flexible, **the ability to recognise that something might not stick to the plan**. Moreover, the plan itself might change by 90%.

We have realised that **we can find an opportunity to perform** at least minimum **youth work in any conditions**. However, we must be **flexible** in any sense. Wait with something. Do something step by step. Replace something. Change some people. Change the number of people. In other words, **be ready for changes**.

The western regions of Ukraine, which work a lot with internally displaced persons and humanitarian programmes, are discussed in the information space more often. We talk a lot about acute response, for instance, about the territories that have just been deoccupied. But there is almost no information, little information on life under regular shelling, for instance, in Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv regions, when people do not leave, stay there and study or do something. It sometimes seems that we have been forgotten, because what can be done here? **But it can. Even in such conditions. And we do.**

OLENA ARUTIUNIAN

Non-Governmental Organisation “Kirovohrad Region Youth Centre” together with the Central Ukrainian State House of Art and Technical Creativity, the Centre for the Development of National Cultures “United Family”, Kropyvnytskyi

YOUTH WORK IN TIME OF WAR

“The knowledge we gained during the programme ‘Trauma Informed Youth Work’ is used in work with young people, young families, for ourselves. Even when people come to us for humanitarian assistance from the front line, we can help and teach how to provide psychological first aid. We share the experience, teach the others... We already know how to do it; we understand that it is important, understand how everyone can get and apply their own resources — it is also a major contribution into further functioning and work, and we appreciate it.”



PURPOSE: to support and adapt young people and young families among internally displaced persons and vulnerable groups of residents who have found temporary shelter in Kirovohrad region.

AREAS OF ACTIVITY:

- **non-formal education** for young people: educational and leisure clubs, musical meetings, workshops, quests, sports and leisure events; initiatives to develop young people's soft skills;

- psychological and crisis support of young people, volunteers, youth workers via the programme **"Trauma Informed Youth Work"**;

- non-formal education for young people, children, young mothers and fathers, people of retirement age in communities;

- **employment** of internally displaced young people;

- organisation of public campaigns, events, creation of European Clubs for **Eurointegrational** youth work;

- **mentoring support and professional support of young people.**

KEY ADVICE: to support youth initiatives, to support young people and to develop trauma informed youth work. This activity will take longer than several months because the young people who have been affected by the war need help. Not only the young people in safe places. After the war, the young people affected by the war will start to return: they will need help, they have initiatives; they will need not only help, but also participation and flexibility, communication and interaction.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- non-formal education and youth work based on the values and approaches of the Council of Europe;

- Programme **"Trauma Informed Youth Work"**;

- triptych **"Youth participation: from personal experience to planning changes in youth work to strengthen youth participation"**.



OLENA ARUTIUNIAN

Non-Governmental Organisation “Kirovohrad Region Youth Centre” together with the Central Ukrainian State House of Art and Technical Creativity, the Centre of Development for the National Cultures “United Family”, Kropyvnytskyi

ON MOTIVATION

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

All our activities are based on the **European values**, the main approaches of which are as follows: human rights; equality and equal access to opportunities; respect for dignity; respect for rights and freedoms of each person.

The knowledge we gained during the training, for instance, in the programme “Trauma Informed Youth Work”⁵⁵, is used in work with young people, young families, for ourselves in our work. Relevance of this theme is explained by the need to understand what is happening in the team, to ensure efficient communication of the participants. Even when people come to us for humanitarian assistance from the front line, we can help and teach how to provide psychological first aid very-very fast (as express training), for instance, on four elements protocol. In other words, we share our experience and teach the others. The acquired knowledge is also important for interaction with colleagues and prevention of burnout. It is important to understand the difference between fatigue and burnout; the need to give and take a timely rest, something we did not understand at the beginning of the war. We already know how to do it; we understand that it is important, understand how everyone can get and apply their own resources — it is also a major contribution into further functioning and work. And we do appreciate that.

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

Probably, **believing we can do that, and who else can do that of not we?**

Team support, team work.

Possibility of getting psychological and physical aid from our partners.

Understanding what **resources** are available. For some people, it is their family: lots of our colleagues have engaged their families, and family members are volunteers. This family support has turned out to be very important. Some people have engaged their friends, which was also very important. I mean, everyone has found their own resources, and we have used these resources.

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

Mentoring has turned into a very popular activity. We have been discussing it for a long time, but have not implemented it. Now more experienced young people who come to us are mentors for less experienced people. It happens when events are organised and prepared, and when events are held. I can say that now mentoring is used to organise joint events, not only by involving the target audience, but also by engaging younger people into organisation and developing competencies that way.

We have planned youth exchanges, but have not implemented them because of the war. Opening of the European Clubs. We planned to open these clubs, for instance, in Mykolaiv, Dnipro. But it was not done since the people who planned it have been evacuated and are living in other

55. Trauma Informed Youth Work: youth centres start learning. Council of Europe Office in Ukraine. URL: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/-/trauma-informed-youth-work-youth-centres-start-learning>

cities now. However, **we have opened these clubs in other cities**, for instance, in Kyiv and Kirovohrad region.

We would also like to plan and implement projects in another sector in addition to what we have now.

On the other hand, new organisations and partners have moved to our city. For instance, the UNICEF office has created lots of new opportunities for young people. It had not been like that before the war because they were focused on the East of Ukraine. Now they reside here and have opened more opportunities for our young people.

— ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

After the active phase of the war had started in Ukraine, the young people from Kirovohrad region and Kropyvnytskyi, who took active part in all the social events, did not stay aside; on the contrary, they got even more involved in the activities and events. In particular, with the **youth** who have been living in Kropyvnytskyi and territorial communities of Kirovohrad region. They have also joined the work **with children and the youth** among the internally displaced persons. Moreover, we started working with **young families** who had found shelter in Kropyvnytskyi and territorial communities of Kirovohrad region.

The **volunteering centre** opened on the basis of the Youth Centre at the address of the Central Ukrainian State House of Art and Technical Creativity, has started active operations. Three days after the beginning of the active phase of the war, we opened the **public humanitarian centre**, to which the young people started to actively bring humanitarian assistance for those who have found shelter in Kropyvnytskyi. Then

the humanitarian assistance was also brought to the territorial communities of Kirovohrad region. Moreover, the young people equipped the **shelter** on the first days of air raid alerts. The young people were always on duty 24/7 and offered shelter to the residents living near our building and the people who temporarily stayed in our city. Our building is located not far from the railway station, so different people from different social groups found shelter there during air raid alerts. The young people treated everyone who sought shelter very responsibly and with dignity. Moreover, the local residents started bringing things to us, and we helped those in need with humanitarian products. Our partners from Poland and Bulgaria enabled us to help **give shelter to the people from the places where there were active hostilities**. We helped our friends and partners from the Youth Centre and the Centre for the Development of National Cultures “United Family” settle abroad. We had a free opportunity to create safe places for temporary residence in decent conditions.

Concurrently with the humanitarian and volunteering directions of our activities, we maintained our **education and leisure clubs**, the activities of which were much broader and more frequent than before. Our youth workers started to welcome young people, young families with small children from the first days of March and to organise important meetings **with participation of our partnering psychologists**. Owing to our efforts, our educational and leisure activities, owing to the fact that our youth held **musical meetings, workshops, quests, sports and leisure events** for those who had found shelter in our community, we can say that it helped those young people **get socialised** in our community. It also applies to the other territorial communities of Kirovohrad region, where the opportunities for people to **be actively engaged into the life of the communities** rather than just be internally displaced persons were also created.

We also engaged IREX project, which helped us **employ** young people among the internally displaced persons, who already hold education and leisure events in their own territorial communities by involving internally displaced persons, children, the youth and young families. Therefore, we continue the youth work outside our centre.

Moreover, we continue our activities in our ordinary directions: to organise **traditional public events – contests dedicated to the International Day for Tolerance**, where the youth are involved in different nominations. We organised and held a very interesting and important event celebrated on 12 August for the first time in Ukraine: **Youth Day**. The internally

displaced young persons and organisations relocated into our city were engaged into the event.

We were able to engage internally displaced young persons into our projects. In particular, we are implementing Eurotrend project, and we have created our own **game about sustainable development goals and European values**, involved the internally displaced youth under 35 into implementation of the project. We have started to open the European clubs, not only in our region, but also in the other regions of Ukraine, i.e. new **European clubs**. It is a major achievement for the **European integration direction** of the youth work.



We are now implementing the project “New Life Youth” supported by the UNDP; we are conducting a series of **life safety trainings** in the communities of our region and offering free **psychological and career guidance consultations** to young people: How to find yourself at the labour market? How to find yourself in a new community? How to change your career path? We are additionally organising free **mentoring support** and **professional support** to create video content: How has the life of young people changed after 24 February?

We have also involved **crisis psychologists to work with the youth** who have been affected by stress, trauma and traumatic events. Our activity has attracted attention of another organisation, People in Need, with which we co-operate to establish the **kids and youth friendly space**. It will be the safe space where young people will be able to receive both psychological aid and opportunities to implement their initiatives.

Our work to **develop soft skills** of young people continues. This project, which was launched last year with the support of Education USA, continues to be implemented as it is important for young people; it includes joint meetings to develop soft skills of the youth. The young people say that it will help them in different life activities and occupations. Another direction of our youth work is “Krop-Teens Club-Up”, i.e. the club to develop skills of young people.

We have conducted the 32-hour training **“Trauma Informed Youth Work”** with the youth workers. We have twenty graduates who are ready to keep implementing this activity in their territorial communities. The training was held online; the trainees were the people working with the youth in different territorial communities of our region. We are helping them implement the activities they planned for the future, the activities we discussed. This is youth work with the young people who have found shelter in our region.

On the one hand, we have maintained all the activities of the Youth Centre we had had before the war. On the other hand, there are humanitarian headquarter and a shelter at the Centre; there is a new major activity of psychological support of young people. Also, the category of participants has changed because the internally displaced persons have joined the locals.

Of course, there have been changes. Lots of young people who had attended our centre before the full-scale invasion left. New visitors arrived. There are young people among the internally displaced persons who have found shelter in our region. There are young people who have come from the regions, small villages and towns, and have started learning in Kropyvnytskyi. So the audience has changed. The visitors of our Youth Centre and our partnering organisations have changed. As for our partners, the Centre for the Development of National Cultures “United Family”, many representatives of the Polish and German expatriate communities have left. They hold trainings from abroad. We even had the German summer camp online, which was attended by the youth both in Ukraine and abroad. Moreover, we have the new category we have not worked with before — young families.

Young families are paying more and more attention to the **importance of safety**. This problem had not been so pressing before the war.

The young people are getting more **open** because they have more opportunities to get around Ukraine and abroad, especially when it comes to students and those who are not limited by the martial law.

We have **more work** after 24 February. We have started socialising more, there is well-established **partnership** with organisations in different regions of Ukraine and abroad. Covid-19 enabled us to get a good grasp of

online applications; during the martial law, we improved our competencies of online youth work and online communication.

We are now working in the **mixed format**, and we are very flexible. If the safety situation allows working on-site, we work on-site. If the situation gets worse, we get back to the online format very fast. I mean, we have the efficient mixed operational system, which we are using in full.

Our flexibility to the martial law requirements, our opportunities and ability to work as a team, ability to use online applications, possibility of involving and developing soft skills, for instance, the ability to hear and be heard, active listening skills, empathic listening skills are the competencies that have been of use. We can say that we have started to develop all the competencies we are supposed to have today, right now. **Lifelong education is getting more relevant.**

— ON OWN VISION

In the end, if you were to give the key or fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

To support youth initiatives, to support young people and to develop trauma informed youth work. This activity will take longer than several months because the young people who have been affected by the war need help. Not only the young people in safe places. After the war, the young people affected by the war will start to return: they will need help, they have initiatives; they will need not only help, but also

participation and flexibility, communication and interaction.

We are organising lots of meetings of active citizens even during the martial law as it is very important to make adjustments to co-operation between the authorities and the community by involving young people into this co-operation.

Today young people are not the future; they are the present of our life and our development. It is important to involve young people into all the activities in the community. We work a lot in this direction. It is extremely important to involve those who form young people (families, educators, educational and cultural establishments) into this activity.

At present, the approach some of the workers had had before the war must not exist anymore: just come, teach and leave. It is not acceptable. It is extremely important to help the young people believe from their childhood that a child and a young person are citizens with equal rights, and their opinion matters. It will enable us to form the new generation, the new nation. I say "new" because the war has turned into the point of no return that has shown who the people really are. You cannot carry on activities without changing anything. Yes, that is hard. Yes, it takes lots of work. But we must do it. We will be able to do even more together; we can really change our society by uniting the organisations and people that care. We have seen the best side of our society when everyone has joined their efforts, when everyone is standing their ground, and they not only believe in victory, but also do their best to make it happen. Everyone has found their place.

After we win, we must go on and ignore ungrounded accusations (there will be accusations, especially by the ones who are not by our side today), provocations (there will be

provocations, especially by those who try to do something only for themselves). We must join our efforts and keep moving and developing our modern European society.



OLHA DONETS

Non-Governmental Organisation
"Donetsk Youth Debate Centre", Kyiv

EXPERIENCE OF YOUTH WORK WITH INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

"For us it is important to support young people and show their actual problems and needs not only in Ukraine, but also abroad. We also believe that youth work is more than organising free time for the youth. Youth work can actually help young people get a job, find friends, be and feel like a part of their new communities. It is not only free time, but also civic competencies for life, something that is important in adult life."



PURPOSE: 1) to introduce mobile youth work and to provide psychological support in five communities (Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lutsk, Novovolynsk, Kremenchuk) to children and internally displaced young people in these communities; 2) to spread the voices of the young people from five regions of Ukraine about the impact of the war upon the youth in Ukraine.

AREAS OF ACTIVITY:

- **mobile youth work** for children and the youth among the internally displaced persons in the communities of Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lutsk, Novovolynsk and Kremenchuk;
- activation of young people via non-formal education and provision of opportunities, knowledge, skills that can be applied in different conditions: how to launch initiatives in their communities, how to find a job, how to become a part of the new community, how to get and provide psychological support and many other things;
- project **“Voices of young people in Ukraine”**, which is directed at studying and spreading information on the problems and needs of young Ukrainians in time of war.

KEY ADVICE: to remember about **value of youth work** and to create projects for young people based on the **youth work values**. To adhere to the principal goal of the youth work, to develop civic competencies and to support young people in adult life.

Non-formal education, resources and standards of the Council of Europe must be used. The Council of Europe offers numerous resources, which are actually of use for the youth workers; we must remember about them. That's it. **Be friendly to the youth, and believe in the youth.**

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- manuals of the Council of Europe (“Compass”, “Bookmarks”, “Have Your Say!”, “T-kits”);
- financial support by the European Youth Foundation;
- Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine”;
- Recommendation of the Council of Europe on young people's access to rights;
- youth participation approach (all of our activities are based on the values of the Council of Europe).



OLHA DONETS

Non-Governmental Organisation
“Donetsk Youth Debate Centre”, Kyiv

— ON MOTIVATION

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

The Council of Europe supports us with funds and numerous instruments. We use lots of approaches of the Council of Europe in our work.

Our first practice was supported by the United Nations. Still, we use all the approaches and frameworks of the Council of Europe: human rights, youth participation, youth work. I personally work with the Council of Europe within the Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine”, and we try to promote these standards and approaches in this practice and all of our projects.

In another practice, we use the Recommendation of the Council of Europe on young people’s access to rights. We also use the youth participation approach and consider the principal values of the Council of Europe in all of our activities.

We use “Compass” in our work during training activities.⁵⁶ It is the human rights education manual. Also, the Manual on Participation of Young People “Have Your Say!” is in use⁵⁷. As well “Bookmarks”⁵⁸ are used in our educational trainings alongside with some T-kits of the Council of Europe (The training kits, T-kits)⁵⁹.

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

For us it is important to support young people and show their actual problems and needs. Not only in Ukraine, but also abroad. We also believe that youth work is more than organising free time for the youth. Youth work can actually help young people get a job, find friends, be and feel like a part of their new communities. It is not only free time, but also civic competencies for life, something that is important in adult life.

The key aspect of our educational activities was to form the young people’s ability to defend their own rights. We show the young people mechanisms for advocacy and protection of human rights. Then we create video stories. We show it to them that everything they do and everything happening at meetings is assessed by the local authorities. We want them to see that the youth can be a part of decision-making, that they can influence policy of their communities and be an active part of the community.

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

We organise assessment meetings in both practices. Both practices have teams from five regions, the regional co-ordinator and the mentor. So each community is represented when results are assessed. At the meeting, we assess the results of the practice and define whether the goals are achieved.

56. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. URL: <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>

57. Have Your Say!: Manual on the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/16807023e0>

58. Bookmarks — Combating Hate Speech Online through Human Rights Education. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/bookmarksen2020-web2/16809e5789>

59. The Training Kits (T-kits) for Training and Facilitating Learning with Groups of Young People. URL: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kits>

It can be stated based on the meetings held that:

- We achieve all the goals we set and even more in our practice of implementation of the mobile youth work. The youth workers provide lots of social and public services and hold lots of events. We make young people among the internally displaced persons more active in the communities.

- We already have a new project for the future. It will also be associated with the youth work, but the theme will be conflict resolution and transformation. It has been found that there are some community issues between the internally displaced persons and local residents. So we understand that we must work with the young people on these matters. We filed an application for funding of the new project, and it was supported in November, so we are just starting. The activities will start in January, with lots of events dedicated to conflict resolution and transformation.

- As for the project “Voices of young people in Ukraine”, we can also see its evolution and performance. I guess, we mostly achieve our results. However, disclosure of such themes is concealed on social media. We believe that results could be better: I mean, more viewers, more likes, more shared posts on social media. It was our first experience in this area. I think we can do it longer (it was for only three days this time) next time to get better results: more viewers, more likes, more shares. The problem at the latest meeting with the local authorities was that some of their representatives from certain communities could not come to the meeting. We sent them the results. However, the idea was to have direct communication with them so that there would be an actual meeting between the youth and the authorities (rather than just send them the results). We have only three representatives out of five communities. Representatives from two communities are unable to come to us, and it could be a reason for the gap.

We will keep sharing the experience. There are twenty stories that can be used in different youth projects. We still are assessing and reporting on this project. We will think how this project and experience can be used in other activities next year.

— ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

The Donetsk Youth Debate Centre was founded in 1997 in Donetsk as an educational centre for students and professors in the sphere of public debate. Then we dealt with different social needs and developed projects for students, professors and universities beyond the limits of public debate. Our centre also supported other non-governmental organisations. We moved to Kyiv in 2014 after Donetsk had been annexed by Russia. We started working all over Ukraine. Human rights, youth policy, various educational projects, especially the ones involving the youth, students and professors.

After the war had started in February 2022, we offered support to our target groups by organising humanitarian campaigns during the first months. Then we will be able to use our work with war challenges outside the humanitarian actions. The first idea was to help children and the youth among internally displaced persons to avoid the war, to give them psychological support, and just to help people feel safe. While implementing the projects, we realised that our youth workers performed lots of social functions because they helped with documents, employment and CVs. They did lots of things that had not expected to do. They played with the children and youth. Several months later, we tried to resume our ordinary activities despite the war challenges and started classic youth work.



Introducing **mobile youth work** in the communities of Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lutsk, Novovolynsk and Kremenchuk with children and internally displaced young persons in these communities.

The principal purpose of the project was to create the volunteering network to support the youth among internally displaced persons in the communities via non-formal education. The results turned out to be better than we expected:

- the powerful volunteering network was created in Novovolynsk. Lots of IDPs, young people became volunteers in the Novovolynsk Youth Centre;
- the principal achievement in Lviv was that the people working with the IDPs who lived in shelters and did not leave those shelters noted that the young people started to get out and see the city owing to the youth work;

- in Ivano-Frankivsk region, we organised a sort of vacancy fair for IDPs, and the initiative was supported by the local authorities;

- there was a competition in Kremenchuk, and our partners submitted an application for the grant with the idea of working with internally displaced persons, of creating the club of internally displaced persons in the region.

In other words, we make the internally displaced youth more active and give them opportunities, knowledge and skills that can be used in different conditions: how to launch initiatives in their communities, how to find a job, how to become a part of the new community, how to get and provide psychological support and many other things. 1 014 internally displaced young people have joined our project, and 971 have taken part in activities in their local communities.

Project “Voices of young people in Ukraine”

The project was supported by the European Youth Foundation (EYF)⁶⁰ and the organisation “Democracy here. Democracy now”⁶¹. The purpose of the project was to show the problems and needs of young Ukrainians in time of war. The first part was the educational course. We conducted the training with the participants from five communities on advocacy in time of war. After the training, we started collecting stories of young people in time of war and making video stories. We made twenty videos in five communities. After the videos, we launched the social media campaign to draw attention to the war and stories. Then we held the assessment meeting with the local authorities and the youth and presented the project results. We talked about changes and problems, about things of interest for the youth. The authorities worked with or were related to the youth work.

We use different tools to engage participants into our projects. Some people contact centres for internally displaced persons. Some post an invitation online, on social media (about a new project, activities for internally displaced persons). Some of our partners work with the local authorities, who communicate with the relocated people and share information on these events. Some of our partners just advertise their activities in the youth centres, and those who wish to participate come to the centre. We also use direct calls and partnership.

It was more difficult to work with shelters because our youth workers came to the people who lived in shelters and were more active. The young people in shelters were not aware of youth work, non-formal education. However,

the young people who submitted applications for open competitions said that there were more active because they had found the competition themselves, and it was easier. However, we mix all these target groups.

We understand that we must involve not only internally displaced persons, but also local residents of the communities. For instance, there is a conflict in Novovolynsk because the local residents complaint that the activity is only directed at internally displaced persons. So we understand that the community must be engaged as well. The priority is internally displaced persons, but we also have mixed groups, for instance, joint events in open air for internally displaced persons and the local youth.

We also have mix teams that create video stories. For instance, there were stories about internally displaced persons, but the team making the interviews and videos was from the local community.

Of course, all our partners organise different events and invite people from local non-governmental organisations, local authorities, to meet internally displaced young persons at these events. They also invite local celebrities to such meetings.

60. European Youth Foundation. URL: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation>

61. Democracy here. Democracy now. URL: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/democracy-here-now/home>

ON OWN VISION

In the end, if you were to give the key or fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

Of course, the main advice is to remind of **value of the youth work**. To create projects for young people based on the **youth work values**. To

adhere to the principal goal of the youth work, to develop civic competencies and to support young people in adult life.

Non-formal education, resources and standards of the Council of Europe must be used. The Council of Europe offers numerous resources, which are actually of use for the youth workers; we must remember about them. That's it. **Be friendly to the youth, and believe in the youth.**





PAVLO MEDYNA

Non-Governmental Organisation
"Youth Centre "New Wings", Novovolynsk

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND VOLUNTEERING BY THE YOUTH TEAM IN TIME OF WAR

"In April 2022, we realised there was huge demand of young people for the safe and open space to keep studying, working and resuming the youth work. In February, all the youth centres and spaces were actively involved into the humanitarian work and paused their youth work. It was caused by the external circumstances, needs of that time. However, we understood some time later that the youth work had to be resumed, and that the youth centres had to work with the focus on their immediate tasks of youth work. In May, we managed to finish all the repair and preparation works to create the youth co-working space, and we started the activities for socialisation of young people."



PURPOSE: to create the safe and open space for young people to keep studying and working, to resume the youth work.

AREAS OF ACTIVITY:

- **local support of older persons** who have found themselves in difficult life circumstances, in hardships;
- **search for partners** that could help provide the shelters, established in the community;
- establishment of the youth **co-working** space as a safe and open space for young people to study and work, activities for socialisation of young people;
- **non-formal education** for young people: **education in crisis situations, media education and development of media competencies, assistance in freelance activities;**

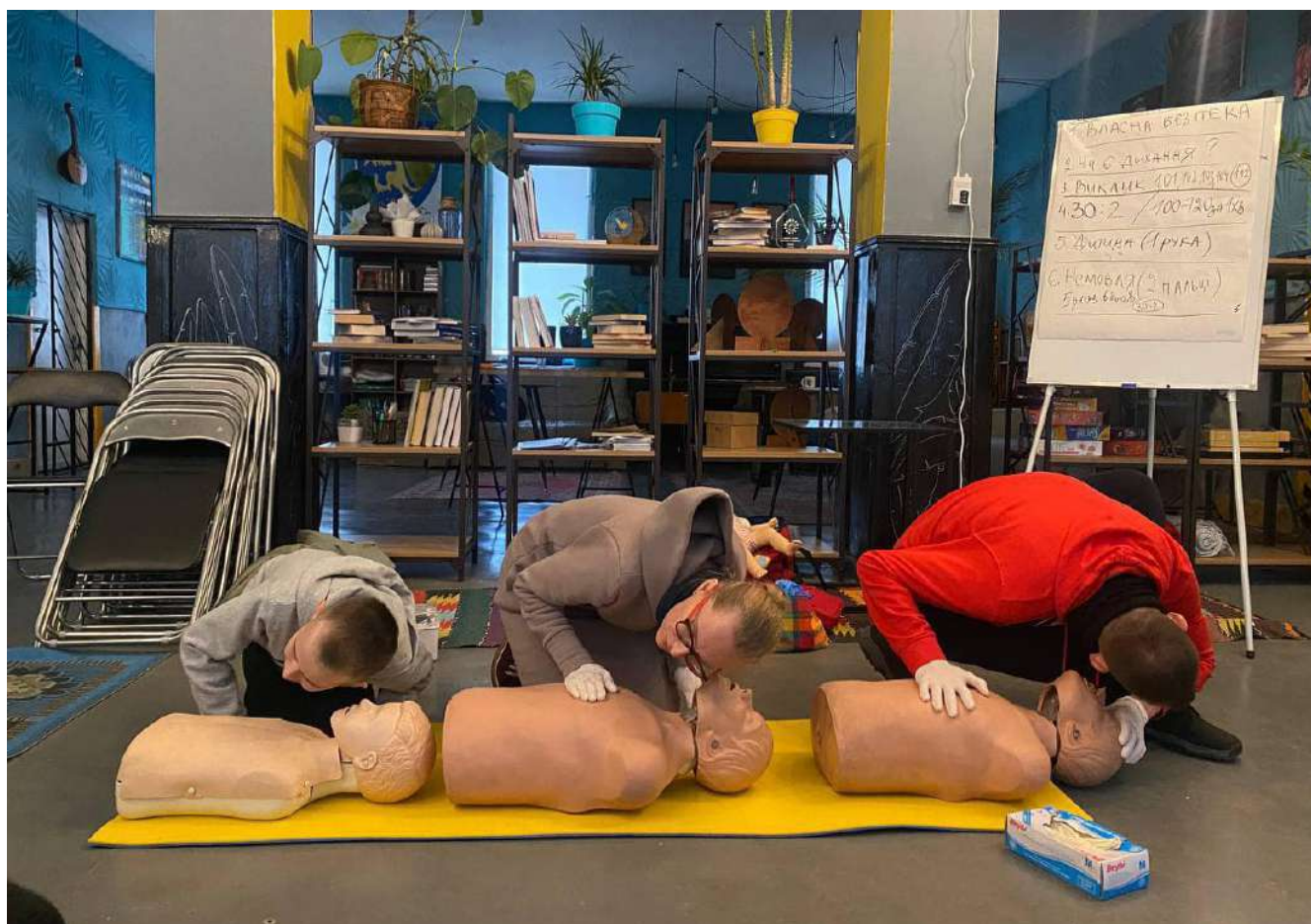
- **leisure**, which includes different **clubs of interests and movie shows** for young people;

- sixth annual **Youth Worker Forum**, which enables the youth workers to meet and share their experience and stories.

KEY ADVICE: do what you can because everything is in your hands.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- youth council as an advisory body based on youth participation;
- manuals of the Council of Europe (“Compass”, “Bookmarks”).



PAVLO MEDYNA

Non-Governmental Organisation
“Youth Centre “New Wings”, Novovolynsk

— ON MOTIVATION

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

As for the most efficient tools, they include everything associated with youth participation. We have recently established the youth council; one of the tools was to engage the young people from our community into that advisory body.

In the non-formal education, we actively use “Bookmarks”⁶² and “Compass”⁶³, not only for human rights themes; exercises and tools are generally adapted to the present-day reality.

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

The basic **no harm** rule persists because the psychological first aid skills are extremely relevant now. The situations differ, even at the events where nothing bad is expected: physical and mental conditions of young people might differ, so it is turning into the important areas.

Mentoring skills are also popular and demanded now.

Individual youth work is more in-demand. As for group work, the requests are most associated with **leisure**. Instead of some complex targeted courses (for instance, on project management or soft skill development), non-formal education requires something of more therapeutic nature: painting, art therapy, crafting. Training is

about needs. However, now the people need something to **take care of themselves**.

The demand for professional training and growth is not of priority among many young people now, but it still exists, in particular, to master the skills that will help earn money, start your own business or start working for yourself.

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

The youth work in Ukraine is one of the most active and efficient reforms ever. This factor and amendments to the laws on youth and fundamentals of the youth policy as well as work to recognise a youth worker as an occupation. These fundamental things will allow improving the quality of youth work. It was mostly done against all odds rather than together. Now these documents help free hands of the local self-government authorities at different levels. If they want to work, they will be able to work, and they will. Otherwise, the youth workers will have to keep working to overcome the circumstances, but they will have the legal arguments to urge the local self-government authorities to co-operate.

Lots of young people do want to be involved, to do something of social significance. In some cases, the young people said, “Look, I don’t know what I can do, but I want to do something. Tell me what I must do” or “I am busy, and I can’t carry bags, but I can do this and that”. **Young people want to contribute to our victory.**

The motives of youth participation have changed. Not of all of them because people handle this stressful situation differently, but the demand for and **wish of participation** have grown.

62. Bookmarks — Combating Hate Speech Online through Human Rights Education. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/bookmarksen2020-web2/16809e5789>

63. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. URL: <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>

To be honest, I do not even remember what goals we had before 24 February; they were physically erased in the morning, and new ones appeared. The goals for 2022 were totally different. We are coping with the goals set on 24 February, we are sticking to the plan: the co-working space has been opened, the youth get adapted, and there are more and more volunteers. I mean, we perform certain local tasks, everything goes as planned.

As for the unexpected things, we had never worked with children, but when the need arose to create safe shelters for children, we supported kindergartens and schools, houses of culture, and it was great. **There was a demand, we had opportunities, knowledge and skills to make it great.**

— ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

In February 2022, we started to create a new youth co-working space. Everything changed on 24 February; all the repair and preparation works were suspended, and we focused on the challenges our community and country faced. We focused on supporting internally displaced persons, the military, namely, supporting the young people who lived or moved to the community.

Our work had several principal directions:

1. Local support of older persons who have found themselves in difficult life circumstances, in hardships. In the first place, they were local older persons because the community started to support the internally displaced persons who were coming in an active and efficient manner. Our city is located near the border and has 56 or 57 thousand of residents, but it managed to host more than ten thousand of IDPs. Of course, that was a lot so all the programmes of the non-governmental organisations and local self-government authorities were aimed at

helping those people. However, older persons in our community were affected a little, so our team started to bring them food packages and support them. We have the public canteen to which we brought food products so that they would keep cooking for the people who had money problems. We called that **working direction urgent because it was needed at that very moment.**

2. We concurrently developed another direction: **we looked for the partners that could help us support the shelters created in the community.** Since the community hosted lots of internally displaced persons, there were older persons, young people and families with children among them. The practice demonstrated that the halls of residence of the colleges and higher vocational schools, which were the first to open their doors and host people, were not adapted for so many people, especially children and older persons. We found the partners and managed to purchase the basic necessities, food products and household cleaning products. Then we turned to more global items: equipment, microwave ovens, cookers, additional water heaters and shower units. We tried to create comfortable conditions for people.

3. In April, we realised there was **huge demand of young people for the safe and open space to keep studying, working and resuming the youth work.** In February, all the youth centres and spaces were actively involved into the humanitarian work and paused their youth work. It was caused by the external circumstances, needs of that time. However, we understood some time later that the youth work had to be resumed, and that the youth centres had to work with the focus on their immediate tasks of youth work. In May, we managed to finish all the repair and preparation works to create the co-working space, and we started the activities for socialisation of young people.

All these three directions are active now. **As for shelters, we co-operate in the format of working with the young people who live**

there. There is no more demand for equipment and other humanitarian items because the number of people living there has reduced, and the shelters have adequate conditions for comfortable residence of internally displaced persons. Volunteering and social initiatives are continued as co-operation with the charitable canteen: we provide food products so that they can keep cooking.

Our co-working space is well-equipped for today's blackouts: young people can charge their gadgets and get warm there. It is not a Point of Invincibility*; it is rather a "niche" place for young people.

The co-working has several **non-formal education projects.** The first one is for young people aged 15 to 18 on **education in crisis situations.** Five other cities from different regions of Ukraine, which have their own programmes and target audiences, co-operate with us. The second direction is **media:** we have our own media studio. Together with IREX Programme, we train young people on media competency development, assist them in freelance development and create opportunities to use the available equipment so that young people can start working by mastering freelance

media and content skills. The third direction of our work is **VilnoHub** Project, which has been implemented since August. It supports the **leisure** activity: **clubs of different interests, movie shows** for young people.

In April and May, we implemented the projects aimed at socialisation of young people; it was field work where we went to shelters and implemented youth programmes there.

The young people's needs keep changing. People are gradually adapting to different circumstances. Youth work events are now held in the candle light, and the people have already got used to that, it has become normal. At the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the young people had not time to study and spend their free time since they had more primary needs under Maslow's hierarchy: safety needs. Once we were telling the young people, "Look, we have such events, and this art therapy activity..." In response, a young person said, "Okay, but I can't come to you as I have no shoes; I don't need your activities, I need shoes." And we realised that the needs were different then. However, the needs kept changing, so we resumed our work with the co-working space and created the safe place for the youth to study and work.



*Points of Invincibility are places where heat, water, electricity, mobile communication, etc. are provided (<https://nezlammnist.gov.ua/>). A project was initiated by Ukrainian authorities in November 2022 on the background of massive shelling of critical infrastructure by the Russian Federation.

We have recently held our sixth annual **Youth Worker Forum**⁶⁴. It has been held as a television channel for the last three years. We have managed to hold it with account of the present-day situation, to enable **the youth workers to meet and share their experience and stories**. We had different directions that could be watched as records: they were stories of the youth workers about how they had completely changed their activities beyond the scope of the youth work, in response to the existing challenges; you could hear about the youth work projects and initiatives launched after 24 February in different directions; there was also a meeting with donors so that the people working with the youth could understand the priorities for youth work opportunities and resources.

The channels of communication with young people have not changed a lot: they are mostly social media, the same as before. However, there is one more new important communication channel now: **personal communication**, when you directly invite a young person if you understand that it could be of interest and use for him or her. **Personal communication is gaining significance**.

The audience of our youth centre has expanded and grown a little younger. We used to work with young people older than 16 at most, but now we have lots of requests from young people over 14 for leisure, non-formal education, safe space and communication site.

In particular, we work with internally displaced persons. In April, we launched different initiatives for engagement and socialisation of such young people. We directly contact some of them; they need the place to work, study and rest.

— ON OWN VISION

In the end, if you were to give the key or fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

Do what you can because everything is in your hands.

64. Shoulder to Shoulder: Sixth Ukrainian Youth Worker Forum. Association of Youth Workers of Ukraine — AYWU. URL: <https://www.facebook.com/ngo.uywa/posts/pfbid0YzLRUZURZK21XaYLSZmtLwWZ1AphWqx1gfh4fM2fDJ2rusaaCPSDyZjvRkHnQNQuI>



YULIIA KRACHKOVA, OLEKSII BOICHUK

Youth Council of Biliavka Territorial Community, Biliavka, Odesa region

YOUTH UNITED TO WIN

"There is a sign at the entrance to Biliavka Town Council, 'Biliavka Is a Town Friendly to the Youth and Children'. This is true."



"It is said that the war has set everything on its own places. We have seen how the young people are ready to be active, despite the fear and circumstances. They keep living and moving. Young people want to help: to the military, their families, animals and municipal initiatives. Young people do get together and wish to do something; they have reached the stage of 'living on' when there are lots of plan. The only thing is that it has turned into 'today and now', without long-term planning. Young people have started to initiate assistance projects themselves. There is more payback and positive feedback from young people. There is an understanding that difficult moments of our life make us stronger and more united."



PURPOSE: to implement the initiatives of the youth council to engage young people into non-formal education, charity and volunteering, social development and active participation in the community life.

AREAS OF ACTIVITY:

- **charitable activities** for fund and resource raising: football matches, artistic exhibitions, environmental protection campaigns, charitable concerts etc.;

- **non-formal education** online by involving young people into various projects, educational seminars, conferences of different organisations working with young people; we do it to expand the young people's experience beyond the community;

- activity of the **Youth Council** and **Youth Centre** directed at partnership of the authorities, young people, educational and cultural establishments.

KEY ADVICE: never give up or lose hope. Even if something goes wrong, but you have already started, you will eventually manage. You must carry on. Regardless of the war, Covid-19 and other circumstances. It hardens and makes us stronger. We must live, we must believe. A lot depends on young people. They are the most active part of the population. It applies not only to Ukraine, but to all the people on the planet.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- printed products of the Council of Europe (manuals on youth work, anti-discrimination, human rights education received for free);
- team youth work.



**YULIIA KRACHKOVA,
OLEKSII BOICHUK,**

Youth Council of Biliaivka Territorial Community,
Biliaivka, Odesa region

— ON MOTIVATION

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

I became a youth worker with the support of the Council of Europe, owing to participation in the corresponding non-formal training.

We mostly use printed products, manuals on youth work, anti-discrimination, human rights education. We have received them pursuant to our request and now use them to work with student self-governance. Most high school students have completed the courses we offer. I do not like studying on my own or for myself. We study together with the young people, the team. It is very useful when you do it not only for your own benefit, when you complete tasks together with the youth, with tea and cookies. The youth love it, and it enables making a team out of young people.

We try to join all the international and Ukrainian national project because it sounds different and gives much better results. We monitor the situation and try to join all the initiatives.

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

Non-formal education activities in time of war are mostly conducted online. Young people and teenagers have become more reserved because of the war, and ideas and plans are limited by the curfew. The youth infrastructure (sports, cultural establishments) is often closed. However, it is not that bad here, especially in comparison with the other regions of Ukraine.

Planning has become more accurate and thorough.

There are fewer young people because of the evacuation, leaving abroad and to other regions. It is hard to fund pros of the situation we have.

We are planning to find ways to communicate with the young people who have left. Internally displaced persons are not that permanent, they seem to be stuck in a temporary condition, but they sometimes join volunteering campaigns as well.

Social media are of great help. We have Instagram and Facebook pages called Biliaivka Youth Council. We advertise our events, invite people remotely, communicate, share our plans and future events, and spread information. We post the movie show schedule, maintain the active page of the youth council, post stories and reels and share events. All our events are shown on the social media, which urges young people to participate.

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

We have seen the very high level of patriotism among young people. It is said that the war has set everything on its own places. We have seen how the young people, especially high school students, are ready to be active, despite the fear and circumstances. They keep living and moving. Young people want to help: to the military, their families, animals and municipal initiatives.

Young people do get together and wish to do something; they have reached the stage of “living on” when there are lots of plan. The only thing is that it has turned into ‘today and now’, without long-term planning.

Young people have started to initiate assistance projects themselves. **There is more payback and positive feedback from young people.**

There is an understanding that difficult moments of our life make us stronger and more united.

— ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

When the full-scale war that affected everyone started, we could not understand what to do and how to live on. It was not interesting to develop ourselves or the infrastructure. We wanted to survive, to protect our families and the people around us.

The first month was the hardest, it was scare to fall asleep and wake up. Despite that period, we realised together with our youth council that we had to act. We realised that some of the projects could not be implemented because of the curfew and other restrictions. But we had to move on and find other relevant activities. We understood that the most necessary one was to help the Armed Forces of Ukraine and internally displaced persons, so we started doing that, including **humanitarian assistance**.

Then we started various **charitable activities** because resources had to be accumulated for people.

The activity of the youth council was directed at charitable events for the community: a charitable match, "From Heart to Heart", an auction of paintings and others.

The young people painted pictures for the **auction of paintings** themselves: in different styles, with different professional levels. The paintings were sold at the auction in accordance with the real laws (with bids and bidding). We managed to sell around 25 lots in the lobby of Biliaivka House of Culture in an hour. We created and organised the auction ourselves. The important thing was that the event was not only charitable, but also was of a cultural and artistic

nature, and there was a live musical concert of young performers who played the guitar, the violin, and the saxophone.

Environmental protection campaigns were dedicated to the future victory of our country: the young people made our town a better and cleaner place, cleaned up the river and the bank, and cooked the traditional Biliaivka fish soup. The young people picked up around seven bags of litter, and then, when the work was over, we had a satisfying lunch with tasty fish soup and communication.

The eco-path along the Dnister is more than an eco-path, it is the place created by the youth. It all started with the school where someone suggested the idea which turned into the tradition: every year, young people join their efforts, get ready, wait and perform such useful work for the community.

"From Heart to Heart" is the campaign that enables involving the public into the charitable initiative. The folk ensemble and the youth council sang the songs together to raise funds near shops at the two market. We were very happy to take an active part and be involved into something great.

The **charitable football match** was played by the teams of Chornomorets FC and Biliaivka FC; the score was 2:0 to Chornomorets FC. It was not a contest, and we were just happy that we could get together, play football and have a good time. We also raised funds for charity.

We gather, help and initiative activities together with the municipal institution "Family Circle" every Sunday.

The **charitable concert dedicated to the Vyshyvanka Day** was held in the Biliaivka House of Culture; the local artists and interesting guests performed. Entrance to the concert was free of charge, but visitors could donate as much as they wanted.

Open day at the youth council. We hold open days in our office at the youth centre to tell young people how our organisation has been created, what plans for the future we have, and we enjoy tea and sweets together. We held the open day for pupils. We needed people for our youth centre then, so we invited young people to join. Then lots of active young people joined us.

Non-formal education. In time of war, when everything is done online, we as youth workers try to give as much as we can to young people: we involve them into different projects, educational seminars, conferences of different organisations that work with young people. It is done to get young people outside the community, to show how everything is done at the other level. The week before the war, we had been to the Verhovna Rada (the Parliament of Ukraine), and the participants were incredibly satisfied by the trip. They saw how everything worked, what the youth did in Kyiv, what practices they had, which of them could be used and tried in our activity. Such training gives lots of ideas, shows what trends there are now, and what is relevant. It is used in the community then. Young people make a list of ideas of what they can do. It is also

of great help for the future, during their studies in universities, work for non-governmental organisations and own activities.

We also implement non-formal education programmes, for instance, the financial literacy course, at the youth centre.

An interesting event of our youth council is **Wheel of Friendship**. We suggested that the youth centres should co-operate with our youth council: the young people joined the pro-social activity at adjacent villages instead of the place of their residence. Our principal goal was to gather seven to ten young people from the same village or town and do something good in another village or town. For instance, Biliaivka gave its plan and ideas of what they would like to improve. We wanted to paint the walls in the youth centre. We were visited by the young people from Hradenytsi, who did that. In their turn, the young people from Hradenytsi asked us to help clean up their river bank. We also got the bus and came to them together with the representatives of the authorities and implemented that action. The campaign was called the Wheel of Friendship because we rolled around all the villages.



The Human Rights Academy – the young people wrote letters to the imprisoned defenders of human rights and tried to justify that everyone had the right to self-expression.

Our **Youth Council** was established in 2018; it was convened four times then (four convocations), and a new head was elected every time. The founder and initiator of the Youth Council was Kostia Kravchuk, who studied at school in the eighth grade then. He came to the head of our town council and told him about his idea, which was supported. The Youth Council has existed since then. It has been joined by young people from and for different spheres. The youth council is open to everyone aged 16 to 35. It is a hobby rather than work. You come and get satisfied with your labour. You are inspired, you embody your ideas, you fulfil your potential, make yourself and the people around better, and feel good and positive. The Youth Council is made of twenty-two young people from Biliaivka. Around a year ago, we visited the villages that pertained to Biliaivka Territorial Community (Hradenytsi, Shyroka Balka, Myrne, Maiory; unfortunately, we did not go to Kaharlyk). Before the full-scale invasion, we had attended different Ukrainian and international events, for instance, the international summit of mayors in Kyiv, where we presented our plans, ideas and activities.

The **Youth Centre** is the open space that can be visited by everyone, the place established for the youth. You can take a rest, watch TV, play a game or use equipment for creative activities there: you can always find something to do there. In fact, it is a small room, but it is full of different interesting items. We are not planning our work for a year or two ahead. We meet once every two weeks in the Youth Council and decide what else we want to do, what ideas we have, whether they are supported, and then we plan how it can be implemented.

The town authorities support us, and youth work is our joint decision. After we have justified the expedience of creation and operation of the Youth Council, the authorities are open to communication. We can call the deputy town head of Biliaivka, offer her our idea, and she can tell us about different aspects, recommend how to organise the processes and help with our ideas. There is also a very interesting and kind woman called Tetiana Malenska, the Head of the Sports and Tourism Department, who always helps with our activities. We are always incredibly grateful to her. She works in our House of Culture on the ground floor, and we are on the first floor. Every time something goes wrong, we go to her, and she always helps. We can communicate with her 24/7, she always listens to us and gives advice. We get all the help we need from the authorities, and we can contact anyone. In fact, the reason is that we are always positive and focused on improving our town. We want the people not only to “hear something” about Odesa region, but also to know our town, to make it famous all over Ukraine and maybe even abroad.

The partners of the Youth Council are the House of Culture, the organisation “Family Circle”, and the sports school. We do not even use the word “partner” – we just communicate, help each other and always try to lend a helping hand to each other. We have a great dancing school “Little Stars”; we can embody lots of different ideas and hold interesting events together with this school and its manager, Kateryna Norenko. It is great when you can contact any person and get a positive response. The youth centre co-operates with the School Parliament.

The pupils, especially the ones from the high school, are involved into activities of the Youth Council. They all are single-minded. The Youth Council is a great example for youth, and it offers different clubs and projects. They are initiated by the Youth Council and spread around the community to create weighty results. It is a good example where the Youth Council starts something while the others continue.

Deputy Mayor Olena Kravchenko always supports the youth. It has gained special relevance in time of war although she had started supporting us before the war. It is difficult to plan something now; anyone has difficulty planning even their daily routine now. So the Youth Council works based on the principle “now and as soon as possible”. If there is an urgent need, the people get together and try to find opportunities.

Our community is really united. We can resolve many issues together. It all starts with school, with student self-governance. Then young people join the Youth Council. These people are ready to take part, they are activists. Nobody is forced. Young people feel the urge, which is cool.

There is a sign at the entrance to Biliaivka Town Council, ‘Biliaivka Is a Town Council Friendly to the Youth and Children’. This is true.

— ON OWN VISION

In the end, if you were to give the key and fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

Never give up or lose hope. Even if something goes wrong, but you have already started, you will eventually manage. You must carry on. Regardless of the war, Covid-19 and other circumstances. It hardens and makes us stronger.

We must live, we must believe. A lot depends on young people. They are the most active part of the population. It applies not only to Ukraine, but to all the people on the planet.

ANZHELA TYMCHENKO, ROMAN GOMOLYAKO

Nizhyn City Youth Centre
(Nizhyn, Chernihiv Region)

"... aspects of inclusion and youth work in the broad sense; consideration of the new target audience we have not covered yet; understanding the importance of youth participation in creation of youth work and identification of needs of young people before doing something."



PRACTICE OF YOUTH WORK IN TIME OF WAR – activity of the Nizhyn City Youth Centre.

When the full-scale invasion started, we reformatted our work because there was an acute need to cover humanitarian needs of the population. We **involved lots of young people as volunteers** at SpivDiia Hub. Then we realised that humanitarian assistance was not so acutely needed anymore, and that we must resume our youth work gradually.

We managed to involve a **psychologist** to work at the youth centre. Together with the team of the youth council, we developed the project **“Volunteer Get-Togethers”**, the association of volunteers, informal meetings for consolidation, synergy and recovery of resources. We launched the project **“Sporty Nizhyn”** – fitness for young people outdoors. We resumed the **activities**: movie shows, media literacy workshops, workshops to make trench candles, wax foundation candles, flickers, painting workshops etc. We resumed **non-formal education**: local online trainings of “Active Citizens” programme of the British Council, media literacy programme “I understand” from NGO “Other Education”, volunteer support programme within the project “Ripe”, the programme “Youth Worker”, and Laboratory of Responsible Citizens.

We helped **our volunteers recharge their batteries**: we organised trips for them, namely to Latvia and the Carpathians, nominated them for the mayor’s scholarship, awarded them on the Youth Day, presented them our merchandise products etc.

We **register the participants** of our events and visitors of our co-working space.

We perform **open youth work** at secondary, vocational and higher educational establishments. We also visit head districts of the community. **We co-operate** with the library, the youth council, and the community of youth workers.

KEY ADVICE: to study relevant needs of the target audience, to help those in need, with the resources that are actually necessary. To take care of your own resources and to recharge your batteries.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- knowledge and awareness of inclusion and youth work in the broad sense;
- consideration of the new target audience we have not covered yet;
- work with the added districts;
- understanding the importance of youth participation in creation of youth work and identification of needs of young people before doing something.



ANZHELA TYMCHENKO, ROMAN GOMOLYAKO

Nizhyn City Youth Centre (Nizhyn, Chernihiv Region)

— ON MOTIVATION

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

In the first place, it is the **team with the same values** of youth work, the team that understands the importance of self-development, to develop the youth and to develop together with the youth. Then the team will find necessary tangible and intangible resources.

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

In the Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase I”,⁶⁵ there were aspects of **inclusion** and youth work in the broad sense; consideration of the new target audience we have not covered yet; work with the added districts of the community; understanding the importance of **youth participation** in creation of youth work and **identification of needs of young people** before doing something.

— ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

When the full-scale invasion started, we reformatted our work: youth work was not of priority during the initial period because there was an acute need to cover humanitarian needs of the population. So SpivDiia Hub Nizhyn was established at the youth centre. We involved both city authorities and partners into co-operation. Of course, we also partnered

the organisations we worked with, the young people, non-governmental organisations and educational establishments. We **involved lots of young people as volunteers** into SpivDiia Hub Programme. The youth mastered the entire humanitarian response cycle, from collecting need requests of the community population to provision of assistance, i.e. collection, processing, call centre, case management, conflict management (when dissatisfied people come), help in filling an application, packaging and giving out. It was done from March to May. Then we realised that humanitarian assistance was not so acutely needed anymore, and that we must resume our work with young people gradually.

SpivDiia enabled us to co-operate with the professional **psychologist** because we had already had that need at the beginning of 2022. We were planning the advocacy campaign about changes to the staffing schedule and introduction of the psychologist’s position. We studied the needs and problems of the youth, who said that the major problem was bullying in the educational environment, so free professional psychological aid was necessary. SpivDiia Hub Programme helped us satisfy that need. Our psychologist started working with the volunteers and team of the youth centre regarding recovery of resources, providing the psychological first aid etc.

In which areas is your youth centre working now?

Together with the team of the youth council, we developed the project **“Volunteer Get-Togethers”**, the association of volunteers, informal meetings for consolidation, synergy and recovery of resources.

Then we turned to sports. We realised that unloading trucks was a good thing, a cool way of physical release when the brain was boiling, but it was tiring. So we launched the project **“Sporty Nizhyn”** in co-operation with the city centre “Sport for Everyone”. There was a moment when public events could not be held, at the end

65. Youth for Democracy in Ukraine. Council of Europe Office in Ukraine. URL: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/youth-for-democracy-in-ukraine>

of April and beginning of May, so we introduced the registration and invited 15 to 20 people to exercise. There was a fitness workout plus a new type of sport; everything was video recorded professionally, and then we made a beautiful video with subtitles and posted it on the social media so that those who could not join would be able to watch and practice. Those were our two days a week when we just paused everything for an hour and a half, closed the door of the centre and went outdoors to do sports.

We realised that it was a cool way to recharge our batteries. The sports were very popular, because, so to say, it started the **youth recovery**, resumption of the work not associated with humanitarian assistance. We started to actively “win back” our right to be the youth centre and just work with young people instead of working in the humanitarian field.

The youth centre also works with **non-formal education**. We co-operate with the non-governmental organisation “Initiative Youth Laboratory” to hold local online trainings of “Active Citizens” programme of the British Council, media literacy programme “I understand” from NGO “Other Education” and conduct workshops; there

is a volunteer support programme within the project “Ripe”, the programme “Youth Worker”, and Laboratory of Responsible Citizens. The Laboratory of Responsible Citizens is our project implemented as our home task within the Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II”; it is trauma informed youth work.

We have started to resume different **events**. Creative workshops are very popular as a way to make something beautiful, interesting, to communicate, take a rest, turn your attention to something different and focus on making a picture, a keychain or something else.

By the way, the people sometimes came to our creative workshops and then joined our other events and became active volunteers. One of the girls joined us as a volunteer, and now she is an in-house youth work specialist. In summer, we managed to go to Latvia with our most active pupils for a week to recharge our batteries. Some of the volunteers went to the Carpathians. So we cared about those “living” in the centre to help them **recover**. The most active people were nominated for the mayor’s scholarship: one girl was paid it for half a year. Some people were awarded on the Youth Day. Moreover, all



the volunteers got our merchandise products. We tried not to leave anyone behind. We issued volunteer's IDs to fifteen people, including us as the youth centre team.

Now we are on a "tour" around educational establishments because we perform **open youth work** at educational establishments. By the way, the schools got interested and started to invite us with our flicker workshops because it was dark, with no outdoor illumination, so the flickers were the top thing. We have calculated it for statistics that the next week we are having 33 flicker workshops in five days (Monday to Friday), in schools, and only one or two will be held in the youth centre. These are flickers alone; there are also movie shows, media literacy workshops, trench candle workshops, wax foundation candle workshops, painting workshops by the art therapist etc.

Who is your target audience?

We have expanded the age limits of our **target audience** – we work a lot with the age group of 10 to 14, starting from the fifth grade, and if it a category of youth workers, there is no upper limit at all.

Almost all the visitors are new now, they came to us for the first time in time of war. There are lots of new-comers every time because they are brought by our new volunteers; of course, **we have expanded our opportunities** and have discovered **new activities**, which are being introduced now.

You must sign up for each event via the Google form. We also **register participants** of not only the events, but also our co-working space, i.e. the people who just come to us to take a seat, listen to a lecture or just spend time; there are around 50 people like that. Of course, the psychologist who offers individual consulting also keeps records on her visitors.

There were few internally displaced persons, but they are, they participate in our events. They even took part in the city quest and won the prize.

Who does your youth centre co-operate with?

Within our community, we **co-operate** with secondary, vocational and higher educational establishments (we definitely come to the places where there is our target audience). Plus the community of youth workers. There is also a library, which always supports the initiatives and is the first to test training programmes. We actively co-operate with the youth council. We also visit head districts of the community.

— ON OWN VISION

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

The period of operations as the humanitarian headquarter was very hard and stressful, but it gave us the **experience** that improved our **stress resistance** (both for us and our volunteers) and **conflict management skills**; we became more **flexible** and **mobile**. Owing to this work, we found the people and organisations that turned into our partners. We also retained volunteers and activists; they found themselves and started to participate in activities of the youth council, became its members or just volunteers, started to work in that area and to develop. In the beginning, they came to us as volunteers, to our event. They found out about our activities by chance or when we came to their class to conduct an event, and got inspired. So it is **expansion of the team, new target audience, development of volunteers, establishment of partnership**, because the common trouble always consolidates people.

I also remember the first month when all we could think about was how to survive and keep the family safe and intact, and then our partnering organisations started to write and offer their help. That **support gave us the force and inspiration to carry on**, it was encouraging.

In the end, if you were to give the key and fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

To study needs of the target audience we work with, do not harm, not to spoil people, not to teach them parasitic attitude. To help those in need, with the resources that are actually necessary.

To **take care of your own resources** and to recharge your batteries because you can burn out very quickly. To remember that life goes on. Who knows how long the war will last? But we can't postpone our life until the victory, which will definitely come. We must be getting ready for what we will have to do when we win, and be doing something now to contribute to the victory.



VIKTORIIA BEZSMERTNA

Non-Governmental Organisation
"Institute of Creative Innovation" (Zhytomyr)

"I have grown as a civic activist based on the values of the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe has given us the understanding and awareness of the safe and comfortable space for young people. Our team is trying to embody it. We use the materials developed by the Council of Europe in the work of the youth centre: "Compass", "Have Your Say!", "Bookmarks", "Quality Label for Youth Centres", "Self-Assessment Tool for Youth Policy", "Dignityland game". We believe it is important not only to do something for young people, but also to ask what they think — this is how our youth centre works."



PRACTICE OF THE YOUTH WORK IN TIME OF WAR – establishment of the youth centre on the basis of the non-governmental organisation.

Creation of the youth centre started with **assessment of needs of the youth** of Zhytomyr (end of 2019 – start of 2020) and of the young people in the region (end of 2020 – start of 2021). According to the survey, more than 80% said that the youth centre was necessary.

We use the trial and error method because we must feel out what can be done, how it can be done, whether young people like it after 24 February. We have the **feedback form** for young people – it is the same for all the events held at the youth centre. There are QR codes that can be scanned by young people to leave their feedback. We analyse everything because we want to know not only what an event was like, but also what the people wanted to see. We also conducted some surveys on Instagram and Telegram among young people, asked about their opinions and expectations.

We established the youth centre on the basis of the non-governmental organisation at the expense of the project, but we did not have the clear list of events; that part was variable. We **fill the youth centre with what is really interesting for young people**. We hold events almost every day, two or three events. We have the English Speaking Club and board game evenings.

We offer non-formal education, consulting (psychological, legal, and (in the future) career guidance). We have the co-working space, cultural and leisure activities and yoga. We offer organisational and information services (young people can apply to us to hold an event, and we provide premises and, if necessary, help with organisation).

KEY ADVICE: have no fear! Believe in yourself and people around. Trust is important for any work. Communicate with young people and work with them and for them in the first place.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- manual “Compass”;
- “Have Your Say!”;
- “Bookmarks”;
- “Quality Label for Youth Centres”;
- “Self-Assessment Tool for Youth Policy”;
- “Dignityland” game.



VIKTORIIA BEZSMERTNA

Non-Governmental Organisation “Institute of Creative Innovation” (Zhytomyr)

— ON MOTIVATION

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

The youth centre establishment project was launched owing to my personal experience and experience of our organisation. It demonstrates how **professional and high-quality our work is**. This case enabled us to realise our personal value. I did not believe myself to be super cool. I have various great experiences I can share, I have not always succeeded, but I have tried to work professionally and treat people humanely. **Human rights as a top value** – these are not just words for me.

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

I have grown as a civic activist based on the values of the Council of Europe.

The Council of Europe has given us the **understanding and awareness of the safe and comfortable environment for young people**, of how it can be built, and what it is supposed to be like. We are doing it together with the team now, our team is trying to embody it. We do not want to be a youth centre for the sake of appearance, we do not

want to focus on targets only: to do it because the project demands it. We do want to work for young people and with young people.

We **use the materials developed by the Council of Europe in the work of the youth centre**: “Compass”⁶⁶, “Have Your Say!”⁶⁷, “Bookmarks”⁶⁸, “Quality Label for Youth Centres”⁶⁹, “Self-Assessment Tool for Youth Policy”⁷⁰, “Dignityland” game.

The **youth centre must be based on values**, must care about human rights. There can be representatives of different communities at the same event, but they have no conflicts because we are against discrimination, we have the safe space for different people.

The important thing is not only to do something for young people, but also **to ask what that think**. This is how our youth centre works, a priori, by default.

— ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

In 2013, when I attended the Council of Europe training for multipliers for human rights education and found out at the optional session that there were youth centres of the Council of Europe, I was inspired because I realised that it was relevant and important for young people, namely in Zhytomyr. But I was just a student then, I had not worked in any organisations, and I could not carry on. I lived with that idea for a very long time, and after I had joined the non-governmental organisation, we started discussing it.

66. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. URL: <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>

67. Have Your Say: Manual on the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/16807023e0>

68. Bookmarks — Combating Hate Speech Online through Human Rights Education. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/bookmarksen2020-web2/16809e5789>

69. The Council of Europe Quality Label for Youth Centres. Good Practices in Youth Centres. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/youthcentre-en-good-practices-165x235-web/16809ec195>

The Council of Europe Quality Label for Youth Centres. Role, Value and Impact of Youth Centres. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/youthcentre-en-role-value-impact-165x235-web/16809ec197>

The Council of Europe Quality Label for Youth Centres. Quality Management in Youth Centres. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/youthcentre-en-quality-management-165x235-web/16809ec196>

70. Self-Assessment Tool for Youth Policy. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/self-assessment-tool-for-youth-policy-english/16808d76c5>

After the basic training of the programme “Youth Worker” in 2019 in Zhytomyr, we and other young people decided to ask the young people whether they needed a youth centre. We **assessed the needs of the youth with a focus on the youth centre** via the survey and focus groups. In the beginning, we asked the young people in the city (end of 2019 – start of 2020) and then the young people in the region (end of 2020 – start of 2021). More than 80% said that the youth centre was necessary. It enabled us to move on. I already had the **arguments** for the authorities: a youth centre was not only my idea, and the youth people did talk about it. We worked with the department, but then 24 February came, and new priorities appeared.

During that period, UNICEF was entering Zhytomyr region with a big project and looking for the organisation in the youth sector. We developed the project application. In the beginning, the idea was that the youth centre would be like a municipal institution. When the processes had started, we realised that a municipal institution could not be opened during the martial law because most municipal institutions were closing down, and the deputies would not understand why establish another one. So I had to make a choice: either to go on with a municipal institution or to rent premises on a commercial basis and start working as a youth centre. The people dealing with projects know that there is not much time, there are time limits. So our team decided that **we would establish the youth centre on the basis of a non-governmental organisation.**

We use the trial and error method because we must feel out what can be done, how it can be done, whether young people like it after 24 February. We have the **feedback form for young people** – it is the same for all the events held at the youth centre. There are QR codes that can be scanned by young people to leave their feedback. We analyse everything because we want to know not only what an event was like, but also what the people wanted to see. We also conducted some surveys on Instagram

and Telegram among the youth, asked about their opinions and expectations. We consider extensive and comprehensive assessment of the needs because we do lack it in our work.

We established the youth centre on the basis of the non-governmental organisation at the expense of the project, but we did not have the clear list of events; that part was variable. We **fill the youth centre with what is really interesting for young people.** The most popular things are substantial leisure, cultural and leisure activities, home concerts, workshops: drawing, painting and art therapy are in demand among young people. We have also launched individual consulting. Our youth centre offers free psychological and legal consulting, and we are going to offer free career guidance to the youth in the future. We hold events almost every day, two or three events. We have a monthly plan, which can be adjusted, of course. At the end of each week, we publish our schedule for the next week on our social media pages (Telegram, Instagram, Facebook). We have registration forms; a day before the event, everyone is sent a confirmation of their participation. We have the English Speaking Club and board game evenings. There is non-formal education, co-working space, cultural and leisure activities and yoga. We offer organisational and information services (young people can apply to us to hold an event, and we provide premises and, if necessary, help with organisation).

The target audience of the project is young people aged 14 to 24, but we are not limited by this age; different people come. We have regular visitors, we already recognise them. We gather contact details via the sign up form. The data base **includes more than a thousand people, and there are 50 regular visitors** for sure. By the way, lots of internally displaced persons come to us, and when you read their feedback and reviews, you feel like bursting into tears because they say our place is cool and gives them an opportunity to communicate, adapt to the city and find new friends. We have board games with a separate



chat for players; it is their own community. We also **visit communities** with different mini-trainings, workshops for the youth. Moreover, I understand how **important it is to work with those who work with young people**. So we hold regular events and meetings for those working with young people to tell about ourselves and our activities.

We have the **premises** of 220 square meters: four rooms, with two larger ones for up to 20 people and two smaller ones for up to 15 people. One of these rooms is the work space for the team, but when there are no events, we can go to any room. We also invite young people to our co-working space, to come and work there. In general, **the space is very mobile**: we have folding tables, folding chairs and lots of bean bags. There is a book shelf, a mini library where young people can borrow books to read,

two toilets, a small kitchen, a glass hall we call a “flask”, with the stairs to the youth centre on the first floor. The stairs are fenced with glass, and home concerts are held in that hall. The atmosphere is fantastic, young people love it: they come to take pictures in that location, so we have created the photo area on the ground floor. There is a reception desk with one of the youth workers there, so visitors do not get lost and have someone to talk to. They can be given a tour, told where to go or accompanied to an event. We have no shelter here, but there is a bomb shelter at the premises 50 meters across the road. When there is an air raid alert, we go there if there is an event. If an event can be held there, it is. We often play board games in the bomb shelter, and we have conducted trainings there. Even when there are no events, our rule is to go to a bomb shelter when there is an air raid alert because safety is on the first place.

The working hours on work days are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., but board games often end at 10 p.m. The weekend schedule is 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. The youth centre has no days off. The team members of the youth centre have days off. There are eight youth workers: a co-ordinator of the youth workers and me, the project co-ordinator, an operating manager and an administrator. They always have two days-off a week, and they just choose the days that are convenient for them.

The project will last until July 2023 and can be extended, but the team and I are discussing how we can ensure **sustainability**. It could be sort of social entrepreneurship or lease of premises on beneficial conditions or something else.

— ON OWN VISION

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

Our major achievement is that we have created the **safe and comfortable space for young people** where they can communicate with each other, where they come with pleasure. When there were long air raid alerts, and we cancelled the events and worked remotely, we were asked, "When will you resume your events?" When young people tell you that it is a cool, great, pleasant and hearty place, and that they would like to return, these are the results we work for.

In the end, if you were to give the key and fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

Have no fear! **Believe in yourself and people around.** Trust is important for any work. **Communicate with young people and work with them and for them in the first place.** Do not think of any solutions without talking to young people first.

VOLODYMYR SONKO, LIUDMYLA LUKIANOVA

Ukrainian Youth Councils Association

"The approaches of the Council of Europe are a part of all of our projects, and lots of tools and useful practices have been a basis of everything we have done. Youth councils are counselling and advisory bodies that engage the youth into decision-making. We often use the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life and 'Have Your Say!' and 'Compass' manuals".



PRACTICE OF YOUTH WORK IN TIME OF WAR – activity of the Ukrainian Youth Councils Association.

Based on the results of the study of the condition of youth councils, we held **V National Dialogue of the Youth Councils of Ukraine**, where the participants could study the cases of those who kept working, obtain information on anti-corruption tools, discuss reformatting of the youth policy in time of war etc.

It resulted in the **recovery programme “Armed Forces of Youth Councils of Ukraine”**, the purpose of which was to create project solutions for operations of youth councils in time of war.

Also, **the Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II” enabled us to conduct four workshops** related to operations of youth councils during two weeks.

We published the guidelines “Communications of Youth Councils in Time of War”, which covered the social media communication tools in time of martial law.

We shot **the documentary “Youth Front of Ukraine”**, the unique story of the main character from Mariupol, the girl who survived the war crimes of Russia and genocide of the Ukrainians in the city.

KEY ADVICE: remember that the **youth policy and youth work are relevant now!** They must remain relevant, they must not be lost at the community, regional and national level. The authorities are helping now, and the present-day co-operation may make youth work cross-sectoral and inter-regional.

Do what is really of value, follow the young people’s needs rather than your own desires.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life⁷¹;
- “Have Your Say!”⁷²;
- “Compass”⁷³.



71. Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/168071b4d6>

72. Have Your Say: Manual on the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/16807023e0>

73. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. URL: <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>

VOLODYMYR SONKO, LIUDMYLA LUKIANOVA

Ukrainian Youth Councils Association

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

— ON MOTIVATION

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

Not sleeping, or sleeping two or three hours at times :)

Support by the authorities is necessary: local initiatives need support by regional departments and local self-government authorities, and national ones – by the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine. Active fundraising via targeted youth programmes.

Grant resources, which were also of use.

Our **partners** helped us implement the practices, in the context of expert support and partial funding.

Active civil position and enthusiasm of youth councils and activists as well as **high level of expertise** of the governing body of the Association were important in our work. We usually show how something should be done, what is necessary etc. at our own example. It is the intangible resource we need.

Also, we are the **national platform** and have access to each corner of Ukraine. So, in its turn, this is support by youth councils and young people. We would not be able to perform such a wide range of activities without them.

There was a **demand**, and a **prompt response**. It is a matter of communication between our members, civil society institutions and partners. It also played the role in implementation of the practices.

Lots of tools and useful practices of the Council of Europe were a basis of everything we did. In particular, the practices provided for co-operation with the representatives of the local authorities and youth organisations for joint strengthening of **youth participation** and civic engagement in the villages and cities of Ukraine (in particular, by young people with disabilities, youth from among national minorities as well as young migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons) by developing the capacity of the youth policy stakeholders and improving the quality of the youth policy and youth work in accordance with the standards of the Council of Europe.

We are also trying to introduce the **50X50 format**, which is used by the Council of Europe. We invite representatives of the authorities, youth departments and organisations involved into work with youth councils to our National Dialogues.

Of course, **human rights** – we always talk about them.

Youth councils themselves are counselling and advisory bodies that engage the youth into decision-making. We often use the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life and “Have Your Say!”⁷⁴ and “Compass” manuals⁷⁶.

The active co-operation with the Council of Europe resulted in four workshops where we introduced the practices and principles of work of the Council of Europe to the youth councils in more detail.

74. Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/168071b4d6>

75. Have Your Say: Manual on the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/16807023e0>

76. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. URL: <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>

ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

The Association founded the new tool, **the National Dialogue of Youth Councils of Ukraine**, where different issues relevant for young people are discussed. V National Dialogue was held after the full-scale invasion. We already had a map of the youth councils situation then and gave them an opportunity to study the cases of those who kept working. As a part of co-operation with the Integrity Office of the National Agency on Corruption Prevention, we provided some anti-corruption tools, the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine clearly described the progress of reformatting of the youth policy in time of war etc.

We received information on the situation from the region youth councils. We have the communication chat between all the region youth councils of Ukraine. It is very easy for us to obtain information because they directly contact regional state administrations and different youth councils. That map was used to start the large-scale **study**, which was conducted for three months: we assessed what was happening to the youth councils, the situation with civil society institutes being a part of them, studied their interaction and new formats and vectors of their activities. All further practices were only based on the direct **demand**. We would not have been able to carry on otherwise.

We saw that 62% of the youth councils had suspended their activities, and their question was, **“What are we supposed to do now?”** So the Association and the non-governmental organisation “Social Capital Development Centre” decided to give them the **specific vectors to be used**.

It was extremely important to show how the youth councils survived now. In particular, we presented the **case** of the youth council of Pervomaisk in Kharkiv region and showed how they co-operated with the authorities and

what they did for young people; the case of the youth congress of Zboriv in Ternopil region, which had not lost the advisory function and offers practical training with the local self-government authorities, raised funds for the Armed Forces of Ukraine; the cases of the Kyiv Regional Youth Council, which managed to provide psychological support and aid in establishment of the local youth councils; cases of the youth councils of Luhansk and Donetsk regions that were relocated and started creating youth councils in the regions where they temporarily were and so on. It is inspiring. The cases were powerful, so it was important not only to show them at the Dialogue, but also to make summaries and guides and launch webinars. There were six webinars. The average coverage was 30 to 40 participants. As for representation, at least twelve regions were present.

It resulted in the **recovery programme “Armed Forces of Youth Councils of Ukraine”**, the purpose of which was to create project solutions for operations of youth councils, youth counselling and advisory bodies and their initiative groups, youth non-governmental organisations in time of war and then for restoration of the communities, regions and Ukraine in general.

The programme had three activities of the preparation stage:

- V National Dialogue, which we have already mentioned, and which it all started with;
- **meeting of regional youth councils of Ukraine** to resume their interaction in the context of exchange of experience, which resulted in development of the guide on functioning of the regional youth councils in time of war;
- preparation **coach session “Youth council = young person”**, which dealt with the psychological aspect of young people, the plan for responding to the situation in the country, and coaching support.

After the preparation stage, we had the study results that were used as a basis for implementation of **respective modules**. Each module had its own product; it was important to do more than just talking and leaving.

- **Participation tools:** we processed the general participation tools: how petitions and appeals can be used in time of war, discussed powers of the assistant advisers at different levels, operation of student councils, youth self-government, non-governmental organisations etc. We also consolidated practical cases of different levels. The events of this module were held only online because lots of participants were from different regions. As a product, there are summaries of speeches on petitions, description of the youth reception office (case of Mariupol).
- **Anti-corruption activities:** there was a meeting of youth councils and the National Agency on Corruption Prevention, and we developed the guide "Nine tools of impact for citizens: how to use them?" with cases of the youth councils, in particular, the

case of Zboriv where the anti-corruption headquarter was established.

- **Psychological and coaching support:** together with the coaches, we gave the youth councils information on the individual coaching support and told where they could develop the youth council work plan. As the youth was from all the regions, the events were held online.
- **Environmental protection:** it was important to raise that issue among the youth since the theme of environmental protection in the communities had been relevant before the war. We found the Czech organisation that co-operated with the Ministry of Ecology of Ukraine to install air sensors in Ukraine and studied how the Russian aggression affected our environment. We launched the inter-regional dialogue between Kharkiv, Donetsk, Odesa, Chernihiv and Sumy regions, which had been mostly affected. At the meeting, the region military administrations and experts presented their own information, while the youth councils presented their projects. So they



exchanged their experience regarding the existing situation. We are now developing the guide for youth councils. This module is still under way. The combined format (online and offline) is planned.

- **Youth council and internally displaced persons:** we held the integration event in Khmelnytskyi region together with the non-governmental organisation “Zakhid”. The authorities, the youth, students and pupils exchanged their experience. We discussed creation of departments for work with internally displaced persons. By the way, the youth council of Mariupol launched the project “Me — Mariupol — Youth”: when a young person contacts the youth council, which in its turn applies to the authorities and deals with requests, responds and helps. Within this module, we started to integrate the department for work with internally displaced persons into the youth councils, namely in Chernihiv and Kyiv regions.

- **Co-operation between youth councils and student self-governance bodies.** This module has been planned, but the events will be held later.

Also, **the Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II” enabled us to conduct four workshops** related to operations of youth councils during two weeks: on records management, facilitation, human rights and integration thereof into operations of the youth council, exchange of international experience. We identified the themes that needed enhancement based on our previous practices and projects.

The other practices are:

- **Guidelines “Communications of Youth Councils in Time of War”,** which covered the social media communication tools in time of martial law.

- **Documentary “Youth Front of Ukraine”⁷⁷,** the unique story of the main character from Mariupol, the girl who survived the war crimes of Russia and genocide of the Ukrainians in the city. Alina is a young person and civil activist who will tell stories of twenty-two young people from Mariupol to Bucha, who keep fighting for our country and victory at different front lines, through the prism of her own life. Kyiv, Boiarka, Chernihiv, Lutsk, Zboriv, Irpin, Bakhmut, Khmelnytskyi, Kharkiv, Kherson, Dnipro, Luhansk, Sumy, Bucha, Mariupol — each of these cities has their own story and own young heroes who deserve to be told about.

How do you share results of your work?

Our representatives take part in preparation of initiatives, formation of products, dissemination of information, **they are always involved.**

We also **try to work outside.** The important thing is to achieve results because lots of youth councils are beyond the Association, so we want them to have access to our work and study these cases. We send the newsletter via the data base of the youth councils of Ukraine, share information on chats with our region, local youth councils, on our communication pages (Instagram, Telegram channel, Facebook).

— ON OWN VISION

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

As for the overall purpose, it has been achieved.

The important thing for us is **participants’ feedback.** It is pleasant when they emphasise that it was efficient and post on social media. Another essential factor is the **number of young people** who join and the number of those who warn that they will be unable to participate

77. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91FCsbTFsUw>

because of the power cut, but ask for link to the records because they need it. We want the information to reach those who are interested.

We produce **high-quality content** owing to experts.

The **time resource is a problem** in implementation of our initiatives. To some extent, the **financial resource** as well because we sometimes had to spend our own funds. We work, but more funding needs to be raised. It is something to develop because it is a matter of sustainability of organisation.

According to the feedback of the youth, the authorities, the international community, and with account of our activities on the international arena, at the national, regional and local level, the Association is quite sustainable, expert, achieves its purpose and performs its tasks in the practices being implemented.

In the end, if you were to give the key or fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

Remember that the **youth policy and youth work are relevant now!** They must remain relevant, they must not be lost at the community, regional and national level. The authorities are helping now, and the present-day co-operation may make youth work cross-sectoral and inter-regional.

Do what is really of value, follow **the young people's needs** rather than your own desires.

Everyone can find **another young person and be inspired by him or her** the way we do. Look what the people are doing, implement and add something. It will improve and enhance the youth policy and youth work.





IRYNA SIMONOVA

Chernihiv Regional Youth Centre (Chernihiv)

"I believe that the basic approaches to youth work must be based on values to avoid events held for the sake of events. Youth work must be honest, open and qualified. It is also important to have the knowledge of trauma informed youth work."



PRACTICE OF YOUTH WORK IN TIME OF WAR – resumption of activities of the Chernihiv Regional Youth Centre after the premises were ruined by the missile strike, launch of the **value-based youth work** to support the youth, to transform the experience into **psycho-emotional growth** in future.

PURPOSE: to facilitate the processes of **recovery and normalisation** of life of the communities affected by the war, and to promote values of youth work.

We **have relocated our youth centre and team** in Chernihiv to another address. The new premises have two sites where we work, to the extent possible in our current conditions.

We have held **reflection meetings** to discuss the acquired experience, to determine what we must do, everyone for themselves and as a team. We have held a **cycle of meetings, organised advanced qualifications**, in particular, on trauma informed youth work, for the youth workers. We also have **reflection meetings and clubs** where people can discuss their problems with psychologists (group and personal work).

We **create conditions for inclusion of the youth into recovery of communities by offering initiatives, projects and events**. The people who did not use to be active now feel the urge to unlock their potential, and we must **create the platform for the people to do that**.

KEY ADVICE: the main thing is **to keep moving**. When you stop, you make a step or two back. It might not be fast. You might be moving slowly, but it is normal. When we talk about super achievements and super heroes, we put extra pressure on ourselves because we want to reach unachievable goals and tell everyone about it. We must **work softly and persistently, on a daily basis**.

As for the people and the team: **do not lose yourself** because the times are very hard, and it is very easy to lose yourself. Even if you do not feel that now, this loss will play a major role in your choice in the future. Of course, **you must take care of yourself and people around you**.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- knowledge of trauma informed youth work was important.



IRYNA SIMONOVA

Chernihiv Regional Youth Centre (Chernihiv)

ON MOTIVATION

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

The donor programmes helped us recover. I cannot say that the region administration or region council helped us because they lack such resources themselves. The good thing is that they do not interfere. We mostly survive on our own. **We have sufficient competencies to overcome everything, nobody is going to work instead of us.** Yet, **the main thing is that we should not be forgotten** and should be involved into training, subgranting etc.

I would like to point out that I personally was really supported by my **community of youth workers**. The community is a very important thing. It is the environment we are changing.

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

I believe that the basic approaches to youth work must be **based on values** to avoid events held for the sake of events. It must be honest, open and qualified. It has an opportunity to think deeper what it must be like under the current conditions. The knowledge of trauma informed youth work⁷⁸ was also important.

ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

The **Chernihiv Regional Youth Centre** was founded in 2017 in the building of the old cinema located in the city centre; it had been forgotten and neglected. It **was built in 1939** and is an architectural landmark, but it was abandoned. It **was the first public site where all the events in the community were held.**

We launched a number of services there since 2017, we created and recovered. The services were absolutely different: movie shows, meetings with kapellmeisters, dancing evenings, artistic and educational events. The centre **gained historical value in public terms for the people, the community, non-governmental organisation.** It was the space to which you could come and hold a meeting for non-governmental organisations, a conference or discussion. The young people spend their time there after classes. There was a piano in the hall. We really wanted young people to have the place to study instead of wandering around. We had the veteran coffee spot that enhanced the communication platform. You could get a cup of coffee and talk. It was sort of **public and civil space.**

In 2017, we had no team and equipment. When we started working, we had seventeen plastic chairs of a creepy green colour, and nothing more. We got heating debt together with the premises. As of 2022, we already had the experience of grant projects, educational events and co-operation with the network of youth workers in communities. We created events for and with the youth together with them.

78. Trauma Informed Youth Work. URL: <https://www.coe.int/uk/web/kyiv/-/trauma-informed-youth-work-youth-centres-start-learning>

We **had the large reconstruction project** for those premises of 2,500 square meters, which included co-working spaces and a transformer hall. We raised the money for that reconstruction for four years, and the repair works started on 3 December 2021; then the premises of the youth centre **were hit by a missile** on 27 February. During World War II, the premises were also ruined during the air raids in the city, and the city centre was practically destroyed. We lost everything. Luckily, nobody was injured!

The team started to volunteer: some people created a small volunteering pool, others joined the military sector; some helped animals or people. The real challenge for the team was to preserve what remained in the youth centre. We **relocated our youth centre and team** in Chernihiv to another address and organised the work there. The new premises have two sites, the space where the youth workers can work, to the extent possible in our current conditions. It was not that easy for the team. When the situation had been stabilised to start work, the people felt that they had burn out, that it was not the principal goal and activity, so they left for other volunteering entities. However, we resumed the youth work in the youth centre; we have recovered the network and our understanding of where we are, what we are for everyone

personally and for the team in general. How we see our future, how our youth work in the youth centre must be resumed. Another thing is that we must take care of the ruined building, which takes up lots of resources.

We have held **reflection meetings** to discuss the acquired experience, and to determine what we must do, everyone for themselves and as a team. How to use that experience for further psycho-emotional growth. The challenges persist. We understand that we are working in time of war, which is not going to end as fast as we would like to. Everyone is tired of humanitarian activities, and there is a desire and need to **get back to the substantial youth work**, both for youth workers and the youth. It is the principal task and activity for now and for the nearest future.

We have held a cycle of meetings, organised advanced qualifications, in particular, on trauma informed youth work, for the youth workers. It is one of the must-have competencies of a youth worker in time of war.

We hold respective events in the field of youth work. When it was warmer, we had artistic meetings and evenings “in the ruins that stood”. It was quite symbolic. The event was called “Rehearsal reading of the script by young actors”.



We are now actively processing the narratives that are of importance for the youth in the context of anti-propaganda. We are focused on democratic participation and importance. At the same time, we discuss how to protect ourselves and process the acquired experience and how to use it in the future.

We also have reflection meetings and clubs where people can discuss their problems with psychologists (group and personal work). We want them to shift their focus from self-pity to the idea that this experience is a driver to work, to find yourself, to understand your history and how you should act. There was a challenge and discordance as regards the returnees. The attitude to them must be changed to integrate them with those who stayed. We integrate them via reflection meetings, clubs, joint events where people relax and learn to communicate with themselves from scratch.

It is super important to hold those **events offline**. It is associated with lots of challenges, but the people meet and can discuss their experience. Lots of meetings have already been held, but I understand that it still is not enough. We must keep talking to **stabilise our experience**. It gets easier every time because it has already been

discussed several times, maybe, a thousand times. These face-to-face and shoulder-to-shoulder meetings are very important.

We had the project «VidNOVA:UA». The people, most of whom had never been anywhere at all, came to us. Such activity and readiness to join the events were an achievement. People who had never attended such events are involved now. They see what is happening around. I perceive youth work as something that supports the people with the increased level of activity. The main thing is not to lose them. A person might have a less active position in the future. But if he or she is supported now, the result can be great, and the person will unlock the potential. Within the project, we have worked with two event spaces I have already mentioned. We also had meetings with active representatives of the community, non-governmental organisations, organised meetings and training on participation, unique nature of the community, interaction in the community, and the evening Game of Minds dedicated to work. We spent lots of time reflecting in that project, which was necessary.

We also **create conditions for inclusion of the youth into recovery of communities by**



* VIDNOVA:UA is a program of youth involvement in the reconstruction of Ukraine, which is designed to give young people the opportunity to make their contribution to the reconstruction of Ukraine and to provide an opportunity for young people to get to know Ukraine and their peers from different regions.

offering initiatives, projects and events. It is about importance of the people's volunteering activity, which is very common now. The people who did not use to be active now feel the urge to unlock their potential, and we must **create the platform for the people to do that.**

— ON OWN VISION

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

February and March were the hardest period. People had to be brought back to the normal state. I believe I **managed to stabilise the condition of the team** in six months so that people could take important decisions, and I am proud of that. **The youth centre has been recovered**, right. There is a **network of youth workers**, who are already tired of humanitarian work and are ready to do anything. There is work for youth workers.

The narratives we develop help the young people make their choice to enable us to keep fighting. If these people change their mind, there is nothing more to talk about...

In the end, if you were to give the key or fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

The main thing is **to keep moving.** When you stop, you make a step or two back. It might not be fast. You might be moving slowly, but it is normal. When we talk about super achievements and super heroes, we put extra pressure on ourselves because we want to reach unachievable goals and tell everyone about it. We must **work softly and persistently, on a daily basis.**

As for the people and the team: **do not lose yourself** because the times are very hard, and it is very easy to lose yourself. Even if you do not feel that now, this loss will play a major role in your choice in the future. Of course, **you must take care of yourself and people around you.**

KATERYNA ROMANENKO

"I started my international activities from examination of materials of the Council of Europe, such as 'Compass', 'Composito', the Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio, 'Have Your Say!', the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, 'Bookmarks.'"

PRACTICE OF YOUTH WORK IN TIME OF WAR

– psychological support of youth workers and training on digital instruments.

At the beginning of the full-scale invasion, I offered online **psychological support** of youth workers who had left Ukraine and started to volunteer. The meetings were held in two formats, group and personal ones. There were four groups of youth workers. They came to talk about specific themes once a week for eight weeks: **about their surroundings** and **about personal resilience**. The group was called “Personal Efficiency”, but we studied resilience there. The groups were given tasks, and we discussed issues in that field.

I also provided psychological support offline to the groups of volunteers in Poland. I also created demo support groups, i.e. **integration meetings** for those who had just crossed the border and did not know where to go, what to do, who to contact. Those groups were for Ukrainians. Then there were mixed groups.

The need to hold **trainings for youth workers on digital tools** was caused by the fact that they **had lost contact with their team or activists**, which was a major trauma for a youth worker. We held trainings for the Ukrainian youth workers who had moved to Poland. However, they also brought Polish youth workers. One training was planned, but we held it three times.

KEY ADVICE: to do no harm, to avoid condemnation, and to help only those who do ask for help, and to be attentive. The good cannot

be forced. You cannot force anyone to accept the good, but people should not be restricted in their opportunity to receive the good.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- “Compass”;
- “Composito”;
- The Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio;
- “Have Your Say!”;
- the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life;
- “Bookmarks”.

KATERYNA ROMANENKO

ON MOTIVATION

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

To start with, I have seen numerous examples. The psychologists we had hired to consult people lived under air raids and said, "I can consult some more people." However, a sick doctor cannot treat anyone. The psychologists who have been traumatised have difficulty helping others.

So I left abroad because I realised that my qualifications were sufficient to help, but I would not be able to help professionally if I lacked physical safety myself. The first condition must be that the practising specialist must be safe and must not be traumatised during the practice. If you do not have professional stability, the client gets even more traumatised.

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

I started my international activities from examination of materials of the Council of Europe, such as "Compass"⁷⁹, "Compasito"⁸⁰, the Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio⁸¹, "Have Your Say!"⁸², the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life⁸³, "Bookmarks"⁸⁴. I still develop corporate evaluation in my work based on the Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio. I show it to business entities and at different business meetings as a self-assessment tool. It is a good tool for individual self-assessment.

ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

I am a psychologist and teacher for adults by my degree. When the full-scale invasion started in February, my colleague and I were supposed to have the second day of the online training of the Youth Worker Programme in Kherson. In the morning, we started to get messages that some of the territories had been occupied. The colleague with whom I held the training is from Poltava, and I am from Kyiv. My family lives in Zaporizhzhia. So the training was obviously not held in Kherson on 24 February. That period was hard, the territory was occupied, and terrible things were happening...

I have an active psychological practice, that is my private business. But I did the youth work all the time. Then I mostly worked with youth workers where I could improve my own qualifications and **support youth workers**. I started to receive personal messages from youth workers from different regions that they needed support. They were strongly traumatised by the events because they wanted to be involved, because **youth work is generally about involvement and use for the society**. And the **world turned upside down**.

At the beginning of the full-scale invasion, I provided online **psychological support**. Youth workers work with people, and social contact is the most important thing for them. That contact was taken away from them.

I was at an absolute loss for week myself. But then I got engaged. I held the first online

79. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. URL: <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>

80. Compasito: Manual on human rights education for children. URL: <http://eycb.coe.int/compasito/>

81. Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio: A tool for the assessment and development of youth work competence. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/1680699d85>

82. Have Your Say: Manual on the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/16807023e0>

83. Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/168071b4d6>

84. Bookmarks — Combating Hate Speech Online through Human Rights Education. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/bookmarks2020-web2/16809e5789>

meeting on psychological adaptation on 2 or 3 March with the youth workers who had left Ukraine and started volunteering. The indicator was that the people did not keep aloof and hope that the people from the other country would help; they started volunteering themselves. The problem was that they had difficulty doing that because they worked not only with Ukrainians, but also with teams of Polish volunteers or in some institutions, youth houses of culture or, for instance, at railway stations. Another thing was that it was mentally difficult to help if you yourself were in the same situation, to help the stressed person; it was the major challenge in support of youth workers.

The meetings were held in two formats, group and personal ones. They asked to tell about some cases. I gather the group of psychologists who helped people in general, not only youth workers. I was responsible for youth workers because I was involved into that field, and because it was not difficult for me. I understand their questions. Some psychologists do not work with traumas or people in groups. I had such experience. I had people from different regions. I helped the people in Kherson region while we could communicate; then there were major communication issues, and they had difficulty leaving.

I work all over Ukraine. I had an ad with the questionnaire in the Telegram channel. Those who wished, filled them in. We urged everyone, not only youth workers. The youth workers also came based on my colleagues' recommendation. They all came to groups. The groups were different: ten to twelve people, three people, depending on my and their capacity.

I have been working with war traumas since 2014, and I was professionally involved in Kostiantynivka, Sloviansk and Kramatorsk. There was psychological support of psychologists and teachers. I had missions there. I am used to then. So I found it easier than my colleagues, psychologists and teachers.

Before that, I had had master mind groups for entrepreneurs and other categories. My target group in the business environment. In the end, such psychological support groups for youth workers turned into master mind groups. There were four of them. They came to talk about specific themes once a week for eight weeks: **about their surroundings** and **about personal resilience**. The group was called "Personal Efficiency", but we studied resilience there. Master mind groups have self-moderation; there is a moderator and a list of questions. The participants share their problems, meet to discuss a specific case. I mostly rely upon psychology and pedagogical knowledge in groups. The groups are given tasks, and we discuss issues in that field. The master mind group has a programme, with questions for each meeting. There are also home tasks in between weeks. I used the same approach for youth workers.

I also provided psychological support offline to the groups of volunteers in Poland. I also created demo support groups, i.e. **integration meetings** for those who had just crossed the border and did not know where to go, what to do, who to contact. March and April were most difficult. Fewer people came in May. Twenty to thirty people sometimes came to such groups. It was done not in regional centres, but in small towns in Poland. For such settlements, it is many people.

Support is necessary not only in Ukraine, but also abroad. This support abroad influences whether these people will come back or not. Those groups were for Ukrainians. Then there were mixed groups. The need arose because the Ukrainians started to join the society, study the language and communicate, study the culture. Some aspects were very unusual, some people had difficulty understanding why some things were said, why some holidays were celebrated. So integration meetings were necessary. I was surprised to find out that some people in Poland wanted to know more about the culture and came to such meetings. It is difficult to find a common language without

cultural understanding. Between 20 and 30% of the participants were Poles, and between 70 and 80% – Ukrainians, which was efficient. We organised the same meetings with the teachers who had moved and started working in Polish schools. The people found such meetings by recommendation. They are often associated with youth work, some are directly associated with youth work and volunteering. I know the youth houses of culture, youth councils, institutions that work in this system, councils of teachers.

We also held the **training for youth workers on digital tools**. It was a major challenge in the beginning. The youth workers **lost the contact with their team or activists**. The team is ten to fifteen people, who will generally volunteer and help do something. There will be five to ten people like that even in the smallest community. A youth worker is always strongly affected when he or she moves, but the team stays where it is, or the people go to different countries. I helped organise the meeting with the youth council in Zaporizhzhia, recommended how it can be done interactively instead of an ordinary meeting in Zoom. Zoom is a pandemic tool while tools in time of war must be more interactive and efficient so that you can provisionally touch another person. Either work in groups or do something together or hold a training, with more interaction between the trainings. We gathered the tools that were not that common in Ukraine, like Genially. We developed the digitalisation training on the tools that could be of help. Genially was used as a basis because that tool was least known in Ukraine. We offered ten tools in the beginning, but then we got the feedback asking to have the focus on Genially. We focused on Genially, Bitmoji as less known ones. We did that for the Ukrainian youth workers who had moved to Poland. However, they also brought Polish youth workers. We mostly looked for participants among our acquaintances. As it was volunteering, there was no PR manager or person responsible for engagement. In general, more than a thousand people were trained, but there were few youth workers. One training was

planned, but we held it three times. There were ten to twelve tools for the first time. Then we focused on Genially, which replaced lots of other tools. The platform keeps developing. There are frequent updates and more and more functions.

— ON OWN VISION

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

There was **not enough time for quality assessment** as the effect of such groups does not come fast; it might take half a year. Feedback should be improved. It was easy to get it in digital tool trainings, but quality feedback is difficult to get from groups at psychological adaptation events. I am still looking for a method to collect feedback in such situation. I still have not found one...

In the end, if you were to give the key and fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

To do no harm, to avoid condemnation, and **to help only those who do ask for help**, and to be attentive. The good cannot be forced. You cannot force anyone to accept the good, but people should not be restricted in their opportunity to receive the good. I often hear that people are ashamed to ask while volunteers say that rude visitors come. Some people are not ready to accept and open up, to attend group events. I often hear the youth workers say that some people do not attend groups although they really should. Nobody knows what other people need, and you cannot take decisions instead of them.

OLENA KRAVCHUK

"I was helped by the Council of Europe... the values of the Council of Europe, their materials... on how to work with young people and study their needs. So I asked the young people what they needed... I tried to consolidate them... Participation in our events was voluntary. There was never any discrimination. I introduced all the values of the Council of Europe."



PRACTICE OF YOUTH WORK IN TIME OF WAR – training programme of psychosocial support for the Ukrainian youth displaced to Poland, Warsaw, “Step to Success”, which was aimed at consolidating the Ukrainian youth displaced to Poland after the full-scale invasion on 24 February 2022, and at helping them adapt to and integrate into other country while retaining their own Ukrainian identity.

The programme was made of a series of trainings aimed at:

- forming important life and social skills;
- improving self-esteem;
- developing the ability to work in a team and introducing yourself;
- studying the world of feelings and emotions;
- developing creative thinking and art therapy.

“The Step of Success” lasted about two months (from the middle of June to the middle of August). We gathered twice a week, and the youth started to offer their own ideas. There were ten people in the beginning, but the number reached forty in two or three weeks.

We held the Polish language speaking club, the rag doll workshop, watched movies in Ukrainian and Polish, discussed them, played Mafia, and then created our own youth centre, called it Skovoroda and kept working.

KEY ADVICE: if you are a youth worker, you **must remain a youth worker** despite your condition, despite the country you are in; you must remain a youth worker and keep doing whatever you can. Set the goal and reach it!

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- “Compass”;
- materials on how to work with young people and study their needs;
- values of the Council of Europe;
- principle of voluntary participation;
- no discrimination.



OLENA KRAVCHUK

ON MOTIVATION

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

I had **my own resource, my own desire to help the people around**. If I worked with the youth, I wanted to help them. Human resources were important so the good thing was that I found a non-governmental organization, civil activists, both Polish and Ukrainian, who had joined their efforts. There were human resources and my desire to do something for the Ukrainians.

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

It was useful to participate in the training on trauma informed youth work as well as social cohesion and barrier-free environment. Our youth centre also participated in the Council of Europe Project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase I", where we were given "Compass"⁸⁵ and studied the **values of the Council of Europe**, their materials on how to work with young people and study their needs. So I asked the young people what they needed. I tried to consolidate them first, and then asked what they were interested in, and what they wanted. Participation in our events was voluntary. There was never any discrimination. I introduced all the values of the Council of Europe. I used the exercises from "Compass" in my work.

ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

The practice has the title: **training programme of psychosocial support for the Ukrainian youth displaced to Poland, Warsaw, "Step to Success"**. It was aimed at **consolidating the Ukrainian youth displaced to Poland after the full-scale invasion on 24 February 2022, and at helping them adapt to and integrate into other country while retaining their own Ukrainian identity**.

First, I moved to Warsaw and realised that I could not just sit around because lots of children/youth had moved to Poland (around 200 hundred thousand children and the youth in Warsaw alone). I realised that they must be consolidated so that they would not get lost, would get united and understand they were not alone and could speak Ukrainian, do something together.

How did it all start?

I was an animator in the beginning and took care of the kids while the Polish psychologists or activists worked with adults. There were lots of children and young people, they had to be kept busy all the time, and I did that as an animator. However, I wanted to do more for the children and the youth in Poland to unite and consolidate them so that they would start doing something instead of getting reserved. I have the special programme called "Step to Success", which has been developed for psychosocial support and adaptation of pupils, the youth at school who have problems.

I found the Polish non-governmental organisation called "Fundacja Inna Przestrzeń", which started helping the Ukrainians, including civil activists and non-governmental organisations such as Co-ordination Centre for the Ukrainians, in time of war. That non-governmental organisation gave me the premise and helped find the participants of the trainings I planned to hold for young people.

85. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. URL: <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>

What is the core and idea of the practice?

The programme was made of a **series of trainings** aimed at:

- forming important life and social skills;
- improving self-esteem;
- developing the ability to work in a team and introducing yourself;
- studying the world of feelings and emotions;
- developing creative thinking and art therapy.

Participation in the programme helped **develop the sense of team, support, mutual help, critical attitude to risk situations, and empathy**. The programme was aimed at forming the healthy lifestyle, preventing stress, strengthening the image of “Self” and integrating non-adapted young people. The programme provided for several aspects: to enable teenagers to talk about their worries, fears and concerns, in particular, the ones associated with the event they had experienced; to introduce ways of overcoming the difficulties that might result from crisis/emergency situations to the participants; to prompt restoration of systematic relations between teenagers and adults.

The youth was from different corners of Ukraine: Kyiv, Avdiivka, Kharkiv, east of Ukraine, Rivne and Lviv regions etc. All of them were at a loss, but then they got to know each other better, started working together, held energisers that consolidated us. After the training (I did not keep them busy for more than an hour and a half), they did not want to leave, exchanged their phone numbers and made the Telegram chat, where they still post something and keep communicating with each other. Some of the young people had a high level of psychological trauma, which indirectly influenced their psychosocial condition and decelerated their development. I saw that some of them had

traumas because their conduct was not very adequate. So their participation in the trainings was of use.

The “Step of Success” lasted about two months (from the middle of June to the middle of August). We gathered twice a week, they plunged into themselves gradually, so I got them out of that condition that way.

What happened after the training?

We held the trainings that helped them develop and feel the urge to do something. They opened up and suggested their own ideas.

In the beginning, I asked what the youth was most interested in, and it turned out to be the Polish language. There were Polish language programmes for adults for free, but there were none for children. Then we co-created the project **to study the Polish** language because they needed that. It was the speaking club where we studied both Ukrainian and Polish culture. The Poles came and told about their culture. There was also a creative workshop, tours around Warsaw and visits to museums. So they heard the Ukrainian and Polish languages, studied the culture, history, they had a dialogue between themselves and Polish activists. They studied Polish, talked, found a common language and got integrated.

The youth also wanted to create the **youth space or youth centre** to get together and do something. I already had an arrangement with the leaders of the Polish non-governmental organisation on free use of their premises. There was a kitchen with tea and coffee facilities.

We also had **workshops** where we made rag dolls and sent them as charms to our militaries, so we started to develop that way. Moreover, we **watched movies** in Ukrainian and Polish and discussed them. We also **played Mafia**.

There were ten people in the beginning, but the number reached forty in two or three weeks. Three of them were activists who could lead people, I taught them how to work. I introduced the co-ordinator of the non-governmental organisation to them so they could help each other and support ideas of the youth. They do a lot now, they have created “Skovoroda” Youth Centre with various events for Ukrainians and Poles. They get together, organise celebrations and communicate.

I have been in Ukraine since the middle of September and now work in the Donetsk Regional Children and Youth Centre, where I had worked before the full-scale invasion. It has been relocated from Kramatorsk to Vinnytsia, and we have set up our operations here. However, I post all the information on online events in our Telegram chat. We often communicate with the activists about their progress and necessary help.

— ON OWN VISION

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

I felt satisfied that I had the goal to consolidate and unite the youth, and I achieved the goal. I realised that **there was very powerful youth work in Ukraine.** The youth is so patriotic. I have never thought they are like that — they paint, sing Ukrainian songs and want to do something for the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Our youth is cool, our youth work is cool, so they must come from abroad and study our experience.

In the end, if you were to give the key or fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

If you are a youth worker you **must remain a youth worker** despite your condition, despite the country you are in.. **Keep doing whatever you can.** Set the goal and reach it! I engaged the youth, and they started setting and reaching their goals. We went through it all together with the youth, studied at each other’s example. I helped them with something, and they helped me back because we realised that I could not do it on my own, and they always lent me a helping hand.





ROMAN RASEVYCH

"I am grateful to the Council of Europe for participating in each training within the Project 'Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II' since March. I learnt a lot at the level of examination of documents and practices of youth work after 24 February because the youth work was never stopped."



PRACTICE OF YOUTH WORK IN TIME OF WAR – activity of the Children’s Sokil Movement.

It is development of **school activities** the main task of which is to create the **comfortable environment for a child** and conditions for his or her **self-development**. There must be a **bridge between school and out-of-school environment**.

The children (seven to fifteen persons) lead by the senior school pupil make a Sokil group of different ages. These groups are organised **at the children’s place of residence**. They work out, improve the living environment, organise trips, honour the soldiers, write books of memories and take care of the families who have lost someone at the war. **In fact, the children’s projects are a basis of work of the Children’s Sokil Movement**. The groups are permanent, but they are especially efficient in summer. No resources are allocated: they spend their money if needed or do everything on their own without money. There is mentorship. Children are given **management roles**. **Trust** is

a basis of our success. The faster we trust such roles to children, senior school pupils, the more confident they will be.

We have certain schools that show practical cases of activities of Children’s Sokil Movement.

KEY ADVICE: go to people. Be surrounded by people. Do not look down on people. Feel their pain and concerns. And **you will always find a common language**. Humans are humans. They will understand you, support you and follow you.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

Principles of the Council of Europe:

- voluntary choice;
- participation;
- possibility to impact upon decision-making.

ROMAN RASEVYCH

— ON MOTIVATION

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

Support by school, interest of the community. We must be **united**. We should understand the idea of Children's Sokil Movement.

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

I am grateful to the Council of Europe for participating in each training within the Project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II" since March, lots of meetings were held by our trainers. It was great, I learnt a lot at the level of examination of documents and practices of youth work after 24 February because the youth work was never stopped...

Kolb's Model is a wonderful thing.

Principles of the Council of Europe:

- voluntary choice;
- participation;
- possibility to impact upon decision-making.

— ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

I try to make **school activities** more relevant because this level is in the shadow in youth work. There are no forms and techniques of work with pupils, especially after lessons, in order to engage them into activities. The principal thing

is to create **the comfortable environment for a child** to feel good, to be busy doing something useful and to work with interest. The idea and core of **Children's Sokil Movement** have been around for a long time because this work was started in 1992. We have actually been working since the beginning of the Ukrainian independence until now, even after 24 February.

We work with certain school that show how the children are admitted to start this work. Their daily work and meetings, **activities** are also seen well. Moreover, it is especially relevant as the role of communities is growing. The school must keep an eye on children. There must be a **bridge between school and out-of-school environment**.

The children (seven to fifteen persons) led by the senior school pupil, who can take responsibility for them, form a Sokil group of different ages or, as it is sometimes called, a Sokil formation. Social organisations are also made of people of different ages. So different age is a natural thing, and a child who gets out of home is surrounded by people of different age. The same age is better for the educational rather than development purpose.

There is a principle of turnover, and group leaders are elected for half a year.

The groups are organised **at the children's place of residence**. They work out, improve the living environment, organise trips, honour the soldiers, write books of memories and take care of the families who have lost someone at the war. **In fact, the children's projects are a basis of work of the Children's Sokil Movement.**

Internally displaced children also join these groups because they go to school and join Sokil formations at the place of their residence. There is no division.

The groups are permanent, but they are especially valuable in summer.

Moreover, there is a Sokil Council made of leaders of Sokil groups, who meet in schools from time to time. The Sokil Council is co-ordinated by the stanitsa leader, who is also a senior school pupil.

Children's Sokil Movement is the methodology, science and practice.

Children's Sokil Movement has its own attributes, symbols, flags and banners: everything is there so that there would be its own rhythm and interest.

No resources are allocated: they spend their money if needed or do everything on their own without money, but they manage. For instance, they have football matches. It would be great if the community helped. On the other hand, it could be good because everything ends when resources are exhausted, but there are initiatives in our case.

There are pedagogical leaders; school is a pedagogical centre, a teacher managers processes and has a mentoring, leading role to consult and moderate.

The school is supposed not only to teach, but also pay a lot of attention to upbringing. So Children's Sokil Movement is the technology with good prospects.

Teachers, local deputies, businesspersons and parents are mentors in such groups. They are supported by school and community. The system runs in a circuit. The children are always supervised. The processes go on with support of the school and children themselves.

Children are given **management roles**, they gain **life experience**. They have a unique

opportunity to acquire these skills in school by means of pedagogics of relations so that the process would be dynamic and expand, they would have an opportunity to be heard, to be led and to lead, to be free and unlock their creative potential to the full.

Children feel comfortable in such environment, experiment and try different experiences and practices. The qualities a child and the society need are formed out of such relations.

Trust is a basis of our success. The faster we trust such roles to children, senior school pupils, the more confident they will be.

Everything is based on self-initiatives, and the formalisation process is voluntary. The school and the principal must have the urge to participate. They must be interested.

This work is of great relevance because children do not live their life in telephones, but they join their efforts at the place of their residence under the guidance of the senior school pupil. The groups live, act and create, which is especially good during remote learning.

However, the upbringing role must not be fully assigned to the leader; there must be school clubs, a music school, a modelling club (that could be organised by businessperson), a Plast club. The activity must be versatile. It is social responsibility.

It would be great to create the School of Sokil Leaders to prepare them for future work. Mentors (they are mostly school teachers, but they can also be local deputies, businesspersons and parents) must also be trained. Everything cannot be done spontaneously and in chaos.

All these things can be done with great interest and low costs.

— ON OWN VISION

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

The point is that there is already dynamics. **Each new day gives a new idea for life**, a unique idea. Lots of things are put down on paper, lots of things have been improved and adjusted. In general, Children's Sokil Movement is already there, it has been registered, it already exists in Ukraine. Another question is to which extent it has been introduced in communities... There must be a desire to engage children into such activities. You must feel the urge to do that. There must be creativity and initiatives. **There must be maximum work** and dedication to children.

In the end, if you were to give the key or fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

Go to people. Be surrounded by people. Do not look down on people. Feel their pain and concerns. And **you will always find a common language.** Humans are humans. They will understand you, support you and follow you.

TETIANA STOROZHKO

Youth Agency for the Advocacy of Roma
Culture "ARCA"

"All the work by our organisation results from many years of training within different programmes and activities of the Council of Europe. All the educational activity is closely related to the materials and manuals of the Council of Europe. Our work is based on the non-formal education approaches, youth work principles, not only for young people, but also together with them as partners on equal terms."



The main **purpose of creation and development of the Roma media platform** was to increase presence of the Roma theme in the media environment and to change the perception of the Roma community in Ukraine and abroad. The pilot version of the platform was created in 2019. The next development stage was a media laboratory for the young people interested in media who developed their content creation competencies as journalists, bloggers and wanted to work at the platform more professionally.

The second practice is **a retreat for (pro-)Roma female activists and creation of the artistic exhibition as well as documentary theatre performance based on the participants' experiences**. We worked with the psychologist and art therapist, shared our personal stories, video recorded stories of the youth, and the authors of the stories turned into actors and told their own stories and their colleagues' stories. We have made the documentary and theatre performed on their basis and will show them

to the public. We are now focused on advocacy and lobbying of interests and needs of the Roma youth, in particular, via art.

KEY ADVICE: as a youth worker and representative of the civil society, I guess that we must plan and work for **recovery of Ukraine** now: fight the effects of the war, look for partners and opportunities, create coalitions and work in new directions.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

All the work by our organisation results from many years of training within different programmes and activities of the Council of Europe. It is **associated with the materials and manuals of the Council of Europe**. Our work is based on the **non-formal education approaches, youth participation**, work not only for young people, but also together with them as partners on equal terms.



TETIANA STOROZHKO

Youth Agency for the Advocacy of Roma Culture "ARCA"

ON MOTIVATION

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

We have the experience of **many years of low-level work** with the Roma families and communities. We have managed to create the **network of partners** in Ukraine and abroad. It helps us develop projects and achieve goals. Moreover, we have always been supported by international partners and organisations, so we have managed to master successful practices and also go outside our own information bubble and focus on inter-section approaches.

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

All the work by our organisation results from many years of training within different programmes and activities, it is influence of trainings and frameworks of the Council of Europe. There have been trainings on the Roma themes only and events dedicated to work with historical memory or non-formal human rights education. My colleagues and I have completed "Compass" training⁸⁶ by the Council of Europe. Therefore, **all our work is closely related to the materials and manuals of the Council of Europe**. Our work is based on the **non-formal education approaches, youth participation**, work not only for young people, but also together with them as partners on equal terms. The Roma communities are co-creators of our practices.

ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

The main purpose of creation and development of the **Roma media platform** was to increase presence of the Roma theme in the media environment and to change the perception of the Roma community in Ukraine and abroad. The pilot version of the platform was created in 2019. The next development stage was a media laboratory in 2021 with the support of the European Youth Foundation. The media laboratory was created for the young people interested in media who developed their content creation competencies as journalists, bloggers and wanted to work at the platform more professionally. After the full-scale invasion, the need for sources of reliable information has grown. Moreover, with account of the propaganda and numerous manipulations of information by Russia, it is especially important to check the facts and share accurate information, to work with professional journalists and change the attitude to Ukraine, form new narratives as active citizens. There are six key themes on our platform, and they are successfully published every week because the audience needs additional information. The platform was launched on a regular basis with the full team in January 2022. In addition to the above-mentioned, it is especially important to create jobs and opportunities of professional development within the platform even in time of war for the young specialists who have lost their home and stable income due to the Russian aggression.

The second practice is a **retreat for (pro-)Roma female activists and creation of socially important cultural products based on the participants' experiences — the artistic exhibition as well as documentary theatre performance**. The initial purpose was to support and recover the youth sector, in the first place, its Roma part. We shifted the focus in the process to

86. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. URL: <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>

87. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation>



develop a better understanding of how young activists experienced different traumas of the war and which support they needed. We worked with psychologists and art therapists, shared our personal stories. We planned together how to form new mutual support networks inside the civil society as it turned out during the work that live communication with the people who had similar experience and could listen and understand was especially valuable. We video recorded the stories of the female participants, who became actresses in the end and took part in creation of the theatre performance. To

our mind, sharing of such personal stories is the best way to tell about today's reality of the Ukrainians, cause empathy and support in the European society. In October, we had a weekly theatre workshop on creation of the theatre performance. Its first official presentation was conducted in December at the Roma Civil Society Forum in Berlin. We are now focused on advocacy and lobbying of interests and needs of the Roma youth, their information presence in the public space, in particular, via art.

ON OWN VISION

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

The media platform is quite a successful initiative, which is developing fast. We achieve our goals. We satisfy the needs of our audience, **get out of our own information bubble**. Our current task is to expand the partnership network in Ukraine and abroad, to cover a wider range of themes in order to move on and improve our work. We support young specialists so that they can feel like a part of the large community and keep developing as professionals.

Has the purpose of the initiative of creation of the Ukrainian youth support platforms been achieved? It definitely has as it is extremely important to have the **space to share our own experience and tell about our difficulties and traumas**. A small retreat seminar was driver

of several unique and large-scale initiatives: an artistic exhibition, a documentary theatre performance and, ultimately, the Roma Civil Society Forum. It is important to see the reality of young people in Ukraine, to maintain the dialogue between Ukraine and Europe, and to understand each other.

In the end, if you were to give the key or fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

In general, it is difficult to work and plan something for months or years in such conditions. As a youth worker and representative of the civil society, I guess that we must develop strategies and plans for **recovery of Ukraine**. We must already consider the reconstruction and fight the effects of the war, find partners, work in new areas and look for opportunities.





YANA SALAKHOVA

Non-Governmental Organisation
"Theatre for Change"

"I love Hart's ladder of participation. We have different participants who may join the process. Another tool is the Living Library used by the Council of Europe. Communication with different people in a safe environment. Our activity is also a safe space for communication in words, images and bodies. More complex communication."



PRACTICE OF YOUTH WORK IN TIME OF WAR – dialogue practices of co-creation via the methodology of Theatre of the Oppressed online and offline.

We created the experience via co-creation and dialogue about relevant personal and social issues of the community in the format of a **forum theatre**; involved the participants into co-creation and dialogue in the safe theatre environment to find the basis in time of war and to recover social connections, analyse problems of the local community via the forum theatre.

The Theatre of the Oppressed is a combination of different games with your body, voice and all sensory organs to study your own experience. While we play, **we talk about serious issues**. Each game has its own theme, and when the participants play they resonate separately and as a group. The very important thing is that it is a collective process in the same space, which is performed together. The actual issues the group wants to discuss are studied this way. Then on the topic chosen by the group, we develop a forum-play that formulates a

problem and a question for discussion with the local community.

One of the major challenges is that everyone has their own experience of war. You can easily provoke new conflicts, feel isolated and lonely. We try to create the **safe environment, trust to each other and acceptance of the experience**, to create new relations between participants, and to develop social capital in the community.

KEY ADVICE: always try to find **creative ways to build safe space to be with other people**, to communicate with them, and to support each other. People need people in hard times. It is the **resource for yourself** first, and then we can invest resources into others.

Resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe that were of use:

- Hart's ladder of participation⁸⁸;
- the Living Library⁸⁹.



88. Hart's ladder of participation. URL: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/on-the-ladder>

89. Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover!: The Living Library Organiser's Guide. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/16807023dd>

YANA SALAKHOVA

Non-Governmental Organisation
"Theatre for Change"

— ON MOTIVATION

To your mind, which key elements and/or resources have enabled you to work with young people during such hard times?

Education, literacy, a habit to get information from the original source.

One of the challenges is that we are a small team that keeps travelling. We try to find **local members in the communities** so that they could stay and conduct the long-term activity rather than a single event. In order to build trust with the community, we pay attention to local requests in our general approach to such activity at the local level. Some non-governmental organisations and communities come to us with a problem they wish to resolve. They already have social capital in their community, so it is local property. It results in generation of new ideas, new initiatives, new youth groups, local practices, which remain in the communities, and in establishment of new connections.

Within the frame of the project, we financially support the activities of practitioners who receive requests from local initiatives.

How did the resources, tools and materials of the Council of Europe, especially owing to your participation in its projects, enable you to work with young people in time of war?

I love Hart's **ladder of participation**⁹⁰. We have different participants who may join the process. Another tool is the **Living Library**⁹¹ used by the Council of Europe. Communication with

different people in a **safe environment**. Our activity is also a safe space for communication in words, images and bodies. More complex communication, which is very important to understand and transform people. I am changing this in my life. It is something new, I rely upon the person's story, and my perception changes. Thanks to this, a person can feel that changes in life are possible. It could happen at workshops, games, or forum theatre. The viewers also share their ideas. This method helps people feel empathy, and the stronger urge to establish connections appears.

— ON EXPERIENCE

Could you please tell us about your practice or experience of youth work?

We held **dialogue practices of co-creation** via the technique of the **Theatre of the Oppressed** online and offline. We created the experience via creativity and dialogue about relevant personal and social issues of the community as a **forum theatre**. We engaged the participants into co-creation and dialogue in the safe theatre space to find the basis in time of war and recover social connections, to analyse problems of the local community via the forum theatre.

A combination of different games with your body, voice and all sensory organs to study own experience. Everyone is a master of their own life in the Theatre of the Oppressed. While we play, **we talk about serious issues**. Each game has its own theme, and when the participants play they resonate separately and as a group. The very important thing is that it is a collective process in the same space, which is performed together. The important issues the group wants to discuss are studied this way. Then we develop the forum performance, which ends at the height of the conflict, and ask the

90. Hart's ladder of participation. URL: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/on-the-ladder>

91. Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover!: The Living Library Organiser's Guide. <https://rm.coe.int/16807023dd>

local community how it can be changed. The illustration of a conflict, a situation of injustice, invites the audience to intervene and change the course of events based on their own ideas and strategies that have worked in their lives. One of the major challenges is that everyone has their own experience of war: some go abroad, some stay where they are, even in occupation. The important thing is not to compare because it can cause more pain and new conflicts, feel isolated and lonely. So the thing we try to do is games in order to create the safe environment, trust to each other and acceptance of experience shared by everyone. Then the people can create new relations between participants, develop the social capital in their community.

The book "Games for Actors and Non-Actors" by Augusto Boal contains a description of the methodology of the Theater of the Oppressed. I have been working with the discriminated groups and different context since 2014. So there is an experience of how a group responds to each game, and you can find out which game to apply in a new situation. Every time I plan a game, I turn to something else. Firstly, the games are necessary to study yourself (your body, your feelings, which is an additional value of attention to your stressed/traumatised body). It is also an opportunity to express yourself as there are not so many places where it can be done. Secondly, games are necessary to interact with other people, their positions and experience. It is the process of co-creation and allocation of rules in the group together. It is important to look for each other.

— ON OWN VISION

After the activities you have performed, how would you assess your youth work that has already been done? What goals were reached, what issues were not forecast, but were resolved in the end?

The results seem good for now. Some people are not ready to share. Some processes are also difficult to record. One of the indicators of a workshop is changes in the person's emotions, from closed to open ones. So that a person will feel more open, talk more, and then start to change a way of interaction. It is a hard **emotional trip**. We are now holding a workshop in pairs. Something could be a trigger; then one keeps facilitating while the other one resolves the trigger situation.

Another reflection-based indicator is how the people manage **to feel their body**. A person controls his or her body via acting exercises better, feels more creative and free.

One more indicator is when people share their **experience** and personal stories.

There is **also self-esteem and esteem of other people**. People start to feel the value of self-expression by sharing their experience without generalisation. Interaction with other people is valuable; it is a collective process of designing something together.

Another indicator is **continued communication** after the event, new ideas for new events, and active discussion with the audience. It is important not only to talk, but also to act for the audience.

In the end, if you were to give the key or fundamental advice to other youth organisations or youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad, what would you recommend in the context of the youth work in time of war?

Always try to find **creative ways to build safe space to be with other people**, to communicate with them, and to support each other. People need people in hard times. Theatre, a tea

time, something that creates a space for rest, communication and being together, developing relations and telling each other stories. Any way will be great. It is great support. In such way people will feel **support**, feel the power to do something and, which is important, feel that they are accepted by the others. It is the **resource for yourself** first, and then we can invest resources into others.



THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE RESOURCES MENTIONED IN STORIES OF YOUTH WORK EXPERIENCE

Standards

- Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Youth Work. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/cmrec-2017-4-and-explanatory-memorandum-youth-work-web/16808ff0d1>
- Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Young People's Access to Rights URL: <https://rm.coe.int/1680702b6e>
- Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the Access of Youth from Disadvantaged Areas to Social Rights. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/168066671e>
- Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Protecting the Rights of Migrant, Refugee and Asylum-seeking Women and Girls. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/prems-092222-gbr-2573-recommandation-cm-rec-2022-17-a5-bat-web-1-/1680a6ef9a>
- Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Supporting Young Refugees in Transition to Adulthood. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/recommendation-cm-2019-4-supporting-young-refugees-transition-adulthoo/168098e814>

Educational resources and learning opportunities

- Bookmarks: a Manual for Combating Hate Speech Online through Human Rights Education. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/bookmarksen2020-web2/16809e5789>
- Card game of the Council of Europe "Dignityland". URL: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/enter/enter-dignityland-1>
- Compasito: Manual on Human Rights Education for Children. URL: <http://eycb.coe.int/compasito/>
- Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. URL: <https://coe.int/en/web/compass>
- Council of Europe Quality Label for Youth Centres. Good practices in Youth Centres. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/youthcentre-en-good-practices-165x235-web/16809ec195>
- Council of Europe Quality Label for Youth Centres. Quality management in Youth Centres. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/youthcentre-en-quality-management-165x235-web/16809ec196>
- Council of Europe Quality Label for Youth Centres. Role, Value and Impact of Youth Centres. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/youthcentre-en-role-value-impact-165x235-web/16809ec197>
- Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio: a Tool for the Assessment and Development of Youth Work Competence. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/1680699d85>

- Curriculum for Experts of the Council of Europe Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine”, draft (2021). URL: <https://rm.coe.int/curriculum-draft-youth-for-democracy-in-ukraine/1680a40ea6> (Ukrainian)
- Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover! The Living Library Organiser's Guide. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/16807023dd>
- European Youth Foundation. URL: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation>
- Guide on the Educational Course of Trauma Informed Youth Work. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/eng-trauma-informed-youth-work-yfdua-digital/1680aa9073>
- Have Your Say!: Manual on the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/16807023e0>
- Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine”. Council of Europe Office in Ukraine. URL: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/youth-for-democracy-in-ukraine>
- Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/168071b4d6>
- Self-assessment Tool for Youth Policy. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/self-assessment-tool-for-youth-policy-english/16808d76c5>
- Training Kits (T-Kits) for Training and Facilitating Learning with Groups of Young People. URL: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kits>

The Council of Europe Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II” has collected and described the experience and practices of youth work **in the context of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine** in the period after 24 February 2022.

The collection includes twenty stories of experience and reflection, both team projects, initiatives of youth centres and non-governmental organisations etc., and individual experience directed at social, cultural, educational, environmental transformations implemented by, with and for young people.

The Council of Europe Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II” together with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine has created the **collection of experience and practice of youth work, based on the approaches and standards of the Council of Europe**, in time of war for the purposes of recording, training and inspiration of youth workers in Ukraine and other member states of the Council of Europe

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The Council of Europe is a leading organisation that defends human rights on the continent. It has 46 member states, including all the member states of the European Union. All the member states of the Council of Europe have joined the European Convention on Human Rights, the treaty aimed at protecting human rights, democracy and rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights supervises implementation of the Convention in the member states.

