

WHAT CAN YOUTH WORK DO FOR ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS?

Impact and lessons learned from
the ENTER! project on access to
social rights for young people from
disadvantaged neighbourhoods
(2009-2015)

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*Impact and lessons learned from the Enter! project on access
to social rights for young people from disadvantaged
neighbourhoods (2009-2015)*

written by

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What can youth work do for access to social rights?

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> PREFACE

The Youth Department of the Council of Europe has introduced the *Enter!* project to support youth work and youth policy responses to violence, exclusion and discrimination affecting young people in Europe, notably in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. For the Council of Europe, social cohesion is firmly based on human rights (as codified in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Revised European Social Charter), as well as an acceptance of shared responsibility for the welfare of all members of society, especially those who are at risk of poverty or exclusion. For those working at the front lines of supporting young people to access their social human rights, experiencing first-hand the disadvantage of the young people living in the neighbourhoods is both a challenge and an empowering experience. Through *Enter!*, the participants-youth workers engaged on projects with public authorities, local politics and national governments to develop understanding and overcome the disadvantages that young people face in access to their social rights. This required admirable efforts, persistence and belief in the values that promote equality and dignity for all young people.

The study, carried out by Yael Ohana, considers perspectives of both youth work and youth policy, revealing a wide variety of achievements and impacts that are potentially of a more lasting nature. The interaction between youth work and youth policy is a key methodological principle of the *Enter!* project and strengthens the sustainable impact on the quality of life and life chances of young people experiencing exclusion, discrimination and violence. This is the approach that the *Enter!* Recommendation [CMRec (2015)3] on the Access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods recommends that member states adopt and develop.

This study is an example of the important role that youth work has in providing the support, engaging, motivating, challenging and changing the reality so that the young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods can truly have a chance to access their social rights. It is a way to recognise that many young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods are motivated to contribute to the improvement of their own situations and those of their communities, and to provide the means, support, opportunity and spaces to do so.

The answer to the question *What can youth work do for access to social rights?* is certainly *A lot, sometimes, but not everything!*. Two recent recommendations of the Committee of Ministers to member states – the Recommendation on Young People’s Access to Rights and the Recommendation on Youth Work – support the role of youth work and its quality and, in many respects, concur with the findings and proposals of this study about the mission of youth policies in enabling more young people to effectively access their rights.



Antje Rothemund
Head of the Youth Department

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- > John Muir and Kevin O’Kelly, for consultations and valuable contributions to the content of this publication;
- > The members of the Reference and Support group of the Enter! project;
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We would also like to acknowledge the work of Yael Ohana, author of this publication, who over more than 2 years has dedicated her efforts to put together a variety of data and documentation for this publication.

We have made all possible efforts to trace references of texts and activities to their authors and give them the necessary credits. We apologise for any omissions and will be pleased to correct them in the next edition.

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INTRODUCTION

The Council of Europe's youth sector introduced the *Enter!* project¹ in 2009. *Enter!* aims at developing youth policy and youth work responses to exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people, particularly in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods. *Enter!* was initiated by the governmental and non-governmental partners of the youth sector of the Council of Europe² in response to growing concern around the social inclusion of young people and broader questions of social cohesion on the European continent since the onset of the economic crisis, which brought with it worrying growth in youth unemployment and growing acceptance for a populist rhetoric of intolerance towards people who are 'different'. For many young people, especially those living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods, the crisis meant that bad times only got worse. A new approach to supporting those young people most hindered in their access to social human rights, in line with the provisions of the Council of Europe's key agreements on human rights and social cohesion³ and its partners' youth rights agendas⁴, was sought.

The youth policy of the Council of Europe aims at '... providing young people, i.e. girls and boys, young women and men, with equal opportunities and experience which enable them to develop knowledge, skills and competencies to play a full part in all aspects of society'.⁵ In this understanding, youth policies must also consider and approach young people and their issues not only as 'problems to be solved – the so-called fire-brigade approach – but holistically across policy domains and through clear objectives that can be assessed.' In so doing, youth policy should respect the role and 'agency of young people while recognising the specific challenges and obstacles they face in according to their position and possibilities.'⁶

The *Enter!* project was developed specifically with the aim of seeking alternative ways of thinking and practicing youth policy and youth work to promote access to social rights, as a prerequisite for social inclusion. Starting by prioritising the active involvement of the young people most affected themselves, it relied on innovative youth work interventions and youth organisations to leverage youth policies at the local and national levels to achieve sustainable impact on the quality of life and well-being of young people experiencing exclusion, discrimination and violence in a variety of localities and regions around Europe.

1 The *Enter!* project entered its 3rd phase in 2016. More information on the activities under this phase is available at: <http://www.coe.int/enter>

2 www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Coe_youth/co_management_en.asp

3 www.coe.int/T/DGHL/Monitoring/SocialCharter/

4 www.youthforum.org/claims/for-youth-rights/

5 Council of Europe, 2008, [Committee of Ministers Resolution CM/Res\(2008\)23 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe](#)

6 Council of Europe, 2003, [Guidelines for the implementation of the international reviews of national youth policies](#)

Organised in two phases (from 2009-2012 and 2013-2015), *Enter!* had the following objectives:

- > To address situations of conflict and exclusion of young people living in multicultural environments through youth work and non-formal education;
- > To develop the competences of youth workers to initiate, support and evaluate projects for and with young people promoting access to social rights;
- > To develop conceptual, educational and practical means of translating access to social rights for young people into the realities of youth work and policy-making;
- > To advocate for the access of young people to social rights, particularly by developing partnerships between civil society actors, young people and policy-makers, at local, national and European levels;
- > To address situations of exclusion, conflict and violence affecting young people using innovative youth work interventions initiated through partnerships between youth work, youth policy and local authorities;
- > To develop translate concepts of intercultural dialogue into the practice of youth work.

These objectives explicitly respond to the Council of Europe's strategic priorities in the field of youth.

A key expected result of this programme, and to which *Enter!* responds, is that stakeholders have been assisted to take actions to foster young people's access to their rights and young people's autonomy. The following programme orientations have been identified by the Joint Council on Youth, the co-managed decision making body that creates the youth programme of the Council of Europe:

- > youth people's transition to autonomy through a rights based approach;
- > young people's access to social rights and the implementation and follow up of the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights (the so called *Enter!* recommendation);
- > increasing knowledge and capacity to combat intersectional multiple and other forms of discrimination;
- > acquisition of competences through non-formal learning and its recognition.

Enter! combines different types of youth work and youth policy activities, while seeking to create inter-disciplinary links and partnerships between the two. On the one hand, the core of the *Enter!* project was a training intervention to support youth workers to develop innovative and sustainable youth work projects around access to social human rights. On the other hand, *Enter!* engaged the opportunities for policy dialogue offered by key institutions of the Council of Europe, such as the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities⁷, the Parliamentary Assembly⁸ and the

7 www.coe.int/t/congress/default_en.asp

8 assembly.coe.int/nw/Home-EN.asp

Committee of Ministers⁹, to develop awareness for the implications of such youth work practice for improving local and national policies influencing the lives of young people experiencing disadvantage.

ENTER! PROJECT KEY DATA 2009-2015

- 48** – number of activities organised implemented under the Enter! project in 2009-2015.
- 1015** – number of people that participated in activities implemented under the Enter! project in 2009-2015
- 55** – number of local youth-led projects initiated by the participants of the two Enter! Long Term Training Courses for youth workers and youth leaders in 2009-2014
- 18,000** – approximate number of people reached by the projects of the Enter! LTTC participants in 2009-2014

Enter! was rolled out in two main phases, the evolution of the first having an impact on the thematic and methodological priorities for the second. In the first *Enter!* project (from 2009-2012), the focus was on the complex forms of exclusions and the accumulations of discrimination, exclusion and violence that are experienced by young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In *Enter!* 2 (2013-2015) attention moved from the geographical accumulation of disadvantage to the groups that experienced that disadvantage, which may or may not necessarily be defined by where they live.

The backbone of *Enter!* is the two long-term training courses (LTTC) on access to social rights rolled out by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe from 2009-2011 and from 2013-2014.¹⁰ A key policy initiative was the drafting and passing of a Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights, which can be used as a benchmark for quality policy development and implementation by policy and decision makers around Europe, and as a tool for advocacy by youth organisations and the broader youth work community.

More information about the phases and specific activities conducted in the *Enter!* project can be found at the end of this publication and online at <http://www.coe.int/en/web/enter>.

> SCOPE OF THIS PUBLICATION

This publication seeks to highlight the impact of and key lessons learned from the experience of *Enter!* for the promotion of access to social rights of young people and social cohesion in Europe more broadly.

9 www.coe.int/T/CM/aboutCM_en.asp

10 <http://www.coe.int/en/web/enter/long-term-training-courses-for-youth-workers>

For the purposes of this publication, we are using the definition of impact used within the *Enter!* Long-Term Training Courses for Youth Workers and Youth Leaders (LTTCS).

Impact was defined as:

” *‘Changes that took place as a result of the project (which promoted access to social rights and responded to situations of exclusion, discrimination and violence) and that provoked longer term effects on different levels such as the individual level, the level of the young people as a group, the organisation/institution, the community, partners and other stakeholders in the project, local and regional authorities’.*

In the following chapters, we seek to consider perspectives of both youth work and youth policy, and ways in which partnership between the two (a key methodological principle of the *Enter!* project) can leverage the potential of both to have sustainable impact on the quality of life and life chances of young people experiencing exclusion, discrimination and violence.

At the same time, we seek to document ideas and approaches that might set new standards in the way both the Council of Europe and its partners from the national through local levels seek to engage with issues of youth access to social rights. Hence, it is directed at Council of Europe political stakeholders, organisations interested in getting engaged on access to social rights, researchers interested in educational approaches to addressing the challenges of social inclusion of youth, national and local policy makers in relation to the access to social rights of young people, young activists working on these themes and not least the young people that have been reached in some way by *Enter!* activities.

The publication is organised according to the six main chapters covering a series of interrelated themes.

Chapter 1 presents a conceptual exploration of access to social rights, its relationship to social cohesion and its development as an approach relevant to young people, from the perspective of the institutional context of the Council of Europe and broader concepts addressing issues of social well-being.

Chapter 2 explores the situation of access to social rights of young people in Europe, as demonstrated on the one hand by the experience of the grass roots initiatives that were supported by the *Enter!* project, and on the other hand by the large body of research on the effects of the social situation on young people’s life experiences and chances.

Chapter 3 considers the specific characteristics of the *Enter!* project as an innovative approach to promoting access to social rights, going into some more depth on the two pillars through which it has had the most impact – the area of education and training and in the area of policy development.

Chapter 4 presents the impacts of the *Enter!* project.

Chapter 5 attempts to interpret from the previous chapters how you work can most effectively support and promote youth access to social rights.

Chapter 6 presents more information about the *Enter!* project. Useful links and further reading are included for those who would like to find out more about the theme of access to social rights in Europe, including but not exclusively from a youth perspective.

Throughout, readers will find short descriptions of projects, quotes and testimonies from youth workers and youth policy makers active on issues of access to social rights all over Europe about their experience of the *Enter!* project, its value for them and their work, and its impact.

The perspectives on the role and effectiveness of youth work in addressing challenges of youth access to social rights presented in the following chapters necessarily overlap to some extent, and the categorisation into different perspectives we have chosen to present is far from complete or comprehensive. Yet, these different perspectives help us to delve deeper into some of what is at stake for the development of youth work in general, for policies in relation to youth work and for the engagement of the Council of Europe, and possibly other institutions, on youth work development. In so doing, some questions for further enquiry shall necessarily arise, as shall some challenges and shortcomings in the current situation, and suggestions for potential ways forward on addressing this issues through youth work. While these cannot constitute a political agenda, this publication not being the place for such, it is hoped that they might inform discussions of the political agenda surrounding supporting access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the future, inside and outside the Council of Europe.

> A SHORT NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

The information presented in this publication was gathered over an extended period of time (approx. 20 months from 2013-2015) using a variety of different methods. Notably, the author attended several of the residential sessions of the two LTTCs and several other *Enter!* project meetings to interview or hold discussions with participants and institutional stakeholders of the LTTCs and the whole *Enter!* project. Remote interviews were also held with stakeholders that could not be met in person. A significant amount of information was collected by team members of the LTTCs during their online and face to face training and evaluation sessions with participants on request of the author, with the aim of accessing specific information and perspectives. Furthermore, the online learning platform through which the participants and team of the LTTCs worked in between residential phases was an invaluable source of information. The author also benefitted from a huge number of documents, several specifically evaluating the LTTCs and other activities within the *Enter!* process. A wide range of documentation, including other European level research on similar themes, was also consulted to substantiate or bring perspective to anecdotal information. The overall structure and proposed contents of

the publications were discussed and agreed upon between the author, the Youth Department staff members in charge of the project and the *Enter!* Reference and Support Group.

> A SHORT NOTE ON THE USE OF TERMS

Many of the terms used in this publication are the subject of contestation. What constitutes disadvantage? Who might be considered disadvantaged? What is multi-cultural? What is a neighbourhood? How do these terms combine to produce stigma, hierarchies and discrimination? All of these questions are valid, and can be answered in a variety of ways. The *Enter!* project went some way in exploring them and developing accurate and stigma-free definitions – sometimes with success, sometimes without. We were painfully aware of their limits when drafting this publication. Nevertheless, they are the terms at our disposal and we have sought to clarify any and all that might be difficult to understand, and we have sought to use them as descriptively and as non-judgementally as possible. For the sake of consistency, definitions of the terms most important to the project, have been drawn from the Glossary published in the Council of Ministers' Recommendation on Access to Social Rights of Young People in Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods (CM/Rec(2015)3)¹¹ or from materials and inputs presented in the two *Enter!* Long Term Training Courses and research and policy activities undertaken under the *Enter!* project.¹²

11 <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=2282497&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogged=F5D383>

12 Glossary published in the Council of Ministers' Recommendation on Access to Social Rights of Young People in Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods (CM/Rec(2015)3)

CHAPTER 1



WHAT ARE SOCIAL RIGHTS, ANYWAY?

In this chapter, we present an exploration of social rights and of access to social rights, their relationship to social cohesion and its development as an approach relevant to young people, from the perspective of the institutional context of the Council of Europe and broader concepts addressing issues of social well-being.

SOCIAL RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS!¹³

The Council of Europe promotes the values of peace, democracy, human rights and dignity. It works for stable democratic institutions that provide governments and citizens with a legal framework that they can trust. Its Europe-wide agenda places an emphasis on social rights and social cohesion based on solidarity and co-responsibility, especially for those who are at risk of exclusion. To achieve these common objectives, the member states of the Council of Europe have adopted a number of international agreements, including the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR),¹⁴ approved in 1950.

Social rights are part and parcel of human rights. Human rights are the rights that one has simply because one is human and enable a person to live with dignity. These are translated into protections and entitlements which are included in legal provisions and policies and which have to be upheld by the state and governments. In general, states are obliged to respect an individual's rights, protect individuals from rights abuses by others and to fulfil rights. Human rights are often categorised according to three categories – civil and political rights, social rights and collective rights. The second category – social rights – is all about the basic necessities for a dignified life and about living and working together. Social rights are based on ideas of equality and seek to guarantee that people have access to social and economic goods, services and opportunities. These should be adequate, affordable, accessible and adaptable to the people's needs. However, unlike the first category of civil and political rights, states may decide to implement these progressively, taking into account

13 This chapter has been developed in reference to the background paper prepared by Kevin O'Kelly for the Enter! Long Term Training Course May 2013, entitled 'Access to social rights for young people', unpublished manuscript.

14 www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf

differences in resources across countries. Nevertheless, the state is obliged to make efforts to fulfil social rights, and is obliged not to weaken a social right previously achieved.

Samara Jones, Youth Homelessness Network & FEANTSA, Belgium

It remains a challenge in some political and organisational contexts to change social work practice to truly reflect a social rights approach. The members of the Youth Homelessness Network are committed and enthusiastic, but often face difficulties in their own work environments to change established policies and practices. We are confident, however, that by creating this network in which young social workers, youth workers and others can come together to exchange ideas and build projects together, that they will find the means to make a very important impact on their own organisations. Furthermore, these are the future leaders of their fields, so by inspiring them early, empowering them with the means to advocate for social rights and teach their peers and the young people they support how to access their social rights, they will succeed in making real changes.

FEANTSA Youth has organised study sessions in co-operation with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe since 2014 on themes related to social rights and homelessness prevention.

The minimum core of social rights to be fulfilled by States has been defined in the European Social Charter¹⁵, adopted in 1961 and later revised in 1996.¹⁶ The European Social Charter is supposed to facilitate the economic and social progress of the member states of the Council of Europe.

As defined by the Revised European Social Charter, social rights are:

- > The right to work
- > The right to just, safe and healthy conditions of work
- > The right to a fair remuneration
- > The right to organise and bargain collectively
- > The protection of women in the workplace
- > The right to vocational guidance and training
- > The right to health protection and social security
- > The right to social and medical assistance and the provision of social protection services
- > A range of rights for people experiencing physical or mental disabilities

15 <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168007cde2>
16 <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168007cde2>

- Rights for families, mothers and children to access social, legal and economic protection
- Rights for migrant workers and their families
- These rights exist without discrimination on grounds of 'race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction of social origin'.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND SOCIAL RIGHTS

Sofia Martins, ECOS, Portugal, participant of LTTC *Enter!* 2013-2015

We need to enter into dialogue, learn, read, share, discuss debate, grow own critical opinions about the issues. If we just stick to our own vision of things, we'll continue doing the same thing again and again. And that's something we criticise all the time. Cooperation across dividing lines is really important. We need to understand that cooperation and collaboration don't mean to surrender to everything that others, who are more experienced in politics and the public sphere, and the rules of cooperation, put forward. We need to believe in ourselves, respect our needs, be true to ourselves, but also to act and to take responsibility. Nothing will change if we sit around waiting for others to act. If I think about Portugal, I often feel that we are too shy, that we don't express our opinions. We need to let go of all the embarrassment that's when change happens - it can change the world ... that's the mission of Enter!, anyway.

All social rights apply to young people. While young people's rights are not explicitly referred to in the ECHR, the rights that are set out apply just as much to young people and / or children as to adults. As a result, public authorities in States that have signed the ECHR must comply with it in respect of the rights of every person, irrespective of age. For its part, the Revised European Social Charter guarantees the rights of children and young people to '... *appropriate social, legal and economic protection*' in relation to education, health, social welfare, housing, employment, minority status and the quality of public service. Again, these rights are the general rights of any citizen.

Yet it is acknowledged in research and policy that young people have particular needs that require emphasis.¹⁷ This acknowledgement is reflected in the key human rights documents, among them the European Social Charter, which includes some explicit protections for children and young people, as follows:

17 It is widely accepted that young people can have more difficulty than their elders in accessing their social rights. For example, European Union statistics point to the fact that young people 15 – 24 are three to four times more likely to be unemployed than older people, with some countries in Europe experiencing youth unemployment rates of up to 65%. At the time of writing in 2015-2016, and according to the 2015 EU Youth Report, youth unemployment remained a serious concern in the EU28. The report published in September 2015 states that a total of 8.7 million young Europeans are not able to find work, 13.7 million are neither in employment nor education or training (NEETs) and close to 27 million are at risk of poverty or social exclusion. See 2015 EU Youth Report (http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/youth-report-2015_en.pdf) p. 9.

Work: Article 7 provides special rights for young workers 15 – 18, regulated through national law. Working hours are to be limited and wage and working conditions are to meet certain conditions.

Exploitation: Article 7 further protects children against all forms of exploitation (work, sexual, etc.). The ECSR has broadened the scope of this article to include ‘special protection against physical and moral dangers’ in view of human trafficking and the misuse of information technologies.

Conflict with the law: Article 17 requires that the age of criminal responsibility must not be too low, and that criminal procedures are suitable to the age of those in conflict with the law. Young people in conflict with the law should also have access to rehabilitation and social reintegration measures.

Education: Article 17 affirms the right of children and young people to education, including *free primary and secondary education*. Furthermore, equal access to education for children from vulnerable groups is required.¹⁸ Articles 9, 10, 15§1 and 17§1 of the ESC cover access of young people to *professional (vocational) training*, including through apprenticeships, and placing emphasis on the access of people with disabilities. Article 9 provides for *professional guidance* to be guaranteed within the educational system or labour market.

➤ YOUTH ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN THE AREA OF SOCIAL RIGHTS

Access to social rights is also determined by access to justice and a legal process for redress, both of which are possible for children and young people through the European Court of Human Rights and the European Committee on Social Rights, despite their limited access to justice.¹⁹

Notably, with the entry into force of Protocol No. 11 to the European Convention on Human Rights in November 1998, individuals, including young people, have direct access to the Court, whose jurisdiction has become mandatory. In terms of case law, recent research shows that the majority of cases brought to the ECHR by young people until 2013 addressed access to a professional career, conscientious objection, expulsion of second generation migrants, forced labour and access to university education. It further notes that the ECHR has begun to see new trends in abuses directed against certain vulnerable groups, such as women, Roma and LGBTQI.²⁰

Furthermore, both the collective complaints procedure and the monitoring and reporting system associated to the European Social Charter have opened up new avenues for access to justice in

18 Specifically, children from minorities, children seeking asylum, refugee children, children in hospital, children in care, pregnant teenagers, teenage mothers, and children in institutions for young offenders or serving custodial sentences. Special measures for Roma children must not involve the establishment of separate/segregated schooling facilities.

19 Antonina Bejan, 2013, Draft Paper: Young people’s access to rights: The case-law of the ECHR and the Social Charter, in David Hayward, 2013, [Young Persons and the case-law of the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter](#);

20 Antonina Bejan, 2013, Draft Paper: Young people’s access to rights: The case-law of the ECHR and the Social Charter, in David Hayward, 2013, [Young Persons and the case-law of the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter](#);

the social rights sphere. The European Committee on Social Rights makes annual conclusions on whether States Parties are in violation of the European Social Charter, including in relation to the protections accorded to young people. For example, in 2010 the Committee concluded that France had violated Article 13.1 because young persons under 25 were not entitled to adequate social assistance and that the Netherlands had violated Article 4.1 because the minimum wage paid to workers aged 18 to 22 was manifestly unfair.²¹ There are also examples of exceptions being made to the conditions under which States Parties may be considered in violation of the Charter, when the case relates to children. While the wording of the European Social Charter excludes irregular migrants from its scope of application, the Committee has concluded that *'States Parties are required, under Article 31.2 of the revised Charter, to provide adequate shelter to children unlawfully present in their territory for as long as they are in their jurisdiction'*.²²

Yet, many barriers remain for young people trying to access justice in relation to their human and social rights. The same research points some of these out, highlighting that the collective complaints procedure has not been accepted by many States Parties to the European Social Charter and that to be able to use the procedures of both the ECHR and the ESC, young people need to know their rights in general, and their social rights specifically.

SOCIAL RIGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE: A POLITICAL DEBATE

There is a strong political dimension to the question of young people's access to social rights, because it touches upon fundamental questions of how societies can be organised fairly and in respect of human dignity.

Recent years have seen growing interest and legitimacy for the so-called 'rights-based approach', especially in the area of development. For example, in 2001 Mary Robinson, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, defined the rights based approach as *'... a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights'*.²³ In the Council of Europe, the rights based approach can be discerned in the social rights agenda that has emerged with the revision of the European Social Charter and attempts to promote the collective complaints mechanism to more member states.

Whether we consider the discourse of social cohesion, which focuses on social fairness, justice,

21 Source: [Conclusion 2010, France](https://hudoc.esc.coe.int/esc2008/document.asp?item=1); hudoc.esc.coe.int/esc2008/document.asp?item=0 and [Conclusion 2010, the Netherlands](https://hudoc.esc.coe.int/esc2008/document.asp?item=0); hudoc.esc.coe.int/esc2008/document.asp?item=0

22 [Children International v. the Netherlands](https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/complaints/CC47Merits_en.pdf); https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/complaints/CC47Merits_en.pdf

23 Source: Celestine Nyamu-Musembi and Andrea Cornwall, 2004 What is the "rights-based approach" all about? Perspectives from international development agencies, IDS Working Paper 234, quoted in [A European Youth Forum definition of rights-based approach](#), approved by the board in August 2014.

equality of opportunity and solidarity between European countries, rather than the equality of outcomes, or later attempts to promote notions of well-being, in which subjective experiences and not only objective situations are both considered in evaluations of the social situation, the underlying proposition is that inalienable human rights are the basis for human equality, which in turn places the onus on the State and responsible actors of the public sphere to work towards their respect, including through social policy and programmes.

”... *The rights-based approach starts from the philosophical position that all people are entitled to a certain standard in terms of physical, mental and social well-being. It takes the side of people who suffer injustice by acknowledging their equal worth and dignity; it removes the charity dimension of protecting and promoting their rights by emphasising them. It recognises people not as beneficiaries, but as active rights-holders and establishes corresponding duties for states and other actors against whom claims can be held ... As a concept, the rights-based approach ensures the meaningful and systematic inclusion and empowerment of the most vulnerable*”.²⁴

In the youth sector in Europe, the question of youth rights has been on the agenda since the late 1980s, but attempts to enshrine youth rights in legal documents did not succeed. It has again come to the fore as a result of the efforts of the European Youth Forum to raise awareness for the situation and needs of young people that differ from those of children and adults.²⁵ The European Youth Forum formulated its commitment to a youth rights agenda, as follows:

”... *The European Youth Forum adopts a rights-based approach to youth policy that integrates the norms, standards and principles of the international human rights system into the development, implementation and evaluation of youth policy. A rights-based approach means that we:*

- » *Empower young people to claim, exercise and defend their rights and fulfil their responsibilities through their active participation in society;*
- » *Encourage mutually accountable partnerships between young people and duty bearers responsible for validating youth rights;*
- » *Actively work against the discrimination of young people on age or any other grounds, and towards ensuring the full inclusion of youth within society.*²⁶

Interest in and resonance of this youth rights agenda has been amplified by the economic cri-

24 European Youth Forum, 2012, Policy Paper on Youth Rights, Adopted By the European Youth Forum General Assembly, Maribor, Slovenia, 22-25 November 2012.

25 See the ‘For Youth Rights’ claims of the European Youth Forum and European Youth Forum, 2012, Policy Paper on Youth Rights, Adopted by the European Youth Forum General Assembly, Maribor, Slovenia, 22-25 November 2012.

26 European Youth Forum, 2014, A European Youth Forum definition of rights-based approach. Approved by the European Youth Forum Board in August 2014.

sis experienced in Europe since 2008, with two important milestones in the European debate and legal framework being reached since then: the adoption of Recommendation 1978 (2011) “Towards a Framework Convention on the Rights of Young People”²⁷ by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the adoption of Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 “On the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights” by the Committee of Ministers.²⁸ At the time of writing, a Recommendation on access to rights was in the process of being drafted in view of adoption by the Committee of Ministers.

Yet, for many actors of the public sphere, including many national and local authorities responsible for social policy and youth, the idea of youth rights is intimidating, especially when considering the emphasis it places on the distinction between rights-holders and duty-bearers, and the accountability that entails for delivering equality of outcomes. This has caused discussions around youth rights and access to social rights of young people to be fraught with controversy. Opponents in the debate have taken a variety of positions ranging from promoting the idea that youth rights are specific and must be enshrined separately from existing human and social rights commitments, through advocating existing social rights be respected more equally within specific countries and across Europe as they apply to young people who experience disadvantages and obstacles to life in human dignity, to relativizing the responsibility of public authorities to what can realistically be done under the conditions of economic crisis and austerity.

Francesca Rinaldi of Giovanisi, Tuscany Regional Government, Italy, participant of the national seminar on access to social rights, organised in November 2013 in Tuscany by Regione Toscana and Accademia Europea di Firenze with the support of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe

Giovanisi is a project to support young people achieving autonomy. Within the project, a package of opportunities has been designed and financed by national, regional and European funds. The project and its actions focus on six macro-areas (Internships, Housing, Civil service, Entrepreneurship, Employment, Education and Training). One highlight event of the project was an international seminar entitled ‘From Regional and local youth policies opportunities for young people to access to social rights for all young people’, organised in cooperation with Accademia Europea di Firenze. The seminar created a strong network of local authorities and associations at regional and national level. The members of the network are still working together. The collaboration helps them to identify best practices for improving access to social rights and to deepen exchange and learning on issues such as participation, inclusion and social cohesion. This helps stakeholders to find more integrated and cross-sectoral approaches for supporting young people in their transition towards autonomy.

27 Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (2011), [Recommendation 1978 \(2011\), Towards a European framework convention on youth rights](#).

28 Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, 2015, [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2015\)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights](#).; Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 January 2015 at the 1217th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies.

 **CONCLUSION**

The unfortunate consequence of the acrimony that has accompanied the debate has been a deflection of attention from the very real, complex and challenging life situations of young people that prompted the agenda to emerge in the first place. Whatever position on the validity of the youth rights agenda one takes, those situations clearly require more sensitive, holistic and sensible responses from youth policy and from youth work practice than till now have been common.

And whatever the politics of the agenda, it is the real life situations of young people that determine which social rights from among those enshrined in legal documents or demanded by advocates are most important for them. The economic crisis in Europe beginning in 2008 has shown just how vulnerable young people can be to economic fluctuations. Social exclusion, segregation, 'scapegoating' of minority groups, violence, discrimination, the ongoing erosion of social safety nets and the axing of youth work provision as a 'non-essential' service in many countries around Europe have all contributed to growing precariousness, especially for young people already experiencing some form of disadvantage or for those living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. These find themselves ever less able to break the vicious cycle of exclusion in the current climate of austerity. And yet it is widely acknowledged across the member states of the Council of Europe, even by those far from the front lines of the struggle to curb social exclusion, violence and even extremism that youth work contributes enormously to preventing such social ills, exactly because it supports the access to social rights of young people.

Before looking at how *Enter!* has attempted to position itself as an intervention within the social and political context explored above, the next chapter will address challenges of access to social rights experienced by young people in Europe as a result of its actual social situation.

CHAPTER 2:

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PERSPECTIVES ON ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

INTRODUCTION

“... (T)he period when a person is considered to be ‘young’ differs across Europe according to national context, socio-economic development of a society and time. Common to all countries, however, is the fact that the period of youth is marked by important life transitions (...) These transitions provide opportunities for youth to excel and prosper, but can also leave them vulnerable and deprived. With the current economic crisis, many young people are unable to find jobs that allow them to live on their own. This period of transition has become longer and harder, leading to the risk of a ‘lost generation’.”²⁹

This chapter explores the situation of access to social rights of young people in Europe combining knowledge and evidence of such gathered through the two *Enter!* LTTC conducted between 2009 and 2014, the activities of the *Enter!* project that involved the wider participation of youth living situations of disadvantage (the two *Enter!* youth meetings, for example³⁰), research based and knowledge-production activities organised within the *Enter!* project (for example, national seminars and specific research activities) and further research conducted within a variety of EU programmes, the Partnership on Youth between the European Com-

29 European Commission, *EU Youth Report (2012)*. The EU youth report which is released every three years includes information about the EU member states as well as accession and partner countries, thereby representing a broad overview of the situation in a large part of Europe. The most recent edition dates to September 2015 and can be consulted here: (http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/youth-report-2015_en.pdf). Comprehensive aggregate statistics about the social situation of young people in all Council of Europe member states are not available from any single source, with the exception of select key data relevant to youth policy on <http://www.youthpolicy.org/factsheets/>, and these are also only updated on a biennial basis.

30 More information about the *Enter!* youth meetings <http://www.coe.int/en/web/enter/youth-meetings>

mission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth and by individual researchers active on this theme across Europe.

This chapter points to certain key trends in the way young people, and some especially affected groups of young people, lack access to their established social rights, thereby experiencing disadvantage, exclusion and enhanced vulnerability to risk. Such young people are usually not visible in society and mainstream media in positive ways. Rather, they receive a disproportionate level of negative media and social attention, usually focusing on ways in which they are 'causing trouble', engaged in crime, rioting or looting and generally representing a heavy burden on state and society. Such negative visibility is often mixed up with fear, prejudice and downright racism, with high profile trouble neighbourhoods that have the highest concentration of ethnic or religious minorities, immigrants and people with a 'low level of education' being repeatedly singled out.

It is difficult to pin a single profile to the young people concerned – in principle, every young person could be affected – and the whole question of their profile runs the risk of objectifying and even stigmatising the young people concerned. Nevertheless, it is valid to consider who is affected and more importantly why and how they are affected by poor access to social rights. Youth can be a period of heightened vulnerability and when certain mechanisms of social support are not available (irrespective of whether they are public or private) young people can risk becoming excluded.

Yet, research and youth work practice have consistently shown that some groups of young people are more vulnerable than others, and those who experience multiple sources of disadvantage or forms of exclusion are least likely to be able to make 'successful' transitions from youth to adulthood.³¹ And when looking at the end result, it is young women, young people in the care of the state or in conflict with the law, ethnic and religious minorities living in poverty and / or affected by racism, young people from deprived or geographically segregated communities, young people living in working class communities with high levels of long term unemployment, immigrants, LGBTQI and young people living with violence in their everyday lives that seem to be worst affected.

31 There is a wealth of literature on the way in which key youth transitions are a period of vulnerability. For example: Jelena Markovic, Miguel Angel Garcia Lopez and Sever Dzigurski's report entitled [Finding a Place in Modern Europe: Mapping of Barriers to Social Inclusion of Young People](https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/1668217/Finding.pdf/d5685c53-257e-4678-89f6-fcbf17469cff) for the Council of Europe – European Commission Partnership on Youth (2015) pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/1668217/Finding.pdf/d5685c53-257e-4678-89f6-fcbf17469cff is particularly enlightening regarding the nexus between barriers to inclusion and specific youth transitions, as is the report of the expert seminar that took place at the EYCS in October 2015, entitled: [Mapping of barriers encountered by young people in vulnerable situations](https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/8057949/Report-Williamson-Barriers.pdf/890684ad-716c-4b78-a33e-a096c4a5cbc1) prepared by Howard Williamson. pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/8057949/Report-Williamson-Barriers.pdf/890684ad-716c-4b78-a33e-a096c4a5cbc1 A global perspective is provided in the UNDP Human Development Report Occasional Paper 2014, [Youth Vulnerabilities in Life Course Transitions](https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hardgrove_boyden_hdr_2014.pdf) by Abby Hardgrove, Kirrily Pells, Jo Boyden and Paul Dornan. hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hardgrove_boyden_hdr_2014.pdf

This list is by no means exhaustive, however, and many young people in such communities also demonstrate extensive resilience and ‘navigational capacity’³², managing to break the vicious cycle of exclusion.³³

Empirical research conducted in the EU28 points to the extent to which young people are at serious risk of social exclusion and poverty. The EU Youth Statistics Portal defines, ‘at risk of poverty or exclusion’ at risk of poverty³⁴, or severely materially deprived³⁵ or living in a household with a very low work intensity.³⁶ This rate, the share of the total population, which is at risk of poverty or social exclusion, is the headline indicator to monitor the EU 2020 Strategy poverty target.³⁷

Policy also makes a lot of assumptions made about what constitutes disadvantage or who can / should be considered a disadvantaged young person. So for example, it is often assumed that young people living in rural areas are less advantaged than their peers living in urban areas in terms of access to culture or education. Yet, when one looks at the realities across Europe the situations of rural and urban youth are so diverse. Poor young people living in deprived cities are often far more excluded than rural young people that have the support of their families, even if they live far from the urban centres of culture.

It is often the combination of barriers – spatial, financial and social – that determines disadvantage and exclusion. It is interesting that European institutions concerned with the issue of inclusion / exclusion are now considering how to address this issue in more holistic ways in their programming. For example, within Erasmus+ programme a new approach has been developed to promote inclusion of those with ‘fewer opportunities’ in the programme, knowing that the thresholds for this are very different across the realities of the participating programme countries (extending to all EU member states and well beyond for specific parts of the programme, including Youth in Action). This new approach identifies a series of common markers for ‘having fewer opportunities’, and takes the position that there is a minimum threshold – in other words, demonstrating 2 – 3 such markers, whichever these may be from the list and wherever you are, de facto makes you someone with fewer opportunities.

It is in this vein that this chapter paints a picture in broad strokes of the challenges and life experiences of young people experiencing disadvantage and living in disadvantaged neighbour-

32 Howard Williamson quoting the concept of ‘navigational capacity’ coined Sharlene Swarz, 2010, *The Moral Ecology of South Africa’s Township Youth*, Palgrave-MacMillan, London, during his opening input to the 2nd European Youth Work Convention, Brussels, April 2015. See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFTP-tYFJZY> from approx. 3hrs 17mins.

33 Maria-Carmen Pantea, 2014, *Summary report on the 2013/2014 social inclusion country templates*.

34 ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:At-risk-of-poverty_rate

35 ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Severe_material_deprivation_rate

36 ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Persons_living_in_households_with_low_work_intensity

37 Source: Eurostat Youth Statistics; ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth/dashb6 The site provides a definition of the social inclusion indicator; [ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:At_risk_of_poverty_or_social_exclusion_\(AROPE\)](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:At_risk_of_poverty_or_social_exclusion_(AROPE))

hoods based on the participants of the *Enter!* projects all of whom work on the front lines of the struggle for access to social rights of young people. We prefer this approach to attempting an accurate data centric presentation of the situation and status of young people, something for which youth specific data remains unavailable in many member states of the Council of Europe. And yet, these situations can be found in all European countries to some degree, and are the reality of the lives of some proportion of young people in all European countries.

This presentation points to the complex nature of disadvantage in the youth phase and highlights several important aspects relevant to the development of relevant and effective educational and policy interventions including

- › the ways that disadvantage interferes with young people's capacity to act on their own behalf and change their own situations;
- › how poor access to social rights continues to challenge the human dignity of some young people and communities over others;
- › and the ways in which such challenges compound each other, come to be transmitted inter-generationally, re-create 'underclasses', reinforce stigma and prejudice and fuel socio-political tensions and conflicts across the geographic Europe.

Furthermore, and although tempting, it is important not to fall into the trap of seeing the economic crisis of 2008 Europe as the fundamental cause of the challenges that are experienced by young people in accessing their social rights. Many of the social challenges young people face have indeed been made worse or more visible by the economic crisis, but they have not been caused by it. A good example is the phenomenon of youth unemployment there has been not little moral panic. Research shows that youth unemployment is consistently higher than the general unemployment rate,³⁸ and youth unemployment was a serious problem in many countries and regions of Europe before the crisis hit. Yet, the crisis has made the scope and scale of youth unemployment across Europe impossible to ignore, and has increased awareness of the extent to which young people's life chances threatened. This is confronting both policy makers and populations across Europe with the fact that its economic security is by no means something to be taken for granted.

As such, this chapter serves the triple purpose of presenting

- › a justification for why the *Enter!* Project was seen as needed and timely by the decision-making bodies of the youth sector of the Council of Europe,
- › of framing the objectives of the project and the choice of approach and method of intervention (an educational and political process, in this specific case) in a real-life context, and
- › of framing its expected results and potential impacts.

38 European Commission, [EU Youth Report \(2012\)](#).

It serves as a further backdrop to understanding the what? and how? of the impact of the *Enter!* project, and especially of its flagship elements – the LTTC and the development of the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights.

CHALLENGES OF ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

The challenges of access to social rights faced by many young people are complex and multidimensional, with an accumulation of disadvantage often being further reinforced by the vicious circle of discrimination, violence and exclusion.

Over the years, a lot of research has been done on the actual situation of young people living disadvantage and the impacts and consequences of such disadvantage on their life chances and experiences. The *Enter!* project has confirmed many of the perspectives that such research has revealed and has also revealed some new ones. Looking at what can be learned about the situation of social rights from the specific stories of young people living in the disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods that were encountered through the *Enter!* project, specifically through the projects developed by the participants of the two LTTC, provides us with a close to reality mirror for what research has been telling us.

The following is an overview of challenges of access to social rights experienced by a great variety of young people living in different situations and contexts Europe wide. Nevertheless, these represent particular challenges for those living in disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods.

This overview of challenges is organised according to the social rights outlined in the European Social Charter, as this document is a key foundation of the access to social rights approach and for the *Enter!* concept. Nevertheless, the challenges included reflect real situations of young people as highlighted through the *Enter!* experience, and given credence by research. In many cases, we can observe that a lack of access to specific social rights in key domains covered by the European Social Charter, for example education or housing, is directly related to exclusion. At the same time, better access to those rights would improve life chances. Hence, the challenges outlined in this section can be understood as two sides of the same social rights coin – at one and the same time, challenge and potential solution.

The categories included are:

- > education
- > employment
- > health, legal and social protection
- > freedom of movement
- > non-discrimination.

Within each section, specific challenges are addressed in no specific order of importance or gravity. Clearly these challenges are not manifest to the same degree across all communities of young people experiencing disadvantage or living in multicultural disadvantage neighbourhoods, or across all member states of the Council of Europe.

The information about the social situation of young people in Europe available at the current time³⁹ points to the extent to which challenges of access to social rights are interdependent and have lasting implications for the social wellbeing of young people through the life course.

” *... Unemployment, impoverishment, inadequate housing conditions and family disruptions significantly increase the risk of mental health problems such as depression, alcohol abuse disorders and suicide. As detriments to health and wellbeing can often last for life, they have a particularly serious impact on young people.*⁴⁰

Available research also points to transversal trends in the social situation of young people in Europe, which can disproportionately negatively affect young people experiencing disadvantage or living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods. According to the EU youth reporting, young people are doing more school but getting less work. One way or another, it is estimated as of September 2015, that as many as 8.7 million young Europeans are not able to find work.⁴¹

➤ EDUCATION

In relation to education, young people experiencing disadvantage, especially those living in multicultural disadvantage neighbourhoods.

39 For example, the [EU Youth Report \(2012\)](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/eu-youth-report-2012_en.pdf) ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/eu-youth-report-2012_en.pdf; [EU Youth Statistics](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth/statistics-illustrated) ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth/statistics-illustrated, the [EU Youth Report 2015 National Reports](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth/statistics-illustrated): <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/publication/EUyouthreport2015part1> & <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/publication/EUyouthreport2015part2>, [The EU Youth Report \(2015\)](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth/statistics-illustrated); http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/youth-report-2015_en.pdf UN Youth Statistics; www.un.org/youthenvoy/youth-statistics/

40 European Commission, [EU Youth Report \(2012\)](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/eu-youth-report-2012_en.pdf); ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/eu-youth-report-2012_en.pdf

41 European Commission, [EU Youth Report 2015](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/youth-report-2015_en.pdf), p. 9; ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/youth-report-2015_en.pdf

They are notably challenged by:

- > **Educational motivation:** Young people experiencing disadvantage often demonstrate low motivation for education. Often those concerned do not receive adequate encouragement and support for overcoming this challenge from key family members and persons in positions of authority in the institutions of education;
- > **Dropping-out:** Leaving school early is common for young people in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and certainly more common than among the general youth population. The reasons for dropping out are varied – needing to work to support oneself and one’s family, poor results, learning difficulties and disabilities, social and behavioural issues, low importance given to educational achievement in the family or community, having to care for parents who are ill or infirm, or for younger siblings, to name just a few. Many young people facing learning difficulties are excluded from mainstream schooling and have difficulties accessing alternative provision. Boys and young men are particularly affected by this problem. School systems rarely consider their special issues and needs, and they drop out in higher numbers. Accessing support for returning to education in meaningful ways is difficult for dropouts and in many European countries such support does not exist;
- > **Quality of education:** There are considerable differences in the quality of education across different regions within countries and between different regions of Europe, leading to inequalities of access to job opportunities and social mobility;
- > **Educational approaches:** Questions of educational quality are certainly related to extent to which educational approaches kept up with latest developments in educational science or have been reformed. Young people experiencing disadvantage consistently complain that the education they ‘receive’ is not learner-centred, has little practical relevance and does not focus sufficiently on personal competences for an autonomous life. Furthermore, they feel that there is not enough emphasis on gaining experience relevant to work-life through education and that vocational or skills-based education suffers at the expense of academically oriented education. In addition, general education systems are not placing emphasis on helping students ‘learn to learn’, which would support them to navigate the demands of the system. Most education systems remain too focused on ‘results’ whereas for many such young people, the educational process itself would require attention (poor educator-student relationships, violence, bad atmosphere at school, prevalence of educational failure, etc.). Questions of socialisation and self-help are often neglected, although education should contribute to the achievement of social integration objectives. Young people concerned do not have enough access to non-formal educational opportunities and are generally little engaged in those offers that exist. Many young people feel that the school system they are in is unable to deal with the issues and concerns of minority students, creating potential for conflict;

- **Teachers' competence:** Linked to both educational quality and shortcomings in approaches, some voices question teachers' motivation to engage actively in further education, to refresh old and gain new competencies. While it is unclear if such an impression is grounded in fact, the quality and adaptation to modern teaching/learning approaches of further education programmes for teachers is questioned. Many educational institutions lack staff that understand and can handle the challenges of young people with special needs (the emotional needs of young people leaving orphanages, young people with disabilities, young people from migrant backgrounds experiencing discrimination/exclusion, etc.);
- **Costs:** The cost of and limited access to free education are seen as key challenges. Grants and subsidies (across academic and vocational training) have either been cut or are not available. Students and their families often simply cannot afford the costs of required educational equipment, accommodation, clothing, transport, etc.;
- **Violence:** Another key barrier for exercising the right to education is exposure to different forms of violence – among others, domestic violence, physical and emotional abuse, problems of classroom discipline and violence inside schools. Family and community support are essential for educational success, and these are not always available to young people experiencing disadvantage and living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

» EMPLOYMENT

Closely related to challenges in the area of education is the question of employment.

Notable are the following issues:

- **Access to work:** Access to the labour market has consistently been a serious social challenge for young people all over Europe, including for those who might be considered 'privileged'. Research shows that even if a young person achieves a high level of education, employment is no longer guaranteed⁴². Young people living in disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods are less likely to have access to jobs, as the availability of jobs in their immediate communities are limited and due to the effects of both real and perceived discrimination⁴³;

42 For a selection of perspectives on this see: [Youth unemployment and job quality in times of crisis: a European overview](http://www.society-youth.eu/images/media/manual/youth_unemployment_and_job_quality_in_times_of_crisis_a_european_overview.pdf) (www.society-youth.eu/images/media/manual/youth_unemployment_and_job_quality_in_times_of_crisis_a_european_overview.pdf) ; [Youth in the Crisis – What Went Wrong?](http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2014/11/YFJ-Publication-What-went-wrong.pdf) (www.youthforum.org/assets/2014/11/YFJ-Publication-What-went-wrong.pdf) and [Who'd be young and Greek?](http://www.theguardian.com/global/2015/jul/26/greece-youth-unemployment-debt-crisis-eurozone) (www.theguardian.com/global/2015/jul/26/greece-youth-unemployment-debt-crisis-eurozone)

43 For more on this see: [Overview of youth Discrimination in the European Union, 2015](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/overview_youth_discrimination_en.pdf) (ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/overview_youth_discrimination_en.pdf)

- › **High unemployment:** Unemployment among the general youth population tends to be greater than among older people. However, the scale of youth unemployment has grown sharply since the onset of the economic crisis in Europe. Figures given in the EU Youth Report 2012 indicate that the unemployment rate of young people (aged 15 to 24) rose sharply from 15 % in February 2008 to an unprecedented 22.6 % in June 2012, amounting to an increase of 50 % in four years. Furthermore, young people living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods and some specific communities of young people experiencing disadvantage tend to be over-represented among unemployed youth. Reasons identified include the lack of qualification of the young people concerned (low level of education, absence or incomplete vocational training), the demands of the ‘new labour market’ in which low-qualification jobs have become less available, the lower availability of seasonal work in some regions, especially during winter, and prejudice against people from multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods, among others;
- › **Temporary employment:** Temporary employment is much more common among young people aged 15 to 24 than among those aged 25 to 59. While 42.5 % of young people in employment in the EU28 were on a temporary contract in 2011, this was the case for only 11 % in the older age group. Between 2008 and 2011, temporary employment among young people increased by almost two and a half percentage points, while it increased by less than one percentage point for the general working population. This suggests that young people are more likely than the general population to get a temporary job (which often means precarious work). Young people from disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods are again more likely to over represented among those working on temporary contracts for the same reasons they are more likely to unemployed than other young people;
- › **Work experience:** Contemporary employers across Europe have high expectations regarding the work experience of job seekers. Young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods complain that they have limited access to opportunities for gaining relevant work experience, especially during formal education. Many feel forced into accepting jobs under their level of qualification, poorly paid or precarious employment, jobs in fields unrelated to their qualifications or unpaid internships⁴⁴ in order to gain work experience. Young people with little work experience also lack self-confidence and the skills necessary for securing a job such as CV writing, interview and presentation skills. Although a subjective perception, young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods are often sceptical about the motivations of employers. They complain that employers discriminate against young job seekers by assuming they lack experience and not considering them for the positions they offer;

 44 For more information about the situation of unpaid and poorly protected internships in Europe, see the Quality Internships campaign of the European Youth Forum: <http://www.youthforum.org/quality-internships/> and media reporting on the situation of unpaid interns at the UN: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/unpaid-united-nations-intern-david-hyde-forced-to-live-in-a-tent-in-geneva-10451775.html>.

- > **Exploitation:** Having little work experience and being much dependent on getting a job, young people experiencing disadvantage are particularly vulnerable to the risk of being exploited in work. Many work without contracts, social protection or through temping agencies. Young people in the workplace are vulnerable to manipulation and coercion into activities they do not want to do for fear of losing their job. This can take the form of emotional, psychological or sexual abuse;
- > **Prejudice and discrimination:** Discrimination on the basis of race and class is a problem for many young people living in disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods in accessing employment. Some employers are reluctant to employ people who come from non-national backgrounds, low-income social backgrounds or certain localities, because they hold prejudices about their honesty, work ethic or willingness to 'integrate'. In addition, some traditional families challenge the rights of young women to go to work, making it very difficult for them to make independent transitions to livelihoods;
- > **Disability:** The situation of young people with disabilities in the labour market is particularly challenging. Suitably adapted and relevant professional / vocational education, adequately accessible transport for travelling to work and relevantly accessible workplaces for young people with disabilities are lacking in most countries in Europe;
- > **'Corruption':** Young people experiencing disadvantage often complain that recruitment takes place in an 'unfair' or 'non-transparent' manner. In many societies in Europe, personal, family and political connections are more important than qualification for finding out about job opportunities and for actually getting jobs;
- > **Unrealistic expectations:** Young people experiencing disadvantage can demonstrate unrealistic expectations towards their employment potential. Some want to earn a lot of money and quickly, although their qualifications and experience would not allow for this. Some young employees have difficulties with self-discipline and self-control, and low motivation for hard work and the daily routine of a regular job;
- > **Entrepreneurship:** In most countries of Europe, there exist too few opportunities and support measures for young people experiencing disadvantage to develop entrepreneurship competencies and projects, even when they have good ideas and initiative, and even though this is a priority of many youth policies. While a general problem for young people, this affects disadvantaged young people more because they often lack social capital (i.e. support of parents and educational institutions), have educational challenges, and face discrimination (e.g. accessing bank accounts, loans, etc.)⁴⁵;
- > **Information & counselling:** Young people face difficulties in obtaining information and counselling for their training and / or job search. Again, this is a general problem for young people, but it affects disadvantaged young people more because of their educational

45 For more on this see [Youth Business International. \(www.youthbusiness.org/who-we-are/the-challenge/\)](http://www.youthbusiness.org/who-we-are/the-challenge/)

challenges, the lack of access to services they experiencing and because they often cannot afford the cost of regular internet access or a personal computer.

HEALTH

The health of young people experiencing disadvantage or living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods is directly and negatively affected by many other challenges of access to social rights.

In relation to health the following issues are notable:

- › **Health knowledge:** Young people experiencing disadvantage tend not to know enough about how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They are socialised into it in their families or through school. They lack role models and mentors, and people to whom they can turn for advice without involving their parents. Schools do not provide adequate general health education, and when they have health staff, these are usually not specialised in relevant counselling skills;
- › **Physical activity:** Young people from these neighbourhoods face economic barriers to participating in sport activities. Little importance is given to sport and outdoor activities in the school programme, and many schools lack sport facilities. Local communities lack sport facilities and when they are available, they can be expensive to use. There are problems of safety with dark and rundown play areas and parks, and other environments for outdoors activities, because communities do not have the resources to provide and maintain them. Some young women coming from traditional families and communities have more difficulties to access sport activities;
- › **Diet:** Furthermore and closely related, young people experiencing disadvantage face barriers to healthy nutrition. In the first place, there is little awareness of the importance of a healthy diet, which is exacerbated by the low importance given to this theme in schools and families. Second, the cost of food is important. Fruit, vegetables and other healthy nutrition options are more expensive than convenience and junk food, and sweet snacks. School catering is often of poor quality. Many of the young people concerned are at risk of obesity and related health problems from a relatively early age;
- › **Sexual health & rights:** Awareness of contraception, safe sex, relationships, sexual rights and other dimensions of sexual and reproductive health and rights among such young people is often low. This is certainly one result of the Europe-wide lack of comprehensive sex and sexuality education in the school curriculum. As a result, for some of the communities in which young people experiencing disadvantage live, teen-pregnancy and

STIs can be serious challenges.⁴⁶ Peer pressure to become sexually active or to engage in risk behaviours of different kinds is also a problem, especially where gangs and violence are also present. Young people tend to have little trust in health professionals because they fear prejudice and moral judgement. 'Youth friendly' health services, including and especially sexual health services, are generally lacking in most communities⁴⁷;

- > **Alcohol & drugs:** Alcohol and drug misuse are identified as key challenges negatively affecting the health of young people experience disadvantage and living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Some young people also have to live with and care for parents or guardians that have drug and/or alcohol addictions;
- > **Mental health:** For all the stress they encounter, at home and or beyond, young people experiencing disadvantage can be vulnerable to mental health challenges resulting in emotional and behavioural problems and a general lack of wellbeing. Families and schools are not paying enough attention to the development of young people's resilience to mental health challenges. On the contrary, it is the situation of family and in school that often undermines self-esteem and coping mechanisms. Mental health services are generally poor, there are few specialised services for young support people, and for many communities the question of mental health is something of a taboo, making for a general lack of discussion of the issue;
- > **Limited access to health services:** Public health systems have been under resource pressure for many years, with extensive cuts being the result of austerity and reform measures in a great many countries across Europe. Access to quality health services for young people who cannot private services is a real challenge. Often access to public health services is dependent on being in education, in a social insurance scheme or in employment. Some categories of young people, many of the most vulnerable among them (homeless youth, undocumented migrants, youth with mental health or addiction challenges, etc.), fall through the gaps in provision. Furthermore, accessing health services is dependent on key infrastructure like public transport, which rarely serves multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods adequately, and when available can be very expensive. Finally, many young people distrust the very institutions that could provide them with advice and assistance (counselling centres for youth, youth health centres), where these exist at all.

46 For statistics and more information see: [UNFPA on youth adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights](http://www.unfpa.org/resources/adolescent-sexual-and-reproductive-health). (www.unfpa.org/resources/adolescent-sexual-and-reproductive-health)

47 For more on this see [UNFPA on youth adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights](http://www.unfpa.org/resources/adolescent-sexual-and-reproductive-health). (www.unfpa.org/resources/adolescent-sexual-and-reproductive-health)

HOUSING

*The availability and quality of housing are documented as factors influencing well-being or a lack thereof.*⁴⁸

Young people living facing disadvantage face specific housing challenges including:

- **Cost of housing:** Across Europe, the cost of independent housing is beyond the wildest dreams of young people. Buying property is out of reach because available financing mechanisms (mortgages, bank loans) are not adapted to the needs of such communities. Renting an apartment often costs too much as a proportion of income. It is especially expensive to get a small apartment, such as studios suitable for students or young employees. Only young people who have substantial financial and moral support from their families can afford to rent independently on the open market. Expensive housing further limits the labour and educational mobility of young people – affordable housing for young people is particularly lacking in those urban locations where the majority of employment and education opportunities are available.
- **Social housing:** In many countries of Europe, social housing is unavailable or difficult to access for young people. Where social housing is available at all, waiting lists, homeless shelters and emergency housing schemes are oversubscribed, and young people may not be considered eligible (priority is often given to families over single people, for example). Some communities complain about a lack of regulation, and corruption in how housing is organised and distributed. Some communities believe they are discriminated against in the social housing application process (migrants, etc.);
- **‘Quality’ of housing:** Social housing and low cost rental accommodation on the housing market is very often in poor condition, located in deprived and stigmatised suburbs and peri-urban areas, requiring complete renovation for structural problems such as poor insulation, mould or damp. This can have significant adverse effect on other dimensions of young people’s lives from health to employment, limit their life chances and undermine their well-being;
- **‘Living’ communities:** There is a lack of suitable accommodation for the creation of ‘living communities’, in other words, groups of young people living together in larger units on a flat-share basis to reduce costs. There are many landlords who are unwilling to rent out their apartments for flat-shares or charge higher rent because they fear young people will act irresponsibly and damage the property or cause trouble with the neighbours (partying, etc.);
- **Student accommodation:** In many countries of Europe, financial support for students has been slashed. In some countries, the only housing support available to students is in

 48 For more on this see [Habitat for Humanity International. \(www.habitat.org/how/why.aspx\)](http://www.habitat.org/how/why.aspx)

dormitories, which are often in bad condition, and poorly located in relation to educational institutions and main services. These, and other affordable student accommodation, are often in short supply and expensive;

- > **Privacy:** Many young people are staying at home with their parents longer because of a lack of resources to move out. Affordable housing (whether private or social) can come with space constraints. Both of these can mean that young couples and families have to live with a lack of privacy.

» LEGAL AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Young people experiencing disadvantaged can be considered disenfranchised in many respects, not only political. Their access to legal and social protection is often significantly limited.

They experience many challenges in this regard, but most notably:

- > **Poor awareness of rights:** Generally speaking, young people experiencing disadvantage have little knowledge about their rights, and even less about the specific laws, regulations and social policies that apply to them or of which they are entitled to take advantage (contrary to popular stereotypes of 'benefit spongers').⁴⁹ Even if they are aware of their rights, many young people have no knowledge of support structures that exist to provide them with assistance if their rights are violated. Furthermore, it is common to hear complaints from such young people and their representatives that professionals working in the social sector with responsibility for them are not sufficiently aware of the rights applying to young people;
- > **Legal responsibility:** Closely related to knowledge of rights, is knowledge of responsibilities. Many young people have little or no awareness of their legal responsibilities. For example, criminal responsibility begins as early as 10 years of age in some countries in Europe. Furthermore, many criminal justice systems in Europe treat some children and young people as if they were adults, even though there exist specific guidelines and regulations for the detention and prosecution of young people under the age of adult criminal responsibility;
- > **Social and legal assistance:** As a result of negative previous experiences, some young people are sceptical of social and legal services that are dedicated to their support, including institutions and professionals of youth work. Affordable legal services are almost non-existent. Many social service organisations face funding problems and can only provide very limited or poor quality services. In some countries, social services are only available to young people 'in the system', i.e. those in education or in employment, or in the care of the state;

49 For a discussion of this: [Generous welfare benefits make people more likely to want to work, not less; www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2015-03/sp-gwb033015.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2015-03/sp-gwb033015.php)

- › **Access to social protection:** For many young people concerned social assistance is necessary to make ends meet (even if they are working). Austerity measures, social spending cuts and high youth unemployment are creating significant challenges for young people trying to make their transition to independent living. With the curtailment of access to social protection that can be observed in many European countries, and in its absence in some others, young people experiencing disadvantage (and their families) are at even greater risk of poverty and social exclusion;
- › **Benefit-dependency:** Yet, that is not the only risk. Young people experiencing disadvantage can come from families in which there has been an inter-generational transmission of extreme poverty. A major problem is long-term unemployment. Poor quality welfare-to-work schemes, low quality and unpaid internships and dead-end training schemes are common. Benefit-dependency is, therefore, a real threat for many youth experiencing disadvantage⁵⁰;
- › **Policy gaps:** Many young people experiencing disadvantage are of the opinion that their countries and cities do not have policies for young people like them, or if they do have them, they exist only on paper and are not implemented. Even if this is something of a stereotype, there are noticeable gaps between the intentions of certain policies and their actual implementation, let alone results. Indeed, some young people face situations in which measured intended to support their welfare have the opposite or even detrimental effects;⁵¹
- › **Ill-treatment and violence:** Young people experiencing disadvantage often suffer from abuse of different kinds and are subject to different kinds of violence (both as victims and witnesses). There are few viable protections against such ill-treatment and violence for these young people, especially if abuse takes place in the home or at the hands of carers or responsible professionals. In some countries internationally accepted legal standards concerning what constitutes abuse and violence against children have not been adopted. Discrimination and harassment by the police, gang-violence and neighbourhood unrest are further examples of the violence that young people experiencing disadvantage can be subjected to, and which are not adequately addressed by the laws of many countries.

50 For more on this situation see [Europe's White Working Class](https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/reports/europes-white-working-class-communities-report-six-eu-cities); <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/reports/europes-white-working-class-communities-report-six-eu-cities>; report from the Open Society Foundations. However this issue is highly controversial, with controversy being further fanned by tabloid press sensationalism; www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2409433/Poor-white-children-fall-Benefits-culture-blamed-failures-school.html and political populism; www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-21842317. Research does show a more differentiated picture. See: [Benefits in Britain: Separating the facts from the fiction](#); www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/apr/06/welfare-britain-facts-myths; and [The Fiscal Impact of EU Migrants in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK](#); www.ecas.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Fiscal-Impact-of-EU-Migrants-in-Austria-Germany-the-Netherlands-and-the-UK_ECAS-2.pdf. See also: Věra Jourová, EU Commissioner for Justice, Consumers & Gender Equality, [Speech to the EP on the occasion of the International Roma Day Conference, March 2015](#); ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/jourova/announcements/speech-international-roma-day-conference-european-parliament_en.

51 Helena Helve for the European Commission, 2012, [Social Inclusion at the Margins of Society – Policy Review of Research Results](#); ADD URL

➤ NON-DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is at one and the same time a cause of exclusion and disadvantage, and a common experience of those who are excluded and disadvantaged. At the same time, the right of every person 'not to be discriminated against' is notoriously difficult to enforce, because it requires active measures of prevention, not only active measures of redress.

In this relation, young people experiencing disadvantage experience many challenges, notably:

- **Labelling, stereotyping & prejudice:** Many of the young people concerned are directly and negatively affected by labelling, stereotyping and prejudice by other members of the society in which they live, and even by the state and its institutions, for whichever reason – being young, being a member of a minority group, being poor, etc. In some cases, the young people are stigmatised because they live in a disadvantaged neighbourhood with a 'bad reputation'. This can have important impacts on their access to social rights. It affects their self-esteem, confidence and personal effectiveness, as well as concrete aspects of their daily lives (from educational and job chances to the ability to secure housing or benefits);
- **Various, persistent and banal forms of discrimination:** It is felt that society is not sensitive enough towards marginalised groups, whoever they might be. Some prejudices are deeply rooted in history and the culture of the state. Media, politicians, teachers, parents, community leaders all influence the way children and young people develop their values and this is reflected in the way they treat others who are different to them. Young people living in disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods, especially in large cities, tend to have diverse backgrounds – they might be the children of immigrants, or be members of ethnic, national or religious minorities. They might be refugees or asylum seekers. One way or another, they are often seen as 'different', often suspect and are regularly discriminated against by police, teachers, employers and other persons in positions of authority. Young people living in rural areas and with disabilities have fewer opportunities and are less involved in society than many others. Gender inequality remains an important barrier to participation. Young people living in foster families and orphanages and young people questioning their gender-identity and LGBTQI young people can all face challenging attitudes and a lack of acceptance. Young people can be discriminated against on the labour market and in the workplace simply because of their age. Some young people – for example, young women from minority communities – experience multiple discriminations;
- **Negative media attention:** There is a widespread sense among young people experiencing disadvantage and those who work with them, that mainstream media are playing a particularly negative role in relation to discrimination. The media distort and generalise the role and position of young people experiencing disadvantage, particularly those around whom there is a lot of moral panic (minorities, immigrants, asylum seekers, youth

that abuse drugs or alcohol and teen-mums), and generally present them, their families, their communities and the neighbourhoods where they live in a negative light. If media report on positively on the young people concerned, they are made out to be the exceptions that prove the rule.

FREE MOVEMENT OF PERSONS

Many barriers, ranging from the financial through geographical to the legal, can hinder the free movement of persons. One can observe the extent to which these combine to produce exclusion in the case of the young people experiencing disadvantage or living in disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods.

Notably, such young people are hindered in their access to this social right by:

- › **Costs:** The cost of moving around is one of the most important barriers to young people exercising their right to freedom of movement. While for the majority of these young people freedom of movement is not an issue of the legal enjoyment of rights, they simply cannot afford to travel (abroad or even within their country, region or city). Transportation costs within big cities and between different cities are very expensive in some countries, which limits the mobility of young people for study, work and leisure. Those who might have the opportunity to move for work or study often have difficulties accessing affordable accommodation. Moving within one's city, for example to a better address, is often not possible due to the high cost of renting, determined by location. In some countries, social assistance is dependent on having a permanent registered address, which can make moving even more difficult for young people using benefits to make ends meet;
- › **Legal obstacles:** Young people that do not have a recognised legal status in the country where they live (citizenship, status as a refugee or asylum seeker, status as a legal resident, etc.) face the most serious obstacles to their freedom of movement, including being unable to travel within the country or city in which they reside. Engaging in the administrative procedures necessary for getting permission to travel is often so time consuming and expensive as not to be worth it or feasible. Many such young people do not know how to go about these procedures, fearing bureaucracy and possible discrimination. Such young people are all but excluded from the opportunities available to all other young people for international mobility;
- › **Isolation:** Many young people experiencing disadvantage, especially those living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods do not leave their neighbourhoods because they lack self-confidence, having next to no experience of other environments and developing negative attitudes towards other places and new things because of fear of rejection or disappointment. Many young people feel trapped because they leave their

neighbourhoods so rarely, and when they do they feel displaced. These young people do not participate in cultural and leisure activities outside the neighbourhood. They fear discrimination and judgement by others. Some even have fear for their safety when travelling outside their neighbourhoods;

- > **Mobility:** While European youth policies and programmes claim to promote international mobility opportunities for young people with fewer opportunities, few young people experiencing disadvantage get the chance to take advantage of them.⁵² Many of the young people concerned know nothing at all about the European / regional youth mobility programmes, and the authorities responsible for their promotion seem to have difficulty in reaching this particular target group;
- > **Policing:** The stepping up of anti-terrorism measures has seen the introduction of police checks, known as 'Stop and Search' and 'Stop and Account' regulations in many European countries. Young people fitting certain racial profiles (young people of colour or those with migrant background) are regularly stopped by the police, asked to account for their destination and purpose, searched and even detained if they resist.⁵³ In some other countries, authoritarian regimes use such regulations to prevent young people from exercising their right to peaceful protest and freedom of association. Under such regulations, and others on anti-social behaviour⁵⁴, young people in such neighbourhoods have become increasingly policed with the imposition of curfews and 'dispersal zones' being common;
- > **Gangs:** Particularly in larger cities, young people living in such neighbourhoods can get caught up in gang violence, either as gang members or as victims and witnesses of gang warfare. Association with a gang (real or imagined) can significantly limit young people's mobility. It can young people's travel routes to school, social activities, youth work activities and the reach of their travel. For some young women and men there is the risk of actual physical violence and rape.

Young people living in disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods or experiencing disadvantage also face some transversal challenges to their access to social rights. These are discrimination, exclusion and violence. Together or individually, these three phenomena, serve to reinforce the challenges to their social rights young people living in disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods are already grappling with. Indeed, and in the case of some particularly marginalised

52 For evidence of this see the results of the Research based analysis of Youth in Action project: <http://www.researchyouth.net/publications/>.

53 For more on the situation and consequences of 'stop and search' policing see: <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/reports/viewed-suspicion-human-cost-stop-and-search-england-and-wales> and of racial profiling see: <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/explainers/ethnic-profiling-what-it-and-why-it-must-end> and <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/multimedia/meet-the-somalis>.

54 For more on this see the evolution around youth policing in the UK, including the introduction of the Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO), its consequences and the controversies it has raised around the human rights of young people: <https://www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk/human-rights/justice-and-fair-trials/asbos-and-civil-orders>; <https://www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk/sites/default/files/asbos-and-human-rights-2004.pdf>

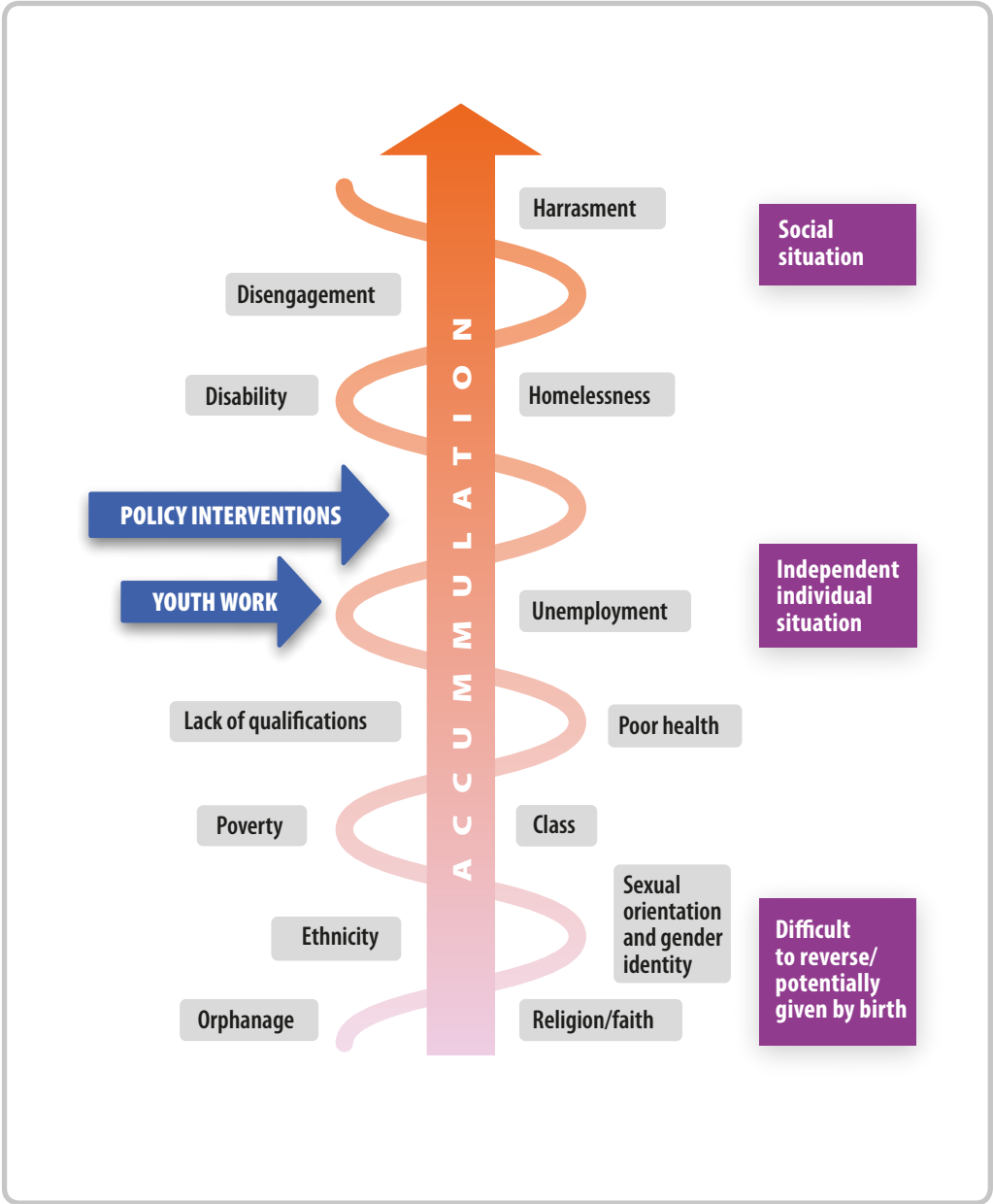
groups and communities, the interaction of all three can become a vicious cycle out which it is extremely difficult for young people experiencing disadvantage to break.

” *‘... Barriers to social inclusion can accumulate, act as a cause or be an effect of previous exclusion. Moreover, intersections of identities and situations can further accelerate exclusion (e.g. a black teenager would face far fewer challenges than a black, gay, disabled young person). Social exclusion is therefore a multidimensional issue manifested through a combination of linked problems. Those problems can accumulate to create even more complex and challenging situations. Furthermore, as a dynamic process that takes place over time, social exclusion carries the risk of producing inter-generational effects, as cumulative disadvantage is passed on from one generation to the next.’*⁵⁵

The following visualisation attempts to illustrate the complex and vicious nature of the spiral in which barriers to inclusion are accumulated and in which many young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods find themselves.⁵⁶

55 Jelena Markovic, Miguel Angel Garcia Lopez & Sever Dzigurski for the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth, [Finding a place in modern Europe: Mapping of Barriers to Social Inclusion of Young People in Vulnerable Situations](http://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/1668217/Finding.pdf/d5685c53-257e-4678-89f6-fcbf17469cff) (pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/1668217/Finding.pdf/d5685c53-257e-4678-89f6-fcbf17469cff) March 2015, p. 80, quoting Howard Williamson 2007.

56 Jelena Markovic, Miguel Angel Garcia Lopez & Sever Dzigurski for the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth, [Finding a place in modern Europe: Mapping of Barriers to Social Inclusion of Young People in Vulnerable Situations](http://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/1668217/Finding.pdf/d5685c53-257e-4678-89f6-fcbf17469cff) (pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/1668217/Finding.pdf/d5685c53-257e-4678-89f6-fcbf17469cff) March 2015, p. 81.



LIVING DISADVANTAGE – FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE?

It is becoming clearer that policy and programmes developed in the absence of an accurate understanding of the subjective experience of the real people they are supposed to be supporting are expensive and often ineffective.

The above presentation tells us something about the range of challenges of access to social rights that young people experiencing disadvantage and living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods face and about some gaps in and pitfalls of policy, provision and programming. However, it only alludes indirectly to how young people live those challenges and the impacts these have on their lived lives.

In the following section, we will attempt to sum up and explore what youth work interventions, such as the *Enter!* project, are telling us about this ‘lived’ dimension of those challenges. It is important to look at such issues from this perspective not only because the human impact of poor access to social rights is enormous, but because it is becoming clearer as time goes by that policy and programmes developed in the absence of an accurate understanding of the subjective experience of the real people they are supposed to be supporting are expensive and often ineffective.⁵⁷

Research looking at the way in which young people’s own expressions about their situation interplays with the political and social discourse around their situation is informative of this ‘lived’ dimension of challenges of access to social young people experiencing disadvantage and mirrors much of what the *Enter!* project has been able to bring to light in this regard.⁵⁸

Referring to a categorisation developed by of Iris Marion Young, Suurpa points out that the lived experience of access to social rights of young people experiencing disadvantage and/or living in disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods demonstrates and can be summed up in five key dimensions of injustice, these being

57 Although likely the result of good intentions, it has become popular for local and national authorities to roll out high profile community development and urban regeneration projects in high profile disadvantaged neighbourhoods, often with the result that they simply throw money at the problems. Participants of the LTTCs and the general sense from the experience of *Enter!* is that this approach does not address the underlying causes of the challenges. A deeper, more consensual and participatory process is required to find out what kinds of intervention are needed and wanted by the local communities. See also, for example, the way in which the results for youth well-being change for certain countries (Vietnam, Russia) when results of objective measures only are compared with the results of objective and subjective measures combined in the [Youth Well-Being Index](http://www.youthindex.org/full-report/); www.youthindex.org/full-report/. Noteworthy is that level of development and ‘high-income’ status does not always correlate positively with well-being.

58 Leena Suurpa, Presentation to the 2nd residential seminar of the *Enter!* Long Term Training Course (2012-2014) at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg in September 2014, and ‘Wandering Through Urban Solidarities: An Academic Seminar Hall as a Site of Collective Contest’, unpublished manuscript, 2015.

- › **exploitation** – class, unequal structural and economic relations
- › **marginalisation** – social life (resources and respect)
- › **cultural imperialism** – unjust dominance (invisibility of some cultures in relation to others)
- › **violence** – social and institutional practices (tolerance and promotion of these)
- › **powerlessness** – political power and capacity for self-expression (gender, territory, class, race, and all of them together).

While the degree to which these five dimensions of injustice are lived and the seriousness of the impact each may have on the lives of specific groups of young people and individuals might differ considerably, they present themselves as common in almost all the contexts and daily realities described by young people themselves and summed up in the long list of challenges previously developed upon. So while the violence that a young Roma woman might experience living in an informal settlement in a country of South East Europe may differ considerably from that of a young LGBTQI man living in a city of Western Europe, they both fear, face and live violence in their daily realities. At the individual level, these five dimensions of injustice have serious implications not only for the lived experience of young people in the present, but for their life chances in the future, mainly manifesting in challenges to a young person's personal agency and effectiveness.

The depth of the injustice that is poor access to rights is exacerbated by the dominant social and political discourse on young people, in other words, the ways (positive but usually negative) that young people are conceptualised and presented in media and policy actions, and the ways in which society perceives, accepts and reproduces such discourses and narratives. Taking a closer look at media releases on youth that appear in the European public sphere⁵⁹, and especially the rationales that are presented for considering young people a policy priority, for example in EU countries and the European Institutions, three main themes emerge.

The first is that young people are to be feared – because they are susceptible to radicalisation, they riot and loot businesses on a regular basis, and the social and political protest movements are root anarchic.

The second is that young people are a 'lost generation', a wasted youth that is failing to live up to its potential and will never be able to live up to its end of the intergenerational pact.

59 For more on this in the media around the world: [Negative Stereotypes are hurting teen job prospects; www.bbc.com/news/uk-26230410](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-26230410); [Young People Want More Positive Stories about Youth in the Media; www.abc.net.au/heywire/stories/2013/03/3703640.htm#VdBiBhOqqko](http://www.abc.net.au/heywire/stories/2013/03/3703640.htm#VdBiBhOqqko); [Hoodies, Louts and Scum – How Media Demonises Teenagers; www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/hoodies-louts-scum-how-media-demonises-teenagers-1643964.htm](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/hoodies-louts-scum-how-media-demonises-teenagers-1643964.htm); and in research: [Media Portrayal of Young People – Impact and Influences; www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/childrens-research-centre/files/crc-pr/file/ecms/web-content/clarke.pdf](http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/childrens-research-centre/files/crc-pr/file/ecms/web-content/clarke.pdf); [Unbalanced media portrayal of youth; https://bethereidoithertsmere.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/final-report-unbalanced-negative-media-portrayal-of-youth.pdf](https://bethereidoithertsmere.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/final-report-unbalanced-negative-media-portrayal-of-youth.pdf) However, more positive voices can also be found in the media: [From hoodies to goodies: today's teenagers have the makings of model citizens; www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/feb/16/hoodies-goodies-teenagers-makings-good-citizens-young](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/feb/16/hoodies-goodies-teenagers-makings-good-citizens-young); [Millennials and Boomers: Don't Forget Generation X; www.huffingtonpost.com/christine-henseler/millennials-and-boomers-generation-x_b_5253931.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/christine-henseler/millennials-and-boomers-generation-x_b_5253931.html).

And the third is that the present is a time of crisis, and that young people are both actors and victims of that crisis.⁶⁰

Even more significant, though, than the negativity that this kind of discourse perpetuates is that it is defined entirely by the political, economic and media classes, and the young people (experiencing disadvantage or otherwise) have little or no influence over how they are portrayed, let alone the opportunity to counter false representations.

Such narratives, and many of the 'real' social interactions that young people living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods have (with authorities of different kinds, with the world outside their neighbourhood or community, with other young people) reinforce a positioning of young people as 'powerless', 'subject to the power of others' or 'in need of empowerment'. Ethnographic research of young people living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Finland and France⁶¹, shows this '*Zeitgeist*' to have a significant influence on the character of the youth life experience, including but not limited to

- ▶ **the privatisation of social problems of youth:** The young people concerned are told they have to try harder; that the opportunities are out there to be seized; that if they could just get through school with a diploma, they will find a job; that if they are 'good' rather than causing trouble, people won't care what the colour of their skin is and so on. The dominant discourse of society is that their problems are their own fault, and they can be solved with more effort on the part of the young people themselves. The causes of their exclusion rarely lie in factors beyond their own control and re-taking control of themselves will lead them to overcome their exclusion. The state, society and the rest of the world, basically have nothing to do with it, and also cannot take responsibility for solving the problems they experience;
- ▶ **the individualisation of social relations:** Closely related to the privatisation of their problems is that the young people concerned feel left alone to make sense of a world that they have difficulty to feel part of because they feel it doesn't like them much. Whether it is because of a lack of trust in authorities that they feel / or which have objectively let them down, or whether it is because of the outside world that seems to hate them, they retreat into individual friendships and communication, and have few contacts to the institutions of society;

60 For example: [Spanish Youth in Crisis; www.ft.com/cms/s/2/5908da36-db09-11e3-8273-00144feabdc0.html#slide0](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/5908da36-db09-11e3-8273-00144feabdc0.html#slide0); [European Youth in 2014; www.europarl.europa.eu/atyourservice/en/20150201PVL00054/European-youth-in-2014](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/atyourservice/en/20150201PVL00054/European-youth-in-2014); [European Youth Forum Warns of a Peter Pan Generation as a result of the financial crisis and response to it; www.youthforum.org/pressrelease/european-youth-forum-warns-of-a-peter-pan-generation-as-a-result-of-financial-crisis-and-response-to-it/](http://www.youthforum.org/pressrelease/european-youth-forum-warns-of-a-peter-pan-generation-as-a-result-of-financial-crisis-and-response-to-it/) and [Youth in the Crisis – What Went Wrong? www.youthforum.org/assets/2014/11/YFJ-Publication-What-went-wrong.pdf](http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2014/11/YFJ-Publication-What-went-wrong.pdf).

61 Leena Suurpa, Presentation to the 2nd residential seminar of the Enter! Long Term Training Course (2012-2014) at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg in September 2014, and 'Wandering Through Urban Solidarities - An Academic Seminar Hall as a Site of Collective Contest', unpublished manuscript, 2015.

- > **the active stigmatisation of and / or a strong sense of being stigmatised:** Again, closely intertwined is the young people's sense of being stigmatised and the fact that they are actively stigmatised for whichever 'difference' they may demonstrate from 'mainstream' society. This is very far reaching, because while outward features may play a significant part in stigmatisation of those who are visibly 'different' (people of colour, religious dress code, physical disability) it is also the fact of living in the place you live in, or of being poor, or of having learning difficulties, far from visible in most cases, that are being stigmatised.
- > **the code of silence:** All these combine to form a 'code of silence' around the situation and experiences of young people – one which can be imposed from the outside, self-imposed or a combination of both. The young people concerned don't talk about their problems, and try not to draw attention to yourself because they feel shame, and a lack of legitimacy, given that they are made to feel by the outside world that their difficulties and problems are their own fault anyway. This destroys their confidence and makes them feel powerless. They ask what would talking about the problems change, anyway, when it is only the numbers that count, not people. And yet somewhat counter-intuitively the young people's behaviour (especially in relation to each other in their private relations) demonstrates a very great need for respect, although the definition of respect can be somewhat warped (respect as fear, respect as obedience, etc.).

These dynamics are to an extent mirrored in the policy domains relevant to access of social rights and youth related social policy and programming. The same research describes the situation of the young people in policy as a **paradox of solidarity**, in which one can observe parallel processes of the promotion *and* limitation of rights. While policy makers may have good intentions, the results of policy interventions do not always demonstrate positive results for the young people concerned, who are at one and the same time seen as victims of their social situation, and by implication objects of pity and care, and as perpetrators of many of the social ills they themselves suffer, and therefore objects of heightened state control. Discontented, disrespected, censored and significantly constrained in their capacity to explore the opportunities life might be able to offer them, the paradox of solidarity underscores such young people's position in society and policy as impoverished, disenfranchised, exploited and exploitable (in financial, political and cultural terms).⁶²

62 Leena Suurpa, Presentation to the 2nd residential seminar of the Enter! Long Term Training Course (2012-2014) at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg in September 2014, and 'Wandering Through Urban Solidarities: An Academic Seminar Hall as a Site of Collective Contest', unpublished manuscript, 2015.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has described and reflected on the main challenges to the access to social rights of young people in Europe as revealed by the experience of the *Enter!* project, particularly the two LTTC organised for youth workers and youth leaders to address access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods. As a context, these challenges have many important implications, not only for the real lives of the young people concerned, but also for the ‘health’ of the communities, societies and polities in which they live and for youth work and youth policy.

Starting from the perspective of the young people, we can see that those who experience disadvantage as a result of poor access to social rights, among other things

- › lack confidence and self-esteem because they have often experienced failure or rejection (in school, in society, in the labour market, etc.);
- › lack opportunities for being responsible and oftentimes also act irresponsibly as a result;
- › lack space and resources to express themselves so that when they claim such space are stigmatised as violent and rowdy;
- › are marginalised from mainstream participation (political, economic, cultural);
- › are sceptical of and intimidated by the idea of engaging and cooperating with policy actors because the measures implemented by such often do not lead to positive change in their situations.⁶³

These facts are highly problematic. Societies in which the well-being of young people is jeopardised and many experience some form of disadvantage (which in the geographical Europe of the Council of Europe including member states spanning the length and breadth of the continent is a reality), challenges to social cohesion within and between states are bound to emerge. It is not that the young people themselves are a threat to social cohesion, it is their social situation and the impacts it has on their life chances and therefore their potential to contribute constructively to the social, economic, cultural and political development of the society in which they live.

Howard Williamson, based on the experience of the National Youth Policy Reviews of the Council of Europe⁶⁴, coined the idea that every country has a youth policy – whether by design or by neglect. Not paying appropriate attention to barriers to the access to social rights of young people (whether intentionally or unintentionally) can have important consequences for social cohesion and increases social risks which would otherwise be preventable, including but not

63 Adapted from Yael Ohana, ‘What can youth work do for social rights? Still trying to getting real’, reflection paper prepared for the Preparatory Seminar for the new LTTC Enter! (September, 2012), unpublished manuscript.

64 www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/ig_coop/youth_policy_reviews_en.asp

confined to the conflict potential within a society, radicalisation, populist capture and the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

Furthermore, considering that such situations of poor access to social rights can be found in practically every country across the continent (albeit to varying degrees of severity and involving smaller or larger numbers of young people), serious ethical and practical dilemmas for politics and policy emerge. Questions such as:

” *What is the meaning of solidarity? How are intergenerational relations structured? How are rights perceived, understood and acted upon by society and by all those officially responsible for their safeguarding? What is Europe for?*

come to the fore and demand answers through public dialogue and discourse.

Policy makers and policy making cannot solve every problem of access to social rights of young people in Europe. Nor can policies and programmes designed for supporting and improving the access to social rights of young people across Europe be expected to deliver equality of outcomes in all cases. Nevertheless, policy actors and policy processes have an important role to play, and a responsibility, in creating spaces for dialogue on how and why policy works or does not work and platforms for experimentation, innovation and the development of new practices that take into account the concerns, experience and expertise of the young people concerned and their wider communities. Notwithstanding the challenges and barriers to equality of outcomes, improvements in the inclusiveness of the policy making process would go a long way to building trust and creating better informed policies and programmes. Experience shows that such processes usually lead to more relevant outcomes.

CHAPTER 3:

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THE *ENTER!* PROJECT: A NEW WAY INTO PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE?

INTRODUCTION

With its particular mix of educational and policy activities, its social rights as human rights agenda and its attempt at translating European instruments into local action, the *Enter!* project attempted to take a new look at a perennial challenge. It has sought a new way into promoting social inclusion of young people. Within its educational pillar, and especially through the two Long Term Training Courses, *Enter!* addressed the theme of impact and how to achieve it through educational and policy-oriented access to social rights interventions from local through European levels.

While definitions of impact can differ, and no single definition was applied from the inception through the conclusion of the *Enter!* Project, the LTTC developed the following definition of impact for the purposes of benchmarking and quality development of the projects developed by the trainees.

” *... Project impact = changes, provoking effects – once the project is finished – on different levels such as the individual level (trainee/participant), a group or community of young people, an organisation / institution, a local community, partners, stakeholders or local authorities involved in the project – while promoting access to social rights and responding to situations of exclusion, discrimination and violence.*⁶⁵

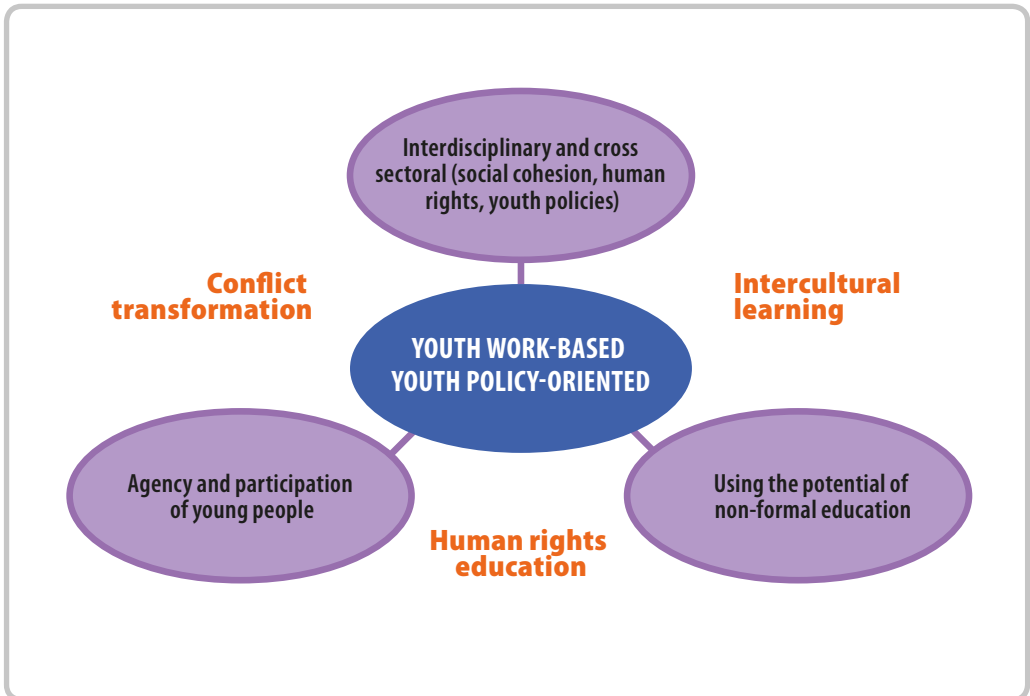
65 This definition of impact was developed by the training team of the LTTC *Enter!* 2012-2014 for the purposes of project development and evaluation within the training course.

This chapter considers the specific characteristics of the *Enter!* Project as an innovative approach to promoting access to social rights, going into some more depth on the two pillars through which it has had the most impact – the area of education and training and in the area of policy development – as well as delving into more detail on the nature of those impacts.

> FEATURES OF ENTER!

The *Enter!* project was developed through a consultative process including key partners of the youth sector of the Council of Europe including non-governmental organisations active issues related to access to social rights, governmental and academic experts, different sectors and institutions of the Council of Europe with an interest in such issues. This process provided the evidence about the situation and concerns of young people living in disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods, and expertise in relation to tried and tested approaches to tackling such challenges as they experience, on the basis of which what might be termed the *Enter!* approach could be elaborated.

The following diagram sums up the general approach.



First and foremost, *Enter!* was youth work based, but youth and social policy oriented. In other words, it saw the potential of youth work, as diverse as its practice is, for supporting young people to access social rights and promote them, but also recognised that youth work does not exist in a vacuum, and that it cannot reach its full potential without political will and policy infrastructure and resources.

Second, *Enter!* functioned according to three key methodological principles, these being

- › a. the necessity of an interdisciplinary approach, when dealing with complex issues of youth access to social rights;
- › b. the importance of participation, promoting the agency of young people themselves
- › and c. the creative potential of non-formal education.

A brief survey of the enormous body of scholarship on issues of inclusion and exclusion of young people that has been accumulated in the post-WWII period testifies the extent to which these principles have been key to supporting young people at the margins of society.⁶⁶

Third, *Enter!* was rooted in three key educational approaches: human rights education, conflict transformation and intercultural learning. Together these three recognise the human rights violations that are constituted by exclusion, violence and discrimination, consider living together and learning with each other in full acceptance of the diversity and the dignity of the other prerequisites for social cohesion, and promote capacities for understanding social conflict and for dealing with them in a constructive manner.

The LTTTC, which forms the backbone of *Enter!*, and from which the majority of ‘real life experience’ can be drawn, included several key characteristics that are important to highlight, as they are crucial to the translation of the *Enter!* approach into real work and activities.

The LTTTC training model was initially developed in the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe in the 1990s to support representatives of youth NGOs, in general, to develop and implement more effective projects for the specific groups of young people they work with. This model was later successfully applied to a variety of themes, including the citizenship and participation of minority youth, intercultural learning and human rights education. It has, furthermore, been adapted for use in specific regions and with young people from parties to conflicts (for example, in South East Europe) and to specific objectives, for example, the training of trainers in human rights education or non-formal education (ATTE, TRAYCE, etc).

The essence of the LTTTC training approach is experiential learning, learning by doing. Such courses foresee that initial training inputs received regarding the theme and how to develop

 66 For more on this see: Council of Europe – European Commission Partnership, [The History of Youth Work Series](#); [pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/knowledge-books](#); Helena Helve for the European Commission, 2012, [Social Inclusion at the Margins of Society – Policy Review of Research Results \(ADD URL\)](#) and Howard Williamson, 2015, [Mapping of barriers encountered by young people in vulnerable situations](#) (report of the expert seminar that took place at the EYCS in October 2015); [pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/8057949/Report-Williamson-Barriers.pdf/890684ad-716c-4b78-a33e-a096c4a5cbbc1](#)

a project with young people shall be tested and tried out for real during a project phase at home. This project phase and the effectiveness of the training received is then reflected upon and evaluated in a further in-residence training course as a means of identifying further training inputs that can be addressed in the in-residence setting.

The LTTCs usually organised in three phases, over a period of 6 to 18 months depending on the target groups, themes and nature of the projects to be implemented.

The first phase is an introduction seminar of approximately 10 days, through which the collective learning platform (i.e. the group) is built and initial training inputs, especially around how to develop a project with young people are given.

The second phase is the project implementation phase. Participants go home to their local context of youth work and further develop and run their project with their target groups. More often than not, the experience of the introduction seminar has changed the nature of the initial project idea with which the participant applied and has to be reviewed and adopted by the young people it concerns, in a participatory process of developing project ownership. Usually, this is something participants only become aware of as being necessary for project success as a result of the experience of the first seminar. During the project phase, participants are increasingly invited to participate in networking (online and offline) and further peer to peer learning experiences with other participants of the course, through e-learning platforms and interim meetings of participants, with or without members of the training team. Sometimes the organisers arrange regional meetings in which participants located close to each other geographically meet to discuss and further work on their project with the support of one member of the training team. Individual participants are often also encouraged and supported financially to visit fellow trainees and learn from their project experiences independently.

The very last phase of a LTTC is usually the evaluation or further training seminar. This brings the group back together to evaluate their experiences collectively and to identify further training needs that can be addressed on the spot and later through other opportunities. New projects can be developed, or new training activities planned. Also a common result is that participants decide to keep in touch and form networks of mutual support for future projects.

Each LTTC has a distinct target group and a set of criteria applying to applicants and projects. However, they have some aspects in common. Applicants usually have to be 18 to 35 years of age, be able to work in the working languages of the course (usually English, French or Russian), be supported by their organisations, able to commit to the entire course (i.e. all three phases including the in-residence courses from start to finish) and bring a project idea with them. Applicants' project ideas are assessed together with the other application criteria, especially regarding their feasibility and their potential value as a learning tool.

LTTCs are usually developed and run by teams of five to six trainers representing different competencies and profiles relevant to the theme, target group or overall training objective of the

course. The in-residence seminars usually take place in one or both of the European Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest, and at least one educational advisor of the Council of Europe leads the team of trainers to provide institutional and political coherence, and non-formal education and training expertise, so that the training course responds to Youth Department standards for activities.

A presentation of the phases of work of the LTTCs *Enter!* can be consulted in Chapter 6.

The LTTCs *Enter!* included the following phases of work, organised with some differences between the first and the second edition, the most notable one being that the first LTTC was longer and included 3 residential seminars, while the second one included only 2 residential seminar:

- › preparatory online activities
- › first residential seminar
- › project development phases, online learning and mentoring
- › (second residential seminar, for the first LTTC)
- › project development phases, online learning and mentoring
- › last residential seminar
- › evaluation phase.

In terms of overall approach, the project based experiential learning and learning by doing dimension of the LTTC *Enter!* is absolutely key. Participants were asked to develop a real access to social rights project, and to implement it. As a result, the LTTC trained the participants in project development, but used the experience of this and of the implementation of the project to learn about how to transfer that training into real life situations, and as a way to demonstrate the value of youth work to support the access to social rights of young people.

Taking the above general approach into account, and considering the many evaluation activities conducted on an ongoing basis within the *Enter!* process, it is possible to distil several key statements that characterise *Enter!* and its innovative character as a complementary non-formal educational and policy oriented intervention in favour of access to social rights of young people:

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CAN IMPROVE ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS

The experience of the two *Enter!* LTTC 2009-2014 and the projects supported shows that investments in complementary training for professionals and volunteer intermediaries of different kinds working face to face with youth communities and individual young people experiencing disadvantage on their issues and aspirations can go some way to improving access to social rights of young people. In particular, these experiences have shown that the multiplier effect of training is strong, and that using projects as learning vehicles on the one hand and as actual interventions to improve access to social rights on the other is effective. Important also was the focus of the training – in this case, access to social rights, social rights as human rights, the

European instruments that support access and the practice human rights education with young people experiencing disadvantage. The section of this chapter dealing with the impacts of the two *Enter!* Long Term Training Courses treats this assertion in more detail.

Jean Case, North Locality Play and Youth Teams, Nottingham City Council, United Kingdom, participant of the LTTC 2013-2014

Speaking about my project, the exchange between Riverside Youth Club in Nottingham, UK and Schiltigheim Youth Club in Strasbourg, France, I can say that as the week moved on we could see a real change in the group. They became supportive of each other. They would try activities that pulled them out of their comfort zones. The expressions on their faces changed and they laughed at themselves when things didn't go to plan, we could see their confidence grow. They would challenge each to do better. We also noticed that the diet and fitness of all the young people should have been much better. A lot of the visit involved walking about the city, moving from one venue to another, and the young people didn't like to walk because they aren't used to it and they tired easily and were out of breath. Our team is going to look at how we can address this with the group now we are back. We discussed involving the parents and carers as they also need to understand what we are trying to do, and we'd like to look at diet, the food types that young people are selecting and at feeling good and being fit together. We might also work on style and fashion, hair and make up. Throughout this programme the team worked hard to encourage the development of relationships within both groups, and by the end of the visit I can safely say that we succeeded. There were tears on the last night as no-one wanted to leave. We have made some firm friends in Strasbourg and in Schiltigheim and we have been invited back. For those young people who never experienced being out of the country, they have a new fire burning inside them - to see more of the world.

Natasha, Voice of Youth, United Kingdom, participant of the *Enter!* Youth Meeting 2015 and young person involved in a local project of a LTTC participant

My name is Natasha and I'm from London. During the human rights project, I learnt more about how our human rights were abused during school. We made a film to portray how bad schools were and throughout this project I built a stronger relationship with my friends in the youth group. I'm glad I was involved as I got to make a film about an issue that was relevant to us and many other young people. We showed our film about human rights violations to other young people and adults that were interested and now that we have new ideas we hope to continue making a difference to the lives of other young people as well as ourselves by continuing to make new films and possibly even more.

Elisha Watson, participant of Jean Case's project in the LTTC 2013-2014: Youth Exchange between Riverside Youth Club in Nottingham, UK and Schiltigheim Youth Club in Strasbourg, France

I chose to be part of this project because I've never really been part of anything and I knew it would be a great experience and a great opportunity to see things from someone else's views. The trip was packed with loads of activities, everyone was really excited to take part in and experience. What I liked the most was spending my time with the French group at their youth centre. It was like being at home again, they made me feel so welcome and you could tell that they appreciated everything they had. Which made me realise that my attitude towards the little things in life that I should appreciate more. Throughout the whole experience I could honestly say I LOVED every minute of my trip and I wouldn't change anything. My confidence at the start of the trip was very little. It was weird being "reunited" with the French group, which made things awkward but that all changed after the first couple of days and everyone was enjoying them selves lots. I'm really grateful. The trip has had a huge impact on my life. I can now say I have made many new friends, both French and English and I hope we can keep these close bonds forever.

Jonathan, Youth Express Network Campaign 'Inclusion Express', participant and of Enter! Youth Meeting 2015

My name is Jonathan, but some people know me as the pyjama boy. I was in Bosnia Herzegovina for a seminar about social rights and human rights. We worked together to launch the Youth Express Network campaign 'Inclusion- Express'. Social rights or human rights? Human dignity, human rights depend on access to social rights. We shouldn't just be content with about how things work. We must fight for our rights. I can't do that on my own but together we can. Let's fight together for a better world, a world where social rights are seen as human rights. We shouldn't keep dreaming about a better world, we should take action together to make sure that every person has a roof over his or her head. That every person can express their opinions. That every person can enjoy education. That every person can be content with themselves. This is what the pyjama challenge is about. It was created at that seminar in Bosnia in bedroom number 220. So why a pyjama challenge? Pyjamas symbolise dreaming, people dreaming about a better life for everyone in the world. Let's wake everyone up to the truth about social rights and to take action. We will only be satisfied when social rights are seen as human rights. Together we can make that happen. Support me and the pyjama challenge by taking a picture in your pyjamas.

➤ **YET, NON-FORMAL EDUCATION ALONE DOES NOT SUFFICE – POLITICAL ACTION IS ESSENTIAL**

The experience of developing *Enter!* and the reflections conducted on its achievements and shortcomings⁶⁷ point to the fact that access to social rights of young people is an inherently political issue and that it needs to be addressed in and through political action, however valuable non-formal education is for addressing situations of poor access to social rights. *Enter!* did this in many ways – by providing opportunities for cross-sectoral learning among actors with some form of political responsibility (inside the Council of Europe and outside, at European and at local level) , by initiating research to provide evidence of need and gaps in policy, by creating contacts between governmental and non-governmental actors. Yet, two aspects of the project were essential in developing its political dimension and action.

The first was the dual recognition that in the first place, it is at the **local level of governance that policy and interventions targeting better inclusion of young people are mostly located and most desperately needed**, and by implication that it is often local policy actors who have the power, opportunity and mandate to make change. And in the second place, that **local authorities often find themselves overwhelmed by the challenge of addressing social problems**, and can lack capacity and expertise for addressing poor access to social rights of young people living in their localities. Therefore, a key characteristic of the *Enter!* project was its deliberate effort to actively engage representatives of local authorities and to develop partnerships between those representatives and young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in their municipalities.

The second was the recognition that **change is all the more possible when young people have strong political and legal instruments at their disposal** and know how to use them. In the case of *Enter!* this recognition translated into two dimensions of learning and action. First, that young people need to get to know and become better able to use key instruments already in existence. Second, that young people can and should contribute to the development of new instruments, because they are living the experiences such instruments are supposed to help address. Concretely, these two things are expressed in the focus of *Enter!* on the European Social Charter and in its effort to elaborate and pass a specific Council of Europe recommendation on access to social rights of young people, with the participation and input of young people affected by poor access to social rights. These aspects are covered in more detail in the respective sections addressing impact below.

67 See among others: *Evaluation of the 1st LTTC*, and Ingrid Ramberg, 2013, *Enter! Access to Social Rights for Young People from Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods – Project Report*.

Mariam, LEPL National Children and Youth Centre, Georgia, participant of the *Enter!* Youth Meeting 2015

I'm a 15-year-old girl from Georgia. I live in Tbilisi, the capital city. Everyday when I wake up, my Mom cooks breakfast for me and then my Dad takes me to the school by car. After school finishes, I have a lot of things to worry about and to do. I go to the gym, I go with my friends to the park or some concerts but I still have many things to worry about. For instance, if I get high marks at school, if my parents will buy me an iPhone for my birthday, how I will spend my holidays and so on. One day I woke up and I saw that there is also another, a different world in my country, different from my daily life. On my way to school I see children begging in the street. I see the news on TV and it is reported that some parents had to take their children out of school just because they don't have enough money to finance their education. If I see my classmates having no money for school lunch or nice clothes, I feel sad not because of me because of others. My peers who are just like me, they have absolutely same rights but sadly, their rights are violated. Who cares? Me? Yes, of course. In my country 3,000 children live in the streets, 14,000 children leave school earlier and so on. I feel responsible for it. On the other hand I feel angry towards our government. When I was younger I thought it was their responsibility but now I think it's my duty to stand up for others' rights and to also fight for their interests towards the Government. It's really difficult to do that in Georgia. Sometimes people think, if they see children in the street, it's not their problem but yes, yes, it is our problem. It's sour task. It is in our interest to change it. It is also in yours. So, now it's time to take action together.

Maria Roidi, Youth Social Rights Network, Greece, participant of the *Enter!* Youth Meeting 2015

The first and most important is to include young people. But, it is also important to include municipalities, private sector actors, and other bodies which are concerned with social rights. In this way, young people have the opportunity to connect to and with all these stakeholders and to network and collaborate in their own interests.

Biljana Vasilevska Trajkoska, Youth Social Rights Network, “The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, participant of the LTTC *Enter!* 2009-2012 and founder of the Youth Social Rights Network

The Youth Social Rights Network is an open informal network of individuals, public and private entities interested in/and or working on improvement of access to social rights for young people, particularly those living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It was formed by some of the participants in the first LTTC Enter! implemented by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe and promotes a multi-sectoral approach in improving access to social rights for young people across Europe. Our aim is to improve access to social rights of young people. Through the projects that we, the founders of the Y-SRN, implemented during the first LTTC Enter!, we managed to identify the main obstacles on the way to improvement of the access to social rights for young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and found out that one of them was the lack of mutual work and cooperation between youth workers and local authorities in different local realities, lack of cooperation between the ones that are closest to the young people and that can help them in overcoming the everyday obstacles. Through our founding event, a meeting of 39 youth workers and local authority representatives called “‘Together for social rights’, funded by the European Youth Foundation, we developed will, motivation and dedication to continue our work to improve access to social rights of young people, with joint efforts and counting on the support from each other. We developed clear ideas for future actions that can be done at local level in partnership between young people, youth workers and local authorities, as well as ideas for actions that can be done by the Y-SRN as a family of young people, youth workers, local authorities and other individuals and public and private entities to support local and national actions and to create and inspire international ones.



AND REAL COOPERATION ACROSS STAKEHOLDER GROUPS AND SECTORS IS REQUIRED

The challenges of access to social rights of young people are highly complex. How, then, can it be expected that the solutions to those challenges be any less complex? Recognition for this fact is expressed in the priority given to intersectoral cooperation within the *Enter!* process. First, this refers to efforts made to engage and involve a variety of sectors of the Council of Europe in the development and implementation of the *Enter!* Project, acknowledging the special expertise of those sectors as regards aspects of the youth access to social rights agenda. Figuring most prominently among these was the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of

Europe, the platform dedicated to the European cooperation of local and regional authorities, and which initiated and promotes the Charter on the participation of young people in local and regional life.⁶⁸ Second, this meant that *Enter!* involved actors and stakeholders from practice, policy and research – whether youth specific or more generally addressing issues of social rights and social policy. Third, this has been expressed through the attempt to involve supporters, donors and partners from beyond the confines of the Council of Europe system – whether large international foundations, individual Governments or thematically specialised coalitions and organisations. Fourth, this has meant attention to the involvement of actors from all levels of governance from local through European. Last, but probably most importantly, the access to social rights projects of the participants of the two *Enter!* Long Term Training courses attempted to develop coalitions and partnerships with local level stakeholders across the spectrum of practice and policy actors in their contexts to maximise the impact of their projects. Where they succeeded, the projects have become models of good practice for intersectoral cooperation at the local level.

TO BE EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS NEED ACCURATE EVIDENCE

Through the two LTTC, the two *Enter!* youth meetings and several of its other core activities, *Enter!* has come into direct contact with grassroots activists, youth leaders and youth workers on the front lines of work on access to social rights with young people. On the one hand, this has been a conduit for accurate and timely perspectives on the needs of young people living in disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods to the policy level. At the same time, it has shown how the grassroots struggle to contextualise the situation of the young people they seek to address in the ‘social rights are human rights’ agenda and create links between their issues and those being addressed in the political sphere. In the end, evidence of need is clearly an essential pre-requisite for anyone seeking to promote access to social rights, irrespective of whether it is generated through academic research or in the field experience and irrespective of whether it is used primarily to ground projects or to justify the necessity of access to social rights interventions towards policy makers.

Developing awareness in different sectors – academic research, youth work and public policy – for this need was an essential feature of the *Enter!* project. This is expressed through the strong focus of the LTTCs on training its participants in how to develop a credible social analysis, as the first and essential step in develop actionable projects that have a chance of addressing access to

68 Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe (CLRAE); www.coe.int/t/congress/default_en.asp. The flagship project of the CLRAE in the field of youth is the [Revised European Charter on Youth Participation in Local and Regional Life](https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Coe_youth/Youth_Participation_Charter_en.asp); https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Coe_youth/Youth_Participation_Charter_en.asp. A youth friendly version has been published as a manual for youth advocacy on local and regional participation of young people, entitled ‘Have Your Say!; https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Publications/Have_your_say_en.pdf

social rights of young people in their real life contexts. It was also expressed in the inclusion of more conceptual perspectives on access to social rights and on the situation of young people in the LTTC training contents – from the conceptual foundations of social rights as human rights, to the sociological experiences of young people living disadvantage in Europe, to European instruments and mechanisms for the protection of social rights. Finally, this was expressed through the emphasis placed on research-policy-practice dialogue around new evidence emerging from research and practice within the different activity strands of the *Enter!* project.

CHAPTER 4



IMPACTS OF THE *ENTER!* PROJECT

Enter!, and especially its two LTTCs, have been evaluated from a variety of perspectives, revealing a wide variety of achievements and impacts that are potentially of a more lasting nature. We can categorise those impacts in four groups as follows: general impact of the Enter! project; educational impact; policy impact of Enter!; impact on the access to social rights of young people; Impact on communities of young people or communities experiencing disadvantage whose members participated in Enter!, especially through the LTTCs. Each of these areas of impact is explored in some more detail.

IMPACT OF THE *ENTER!* PROJECT IN GENERAL⁶⁹

The evaluation of both the LTTCs and the whole *Enter!* project point to a series of more general impacts, as follows:

> ADOPTION OF A HUMAN-RIGHTS BASED APPROACH TO SOCIAL INCLUSION

Enter! took a principled approach, promoting the fact that social rights are human rights. This is nowhere more evident than in the two Long Term Training Courses. More than 60 youth-led projects promoting access to social rights or seeking to improve concrete situations of poor access to social rights of young people within a human rights perspective and using European instruments or best practices were initiated in the context of these two courses. The trainees within the LTTCs (youth workers and youth leaders) took the importance of this approach seriously and worked within a framework of quality criteria which included a solid evidence base of

⁶⁹ This section has been developed on the basis of Ingrid Ramberg, 2013, [Enter! Access to Social Rights for Young People from Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods – Project Report](#)

the social rights situation of the targeted young people, a leading role for the young people in decision making within the project and cooperation with local authorities. The LTTCs and *Enter!* contributed to the development of long term commitment among actors on the ground and their organisations for this kind of approach, a new way of looking at their work and practice innovation for practitioners and other stakeholders involved.

> ENGAGEMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Although realities of access social rights were (and continue to be) very different from country to country, and from local context to local context, *Enter!* contributed to growing awareness of the importance of alliances and partnerships between young people and the local authorities with responsibility for the neighbourhoods where they live. Where they are in place and working, such partnerships have proven effective for 'getting things done' on access to social rights. *Enter!* has shown both local authorities and representatives of young people and youth workers that working together can be of mutual benefit and has contributed to breaking down stereotypes and prejudices between young people and youth workers and local authorities. *Enter!* has shown the extent to which pragmatic cooperation can be mutually beneficial: local authorities can develop interest in youth work and cooperation with youth organisations when they simply have the chance to see what youth work is able to do, and when young people take the initiative to seek support.

> INTEREST IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND YOUTH WORK

Enter! has generated curiosity and in some cases real interest in the potential role and impact of non-formal education and youth work for addressing issues of access to social rights. The educational 'experiments' developed within the two Long Term Training Courses, and the achievements of the projects, most of which took a human rights education and awareness raising approach, have pointed out the value of youth work based interventions to policy makers, to organisations who previously may not have considered non-formal education useful for their mission, and to researchers who are looking for innovative ideas about how social policy interventions can be more effective for addressing access to social rights. Furthermore, *Enter!* has developed awareness for the importance of formal and institutionalised recognition of non-formal education and youth work. It has once again brought home the fact that while social recognition may be available to youth work in the local context, political will is required to institutionalise youth work as a core instrument of social cohesion and to ensure it has resources and a mandate for implementation.

> NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIPS

One of the most obvious and successful dimensions of the *Enter!* project has been its capacity to attract interest and cooperation from partners active in the areas of social rights and youth, but also in areas of work that extend beyond these. This was clearly visible in the number applicants for *Enter!* activities, in the breadth of profiles those applicants represented and in the inter-disciplinary expertise attendees of the activities were able to bring to the table. Furthermore, many useful relationships were developed, created or solidified at the European and national levels, including with partners outside the Council of Europe system (for example, those involved in the Youth in Action programme, such as SALTO Participation, SALTO Inclusion and some national agencies of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action programme).

> POTENTIAL FOR YOUTH POLICY MAINSTREAMING

By definition youth policy is cross-sectoral in nature. *Enter!* included several activities addressing specific sectoral dimensions of youth policy from gender equality to social mobility. The results of these seminars, and indeed of the development and process to pass the Recommendation on youth access to social rights, indicate both the extent of need and will to integrate experiences from other sectors of youth related work into the development of educational and policy interventions on access to social rights of young people. This interest is reciprocal. Representatives of other sectors also understand they have something to gain by integrating a youth perspective into their activities addressing social exclusion, discrimination and violence.

> QUALITY DEVELOPMENT IN YOUTH WORK

The *Enter!* project as a whole was run according to a set of quality criteria. Furthermore, key quality criteria for the projects being developed by the participants of the Long Term Training Courses were elaborated. Learning about and applying these criteria, and later using them to evaluate the achievements of the projects, and also their shortcomings, helped the participants of the LTTCs to run more effective and more relevant projects addressing access to social rights issues. Reflecting on this dynamic helped the participants of the LTTCs, their educational teams, and the Youth Department of the Council of Europe to explore ideas about 'quality standards' for youth work focusing on young people experiencing disadvantage, exclusion, violence and discrimination. Awareness has been raised in the various communities of practice involved in *Enter!* for the need to reflect critically on the quality of the work being conducted, thereby raising the profile of youth work on this theme in the European youth sector.

> INNOVATIVE MONITORING AND SUPPORT SYSTEM

The creation of the Reference and Support Group was a serious attempt to involve the three main professional sectors concerned by youth matters (youth workers, youth researchers and public officials) in the definition and monitoring of the *Enter!* project and constitutes an innovation for the youth sector of the Council of Europe. The group and the way it worked played an important role in creating shared ownership for the project and in creating synergies between its different activities and stakeholders. It also contributed to fostering better intersectoral cooperation on issues of access to social rights of young people within the Council of Europe system.

EDUCATIONAL IMPACT OF *ENTER!*

IN GENERAL

As mentioned several times, *Enter!* was a youth work based, youth policy oriented, project. At the heart of the *Enter!* project was a non-formal educational intervention to train youth workers and youth leaders active in disadvantaged neighbourhoods with young people who face difficulties in accessing and exercising their social human rights. The training, offered through a Long Term Training Course (LTTC) format aimed at developing the skills and competences of such youth workers and youth leaders for setting up projects to improve the access to social rights of the young people they work with in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and for their better social integration.

By acting as a conduit for the direct input of youth workers dealing daily with the challenges of young people experiencing disadvantage, and by bridging experiences from the European to the local level, these two training courses have had a particularly important role in informing the overall development of the *Enter!* project and many of the other activities organised within it. It is also through the LTTCs that *Enter!* has had its most evident and direct impact – educational in nature.

The LTTCs helped youth workers to gain insights into how the European level and engagement with policy actors can support their efforts to empower young people, to promote their access to social rights and to overcome exclusion, violence and discrimination. They have shown that an educational approach, focusing on intermediaries that have the potential to multiply their learning, that seeks to supplement rather than duplicate formal education and training offers for both professional and voluntary social and youth workers (where they exist), focusing on the core competence of the Council of Europe's Youth Department in non-formal education, and on European approaches and instruments for supporting the access to social rights of

young people, can have an impact on the real life situations of young people and the policies that affect their life chances.

The key added value for promoting access to social rights of young people in a human rights perspective has been in the complementarity of the European dimension and perspectives for support opened up to people working at the local level in, oftentimes, rather fraught conditions whether as a result of austerity or as a result of the general level of development of the country in question.

Furthermore, an important impact has been the creation of a sense of learning community around the youth access to social rights agenda among practitioners and local authorities daily confronted with the issues described in Chapter 2. On the one hand, this is because those participating have met and worked with others facing similar challenges, and have exchanged their best practices regarding how to deal with them. On the other, they have developed awareness of and competence for working with Council of Europe and other European mechanisms (across a range of needs from funding to research evidence) where those have been adapted and useful to their specific contexts and needs.⁷⁰ In the end, and without being a formalised entity or institution, this learning community has become a kind of support mechanism in and of itself, developing in an organic manner, as projects and individuals become associated with it through multiplication and word of mouth. Efforts to harness the potential this represents have also been made, and a network of youth workers and leaders promoting access to social rights of young people in Europe has emerged.⁷¹

It would be mistaken to assume that the educational impact of *Enter!* has been limited to the participants receiving training through the two LTTCs. The partners involved in the project have also been exposed to new ways of working, new approaches to their specific issues of concern within the youth access to social rights agenda and new knowledge and perspectives about how to improve their effectiveness. This goes as much for the institutional partners as it does for the different non-governmental organisations and local authorities exposed to the *Enter!* project. In some cases, the process of 'exposure' to other ways of working has been extremely challenging. Hence, the two LTTCs have provided the Council of Europe and the other partners involved in *Enter!* with an unprecedented opportunity to learn about youth work.

The following list summarises different learning points of relevance for institutions interested in promoting access to social rights through youth work:

- ▶ **The LTTCs have shed light on the diversity and severity of situations of disadvantage** that young people across Europe experience (constructing specific kinds of pre-determi-

70 Developed on the basis of content presented in Evaluation of the 1st LTTC, <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680462fa1> and discussions with staff of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, team and other stakeholders of the Enter! 2nd Long Term Training Course (2013-2014).

71 See [Network on Access to Social Rights for Young People](https://www.facebook.com/groups/socialrightsnetwork/); <https://www.facebook.com/groups/socialrightsnetwork/>

ned youth trajectory out of which young people find it difficult to break) by virtue of bringing together groups from such a variety of contexts across the geographical Europe. In contrast to many other initiatives tackling social exclusion of young people since the financial crisis hit, it has revealed the extent of structural problems of disadvantage and its transmission that have been long entrenched across the continent including during the boom years. This points to some potentially uncomfortable truths for all those seeking to effectively promote access to social rights including that many of the policies and approaches in place till now have been massaging the symptoms rather than addressing causes of poor access to social rights.

- > **The LTTCs have painted a vivid picture of the diversity and variety of forms of youth work** being conducted with young people experiencing disadvantage – from professional paid youth work in dedicated national and local structures through NGO volunteer activities that address awareness raising among the broader youth population through hybrids of every kind. This has been valuable from an advocacy perspective because it provides counter arguments to all those vociferous calls for non-essential public services, including youth work, to be curtailed in response to the European financial crisis.
- > **The LTTCs have provided their participants with the opportunity to develop their competence in relation to how ‘Europe’ can help them to do their work** with young people experiencing disadvantage, considering their specific contexts and needs which were necessarily very different. For some this meant coming into contact for the first time with concepts such as access to social rights or Council of Europe legal instruments for achieving human and social rights. For others it meant exposure to quality standards for projects developed on the basis of European exchange of good practice and attendant techniques for improving effectiveness. For others again, it meant learning specific practices of participation and non-formal education developed within a European perspective to empower real young people to access their social rights.
- > **The LTTCs have made obvious some uncomfortable truths**, among others that while many members of the youth work community of practice by now accept the necessity of cooperation between civil society and local authorities, and often diligently try to integrate a dimension of cooperation with local authorities and / or a policy dimension into their projects, the same cannot often enough be said for local authorities and public officials.
- > **The LTTCs have provided valuable information about the day-to-day and structural challenges faced by people and organisations doing youth work** with young people who experience disadvantage – in terms of resources, recognition, mandate and competence.
- > **The LTTCs have raised awareness of the ethical imperative of working with ‘quality standards’** as guiding principles for conducting youth work with young people experiencing disadvantage.

- › **The LTTCs have revealed gaps in competence and effectiveness in several areas**, from which different parts of the institution have attempted to learn. This has been most visible in the youth sector, where several of the evaluation activities have revealed the extent of duplication in work on similar themes broadly related to access to social rights across different sectors of the Council of Europe, and the challenge represented by working together on a common agenda for local impact in a European institution that is used to exchange of practice and the development of standard setting legal mechanisms at the international level.
- › Lastly, and certainly not unimportantly, **the LTTCs have had some interesting and important multiplier effects**. Not only have the participants multiplied their learning to their colleagues and organisations, but their projects have also had multiplying effects through their participants to a wider group of youth peers in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The *Enter!* project and its 'pilot' results has also received a lot of visibility inside and outside the Council of Europe, and this has raised awareness of the need to address questions of inclusion / exclusion and access to social rights among youth in different departments of the Council of Europe addressing related issues and among governmental and non-governmental partners of the Youth Department. This has once more confirmed and underlined the value of investing in youth work intermediaries for social change wider objectives.

Broadly across the international youth sector, *Enter!* has pointed out the extent to which this agenda had fallen by the wayside, overtaken by broader development agendas (for example, the Sustainable Development Goals), agendas targeting specific 'problem groups' (for example, Roma, NEETs, etc.) and how these tended to eclipse the specificity of the youth dimension. Furthermore, it pointed out the extent to which the environment was anything but enabling of work on access to social rights of young people. The dearth of substantive support, whether by virtue of a lack of financial resources, or of a lack of priority given to the issues of concern to this agenda, or even more worryingly by virtue of the poor adaptation of existing youth support mechanisms for organisations carrying projects that aim to promote access to social rights, became clear through the grassroots stories told by the various community representatives involved in the project. Whether the European Youth Foundation, Erasmus+ or the Open Society Foundations, or the wider international philanthropic community, the combination of youth and access to social rights has posed a challenge for how such donors conceptualise their role and for how they engage with the grassroots requiring their support in practice.

It was significantly beyond the scope of the evaluation activities carried out to study the impact that exposure to these 'hard facts' about their own functioning has had on the institutions in real terms. Yet, indications are that those in positions of responsibility have taken note. As such, and at the very least, *Enter!* has served to highlight the need for the donor community concerned with youth and more broadly with civil society responses to social challenges, including those of access to social rights of young people, to reflect on their own effectiveness and lack thereof on a regular basis.

> SPECIFIC LEARNING IMPACTS OF THE LTTCS ON PARTICIPANTS AND ON THEIR ORGANISATIONS

Participants of the two LTTCS have gained in competence, capacity and confidence for their work on access to social rights with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Their knowledge and horizons have been extended and they have become sensitised to the potential of relationships with the European level and with other actors and stakeholders such as local politicians, public servants, youth workers, representatives of youth organisations, etc. They have further become aware of the importance of ongoing assessment and improvement of the quality of their work against standards for non-formal education and youth work.

For the trainees within the LTTCS, there have been individual learning impacts that span a broad understanding of competence as knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the task at hand, in this case promoting access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods and experiencing exclusion, violence and discrimination, within a human rights perspective.

Knowledge was gained about

- > access to social rights and how they relate to the groups of young people the participants are working with;
- > youth work including human rights education, social rights education; intercultural learning from both a theoretical and practice perspective (examples of good practice, methods, facilitation);
- > the European dimension to this kind of work (especially that promoted by the Council of Europe), including relevant institutions, human and social rights frameworks (legal, etc.), European level through local level policies and support measures for their work to the extent that such existed;
- > the situation of young people in other disadvantaged neighbourhoods and in other parts of Europe, About (youth) policy from local to international levels.⁷²

The LTTC participants acquired or further developed a variety of skills through the training provided. These included

- > pedagogical/educational skills, such as delivery of youth work, planning and delivery of non-formal education activities, analysis of learning styles and preferences as a basis for the appropriate development of non-formal educational activities;
- > technical skills such as making presentations, budgeting, time management, project writing; political skills such as skills for working with policy makers from advocacy to strategic planning;

⁷² Developed on the basis of the reports of mentoring activities undertaken by the team of the 2nd Enter! Long Term Training Course (2013-2014) with participants, the participant evaluation of the 2nd Enter! Long Term Training Course (2013-2014) and of content presented in external evaluation of the 1st LTTTC, <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680462fa1> .

- › project-related skills such as project development (how to find partners, develop a needs analysis, plan step by step, conceptual foundations including access to social rights, needs of their participants, etc.), developing project impact potential (networking, multiplication, multi-stakeholder approaches, partnership with other local actors and institutional actors), translation of results into policies (how organisations and local politics work, how to influence the policy and strategic orientations of both their own organisations and local authorities, strategic planning, etc.);
- › digital literacy and e-learning (personal, through their interaction with the e-learning platform and professional, through the use of digital media in their projects).

Evaluation activities revealed that the LTTCs have supported participants extensively in the development of their **personal and professional attitudes and self-awareness** in relation to their work for and with young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This specifically includes:

- › **self-reflection and analysis:** understanding the necessity of reflecting on what one does, why one does it and how and techniques for such, identification of learning needs and challenges, setting learning objectives, identifying and assessing one's own progress towards them, the importance of lifelong learning, challenging others in a constructive manner and dealing with constructive criticism from others, the need for organisational renewal and considering how to be more effective as an organisation;
- › **readiness to consult with others:** the necessity of communication and cooperation with other stakeholders in the neighbourhood for sustainability of action, extended horizons beyond the situation of their specific disadvantaged neighbourhood and beyond their specific daily work format, the legitimacy provided by a connection to Europe in other local stakeholders eyes, interrelations between the local and the European levels, especially as regards the (youth) policy dimension;
- › **intercultural awareness:** confrontation with other ways of working and alternative approaches to youth work and access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- › **renewed motivation, commitment and inspiration:** opportunity to engage with important questions of the why and wherefore of their work countering the sense that nothing ever really changes experienced in the everyday context where knock-backs are common;
- › **confidence, self-belief, pride and awareness of being recognised:** engagement with policy makers and policy-making, speaking in public, taking a stand in the community, representing their work to the outside world.

While the learning impact of the LTTCs has certainly been greatest among their participants, their **sending organisations have also gained** from their participation:

- › participants have gained competence both for their general youth work and for conducting specific projects, both of which are of added value to their organisations.
- › many of their organisations now consider access to social rights as a priority for their ongoing work in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, the result of an LTTC participant's effort to bring their learning back to their organisation.
- › many of the achievements of the projects have also been made possible by the association of these project carriers to the LTTCs – whether as a result of the improvements that have been made to their project plans through the development process or as a result connections made with key supporters or partners.
- › for some project carriers the association to the LTTC and the Council of Europe has given them and their organisations additional credibility.
- › probably the most important impact of the course on the participants is the extent to which they have gained in confidence – to defend their work when it is challenged, to justify and argue for it in front of authorities and funders, to explain to others why they remain committed to it, and this has had positive impacts on their organisations too.

However, it was certainly the structured methodology for project planning, the experience of developing an evidence based needs analysis, of working with quality criteria and of evaluation that were of most added value for participants' organisations. The experience of the project, and its systematic planning and implementation with the support offered by the LTTCs (especially through the mentoring system and application of the quality criteria), has increased the capacity of the project carriers and their sending organisations in a variety of project development and management competencies.

Not only did participants learn about the technical aspects of project development, but they learned the value of many key principles for project effectiveness and legitimacy – from participation through the evidence based approach to collaborative project development. Furthermore, many of these project carriers and organisations had little experience of European funding, or had not considered applying for such. Others, not eligible for such funding, became aware of other opportunities or ways of partnering that could help them access relevant support better adapted to their own situations. Others again, planning small-scale interventions, learned how to leverage the resources of their organisations and / or communities.

Finally, although many of the organisations supporting participants in the LTTCs were already working in fields associated with social rights, many did not see the profile of their work as making a contribution to the promotion of social rights or human rights. Through the LTTC, **both participants and their sending organisations were able to contextualise their missions and practical work in the social rights as human rights concept**, and to develop a more strategic understanding of their positioning in the European human rights community of practice.

Participants certainly experienced many challenges with articulating the objectives, results and achievements (in other words, the educational and social value) of their projects, especially in the context of established and bureaucratic administrative systems (e.g. working with policy actors, relationships with funders, cooperation with public systems and programmes relevant to their target groups, etc.). And the extent to which participants' colleagues have become more competent as a result of the knowledge and skills participants have multiplied could not be assessed. Nevertheless, all indications from anecdotal evidence collected during evaluation activities point to there having been improvements in the capacity of the participants' organisations for conducting such projects.

> EDUCATIONAL IMPACT OF THE PARTICIPANTS' PROJECTS ON YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOODS

The projects developed and implemented by participants of the LTTCs have also had learning impacts for their beneficiaries, as many took an educational approach. Many of the projects worked towards raising the awareness of their participants and other youth publics in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods in which the projects took place about social rights and they have succeeded in doing so through a variety of non-formal educational and creative approaches and methods, presenting not only the idea of access to social rights but also specific mechanisms, such as the European Social Charter or the Charter for Local and Regional Participation of Young People, both of the Council of Europe. These projects and their project carriers worked from the valid assumption that without knowledge of their social rights, young people in such neighbourhoods cannot access them. In their delivery of these projects, the LTTC participants have used methodologies developed and promoted by the Council of Europe and have disseminated non-formal educational publications and manuals developed for this kind of work, raising awareness not only of social and human rights, but also of the educational approaches that exist to other youth leaders / workers involved in their projects.

Participants of LTTC participants' projects have also developed skills and attitudes, or have acquired new ones, as a result of their participation. A key impact on participants of the LTTC was that they became aware of the meaning and significance of a participatory approach in youth work projects, especially when addressing young people with direct experience of disadvantage.⁷³ As a result of the process of self-reflection initiated by the course, many participants decided they needed to go back to the beginning and start again, involving their target group of young people more directly and making them responsible for decision-taking within the project, including for the identification of the social analysis, what the project should set out

73 Leena Suurpa, presentation to the 2nd residential seminar of the Enter! Long Term Training Course (2012-2014) at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg in September 2014, and 'Wandering Through Urban Solidarities - An Academic Seminar Hall as a Site of Collective Contest', unpublished manuscript, 2015.

to do, for its running and evaluation. This adherence to a principled participatory approach helped participants of the projects to gain confidence and self-esteem, learning by doing to see something positive through to the end, as well as teaching them project related skills. For some of the most excluded young people involved this was a 'first', with potentially life changing consequences.

> ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS

By 'access' to social rights we mean the ability of individuals to full enjoy a right. Access to social rights depends on: how a right is formulated, so it can be claimed; procedures, information and how the right is implemented and how resources are being made available for the realisation of that right; the situation of, including the capacities and resources available to, the potential rights' claimants⁷⁴.

The *Enter!* project has the ambition to change the situation of access to social rights of young people living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and the projects of the participants in the LTTC were seen as the primary vehicle for delivering on this aim. The assumption was that while a European level policy initiative was important for raising the awareness of governments for the plight of young people experiencing exclusion, violence and discrimination in such neighbourhoods, local youth led interventions and initiatives would be more effective for helping young people in real life situations of need to access social rights. Yet, this assumption and approach has had an impact on the nature and scale of the impact targeted and possible.

It has been difficult to put numbers to how many of the end beneficiaries of the projects conducted within the two LTTCs have experienced an improvement in their access to social rights as a result of participation in an LTTC project. The scope and reach of the projects was rather diverse, ranging from public awareness raising projects involving hundreds and even thousands of 'audience members' to focused interventions involving just 5 or 6 participants. Clearly the impact of any project that devotes extensive time and attention to a handful of people is more significant for the individuals concerned, than any awareness raising project can ever be. At the same time, awareness raising activities can be significant for changing social and political attitudes. Hence, assessing the nature of 'real change' in access to social rights of young people through the projects involved in the LTTCs is a rather tricky business, risking value judgements in relation to project effectiveness based on ideas about 'change' that have not been de-constructed and clarified.

74 Mary Daly, Access to Social Rights in Europe, Council of Europe, Strasbourg (2002).

Nevertheless, key impacts in relation to access to social rights can be observed in several areas. These can be grouped as follows: impacts in relation to the

- › situation of the young people reached by the projects;
- › visibility of youth access to social rights issues;
- › position of youth in some of the communities touched by the projects;
- › way trainees conceptualise the work they do and the actual quality of what they do on youth access to social rights.

Each of these is dealt with in some further detail in the following sections.

› ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Only a proportion of the LTTC participants' projects sought to 'redress' human rights violations in the social sphere, and it is likely these projects that have had the most 'concrete' impact in terms of improving the real life situations of young people experiencing disadvantage, helping their target groups to access education, training, employment, welfare, legal status or other social rights of which they were previously deprived, or from the enjoyment of which they were excluded.

However, it would be mistaken to consider these projects the only ones that have had concrete impact on the access to social rights of young people. The great majority of the LTTC participants' projects understood their role for improving access to social rights in broader terms, focusing on helping young people to improve their and their communities' quality of life, however they may have defined that (access to leisure, learning, participation, exchange / solidarity, mobility, and many other opportunities to which young people may not have had access otherwise), all within a social rights as human rights perspective. Not at all negligible is the awareness raising effect of such initiatives, which we deal with in a later section. Such projects have 'changed something' very real for their participants and the communities and neighbourhoods where they were run, especially when it was the projects' participants and their peers who made the decisions about what the projects should focus on and why.

Adriana, ECOS Cooperative, Portugal, participant of the *Enter!* Youth Meeting 2015 and young person involved in the local project of a LTTC participant

My name is Adriana. I come from Portugal, in the Southern region of the Algarve. I am a volunteer for several organisations and projects which promote young participation and make bridges between youth and decision makers. I'd like to tell you about my experience in the project called 'Kabati', that was organised in the framework of the LTTC Enter! The main goals of this project was to bring together young people and NGOs to map the gaps in our health system that make access to sexual and reproductive health rights difficult for young people. The idea was to work together to develop more effective consultation processes with groups of young people who have less access to sexual and reproductive health rights and to promote the creation of spaces of discussion and cooperation between them. We worked with schools and different formal and informal community groups to develop action plans, and consultation sessions, using face to face techniques and surveys, on these issues. The young people, and different marginalised groups from sexual rights point of view, chose the priorities themselves - for example, participants included sex workers, victims of human trafficking, LGBTQI community members, immigrants, people with special needs. We realised that if we wanted to understand the situation of young people and vulnerable groups regarding sexual rights we would have to find out what they think, communicate with them in a way they can identify with and develop new and creative methods. We worked with edutainment and social media and were able to reach young people in ways they were not used to. It was enormously motivating for them. I had an enormous joy participating in the project because personally I felt that young people and the concerns of ordinary citizens are very often neglected. Our project brought together different actors to collectively make access of young people to their rights and the active participation of ordinary people easier. It allowed me and all participants to understand the resources that the region has already invested in the field. Until this project nobody talked about it and the information didn't reach young people.

While for their participants being involved in the project might have been a life-course changing experience, their scale is often not large enough to be 'publicly visible' or even to catch the attention of policy and decision makers. At the same time, addressing the structural dimension of poor access to social rights was often beyond the scope and reach of the LTTC projects, even where they had a specific policy dimension or follow-up. This may seem like something of a contradiction in terms. How can projects that address access to social rights improve or change something without addressing the structural phenomena behind poor access to social rights?

This was a key dilemma for the *Enter!* project. It was addressed in the LTTCs both explicitly through the training and mentoring, and implicitly through the process of self-reflection participants went through, with the result that many project leaders consciously or sub-consciously limited their focus to what was most realistic, knowing that such life changing individual impacts and those of a more structural nature are very often mutually exclusive, because they require very different kinds and levels of intervention.

It would be mistaken to judge this as taking the path of least resistance. It is a mark of competence when project carriers understand what they can and cannot achieve with their particular scope, mandate and (often) limited resources, and make the decision to intervene there where they can have the most lasting impact. Coming to this realisation was an 'AHA moment' for many participants in the LTTC and a key impact of lasting value for their further engagement with and for the effectiveness of their organisation's engagement with youth access to social rights issues. And, this is not to say there has been no more structural impact resulting from the participants' projects. These are, however, dealt with under the section addressing policy, below.

> VISIBILITY OF YOUTH ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS

While it is common for Council of Europe projects to aim at increasing visibility for a particular issue inside the Council of Europe system, and *Enter!* was no exception, the two LTTCs have also created opportunities for increasing the visibility of youth access to social rights issues in the different contexts with which they had contact and relationships. These include

- > young people in the community, neighbourhood or more broadly;
- > public authorities, local politics and national governments
- > participants' own sending organisations;
- > and the public at large.

Towards young people: As mentioned previously, a large number of the LTTC participants' projects started from 'know your rights to get your rights' principle. Participants have rightly assumed that in order to be able to access their social rights, young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods need to know what their rights are and how to access them. Many of the projects, therefore, took some form of educational approach to helping their beneficiaries understand their rights and take necessary action to access them. This is valuable on the one hand because it supports young people in difficult circumstances to develop the autonomy to act on their own behalf – something that is difficult for them to do as living in a disadvantaged neighbourhood has negative impacts on young people's agency. On the other hand, from the perspective of project impact and change in favour of access to social rights it could be seen as 'the path of least resistance', as it is significantly easier to educate about social rights than it is to change the situation of access to rights of those being educated.

Towards public authorities, local politics and national governments: For those working at the front lines of youth access to social rights, experiencing first hand the disadvantage of the young people living in the neighbourhoods concerned, it goes without saying that issues of access to social rights are important. However, the majority of those involved in public authorities, local politics and national governments, even when they work directly on such issues, do not have or do not want to have this first hand experience. Hence, several of the projects attempted to engage local authorities, local politicians and even national governments as key stakeholders from the outset, or for those for which that was not possible, attempted to plan project follow-up in a way that would impact on local policy regarding their issue constructively. Some projects were more successful than others in this endeavour. It is especially interesting to note the experience of those local authority youth workers and local authority (project) administrators / managers that participated in the course. For those with the backing of their local councillor or senior manager, the LTTC was seen as something to learn from, an opportunity for enhancing competence, a way to get project development experience and even a way to get a useful project off the ground. For those who undertook the LTTC based on their individual motivation, it was often an uphill struggle to bring the idea that youth access to social rights is an important area of work needing specific attention home to their local authorities.

Towards LTTC participants' organisations (NGOs and public institutions): Some of the participants' organisations have incorporated access to social rights into their priorities and work programmes as a result of the process of developing and implementing a project on access to social rights (for the first time). In addition, several of the participants' projects are what one might call 'DYS copy-cats', without this being intended to have a negative connotation. These projects reproduce the LTTC *Enter!* or some other training offer of the DYS for youth leaders / youth workers (e.g. citizenship modules, training in the use of the charter on local and regional youth participation, *Compass* training) in the disadvantaged neighbourhood and explicitly make use of the existing training methodologies and resources tried and tested first in the DYS. On the one hand, this is a good use of existing resources and a chance for DYS training/NFE methodologies to be disseminated more broadly. On the other, the extent to which those project carriers are skilled enough in NFE delivery with young people (also given that this LTTC did not focus extensively on training NFE and general youth work delivery skills) might be questioned. On another hand again, this could also be considered a dimension of innovation.

Towards the public at large: Closely related to the above are the projects that prioritised awareness raising of a broader nature in relation to social rights. Such projects can create conditions for the better visibility and acceptance of young people's demands in relation to their poor access to social rights. They do not demand extensive 'buy-in' from their target groups, and hence might be easier to roll out than projects that demand more active participation. The

benchmarks for measuring results in awareness-raising projects are also less stringent than in other kinds of educational project – for example, behaviour change might be considered an excellent result but does not have to have taken place for effective awareness-raising to have taken place.

Marin Zivkovic, Croatian Youth Network, Croatia, participant in one of the *Enter!* seminars on social rights organised for national youth councils

In Croatia today there are many groups that are the victims of violence and hate. Rhetoric against them is getting worse day after day. Worst off are national minorities like Serbs and Roma people and members of LGBT community. There is a notable rise in discriminatory behaviour in Croatia. The last notable example was a speech of the Croatian president when she made a clear difference between ethnic Croats and other citizens. And that kind of discourse is growing, especially on the Internet. We are hoping to reach both the victims and propagators of hate speech. We are hoping to give some tools to the victims to help them to protect them self from this violence, but also to raise public awareness on the issue and to warn perpetrators of the consequences for society and individuals. It's still too soon to say, but we are hoping that our actions will reduce violence, discrimination and prejudices among young people and that more organizations will be involved.

> POSITION OF YOUTH IN THE COMMUNITY

Some projects worked closely with or even inside public and / or private institutions of importance for the community, and with persons responsible for those, usually figures of authority in the community – schools, prisons, immigrant accommodation (detention) centres, civic organisations, local community charities, youth clubs, orphanages / children's homes, and so on. Organising a project in such a context is often only possible once a relationship of trust and mutual respect has been developed, and a large part of the preparatory work that had to go into many of the projects focused on this dimension. This has had important impacts on how communities see the issues, view youth led projects and engage with their representatives (whether young people, representatives of youth NGOs or youth workers). Furthermore, it is interesting to note from the evaluations that have been conducted how association with the *Enter!* project, particularly through participation in an LTTC and the organisation of a project supported by the Council of Europe, has changed attitudes of adults (often in positions of authority) in the communities towards young people. By having the opportunity to engage constructively in and lead an initiative of worth to the community, the young people have been able to show the

community that some of their perceptions of young people were not based in fact. The LTTC projects delivered such opportunities in different ways – some through direct engagement with situations and challenges experienced in the neighbourhood of relevance to both young people and the wider community, others by engaging youth usually perceived as ‘problematic’ in activities that are good for them and have some added value for the community. In some cases this involved making a stand against discrimination, in others tackling entrenched social inequalities, in others again offering support and assistance to young people who without it would likely end up in a vicious cycle of poverty and welfare dependence.

Lavinia Ruscigni, AMSED, France, participant of the LTTC Enter! 2013-2014

My name is Lavinia. I am a local youth worker in AMSED in Strasbourg. My role in my organisation is to create a bridge to access to social rights and social inclusion in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Even if Strasbourg might seem to be a rich city, there are disadvantaged neighbourhoods where access to employment, education, health is poor in comparison to other parts of the city. My project is called ‘Overcome the Gap’. The idea behind it is that it’s not enough to have opportunities, but you also need tools to be able to use the opportunities that are out there. Enter! helped me to learn about the tools young people need to be able to use the opportunities that are presented to them. I’ve learned how to sensitize young people to their rights. For many, these are just a ‘theory’. They are not easy to understand for young people. So, we worked with the young people to see what their needs were, and my team and I tried to figure out how to enable the young people to do something concrete together, that corresponds to their needs. My two years in the course have been very enriching because I was able to see different realities, and that those different realities in Europe have so many things in common with the situations we work with here in Strasbourg. Social exclusion, marginalisation, other challenges of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. So Enter, all the participants, trainers, but also the people who participated in the project, they gave me ideas and concrete tools that I could use, and also a strong link with the local authorities. At the beginning I remember I didn’t know how to work with them, or even why to work with them. But, I tried to understand the importance of the dialogue between young people and the authorities. That’s why I see myself, and our organisation, as a bridge. It isn’t always easy to be that. It was a strong experience personally, and I guess it’s only the beginning of a longer process of development for me as a youth worker.

> CONCEPTUALISATION AND QUALITY OF WORK ON YOUTH ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS

A very important dimension of both the LTTCs involved instilling a sense of the necessity for self-reflection, self-assessment and evaluation in the participants. Counter-intuitive as it may seem, many education, youth work and social support systems (both public and private) are not equipping their human resources to consider the quality of their work. With such extensive emphasis on results as today is common, the process through which the results are achieved often gets too little attention, as well as the competence of those entrusted with those processes. Several dimensions of the LTTC training curricula aimed at developing such competence:

- > project development: emphasis on an evidence based social analysis, a participatory approach to establishing the project, quality criteria for projects as a basis for planning and evaluation;
- > extensive in-depth mentoring of participants through the course;
- > emphasis on skills and approaches relevant for youth work practice with young people experiencing disadvantage or poor access to social rights (Human Rights Education)
- > and ongoing evaluation through self-assessment and collective reflection (Learning Portfolio approach).

Those participants that have engaged diligently with the activities presented by the team during the residential seminars and throughout the e-learning phases have developed their competence in the area of reflective practice extensively.

In some cases, they have also been able to bring this competence back to their organisations and institutions, and to introduce ideas about the 'learning organisation' into the way they work day to day.

At the same time, certain of these aspects even represent innovations for the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. The courses experimented with approaches that until now have only rarely been used in Youth Department training activities, even LTTCs. This is especially true for the mentoring and learning portfolio approach, and for the development of specific quality criteria to guide both the planning and evaluation of projects within one specific course. Hence, the Youth Department of the Council of Europe might also be said to have learned about quality of youth work from this experience, with possible implications for its agenda on the recognition of youth work.

Fionn Greig, Voice of Youth, United Kingdom, participant of the LTTC *Enter!* 2013-2014

The Enter! Long Term Training Course gave me an opportunity to live my normal setting where I did youth work in London and to come here and to learn about social rights. Before that, I only had heard of human rights and didn't know there was a way to do it in Europe called social rights. It also gave me a chance to devote 2 weeks to planning a project for young people and to be really participative. The young people actually chose the topic just after I got back to the UK so that was exciting. I'm personally very interested in the politics of justice and fighting discrimination and fighting oppression so this course on the access to social rights gave me a good understanding on how to include my passions for that subject in the work that I do with young people. As for our organisation, we're very small, only 7 workers and a few volunteers. But, the course and our project, gave us a better understanding and perspective on the work that we do with young people on their rights. And we hadn't really done rights based work with young people before just work we didn't realise we could connect to rights. For me, personally and as a youth worker, it was a really brilliant challenge to sustain a 2-year project with young people. And it's still going on, so the support from the LTTC gave me ideas and energy and ways to communicate with the other youth workers that are doing their work around Europe. It was really good fun as well, and we made friends.

> POLICY IMPACT OF ENTER!

Impact on policy is an important aim of the *Enter!* project as a whole. *Enter!* has kept two specific objectives in this relation:

- > develop conceptual, educational and practical means of translating access to social rights for young people into the realities of youth work and policy-making;
- > advocate for the access of young people to social rights, particularly by developing partnerships between civil society actors, young people and policy-makers, at local, national and European levels.

The specific *Enter!* approach relied primarily on youth work based activities to achieve its aims. In terms of impact on the policy dimension, two pillars of the *Enter!* project stand out – these are the two Long Term Training Courses and the elaboration of a Council of Ministers Recommendation on the access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

In the following, we will attempt to deconstruct which policy impacts *Enter!* has had through the Long Term Training Course and the Recommendation, looking at impacts from the local through to the European levels.

POLICY IMPACT OF THE LONG TERM TRAINING COURSES

The two Long Term Training Courses were organised in such a way as to bring youth work into contact with policy and to create functional relationships between the two fields of work wherever possible, under the assumption that such relationships can foster effectiveness, develop creative approaches, leverage resources, avoid duplication and promote sustainability in the delivery of access to social rights to young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods around Europe. The LTTCs sought to create a constructive dynamic around the idea of engaging with policy and policy makers, something which for the majority of LTTC participants was often difficult to imagine given their previous experience (and also, their lack of experience) in this domain. The evaluation activities conducted reveal several aspects of the policy dimension on which the courses have had an impact, as follows:

> KNOWLEDGE OF KEY COUNCIL OF EUROPE POLICY INSTRUMENTS AND HOW TO USE THEM

In taking the explicit decision to promote cooperation between youth workers and leaders working with youth experiencing disadvantage, the *Enter!* Project pre-determined that there should be a policy dimension to the content of the LTTC curriculum. The two editions of the LTTC chose to honour this expectation in a variety of ways, with the second having had the benefit of time to learn from the experience of the first, thereby having the opportunity to adapt its contents on the basis of evaluation and reflection. Nevertheless, both courses addressed a number of policy relevant contents, many of which were new for participants (likely because of the European perspective). An important dimension was, therefore, Council of Europe human rights and social rights frameworks, as well as their attendant mechanisms (especially the European Social Charter).

> COMPETENCE FOR ENGAGING ON POLICY AND WITH POLICY ACTORS

Furthermore, important discussions and reflections were held about questions of power relations between young people, adults in positions of authority in the community, and local politics and policy making

- ▶ around social rights issues of concern to the young people they work with; about the role/s of youth workers, youth leaders and organisations promoting access to social rights in relation to the young people they work with and for, and possibly represent;

- › about the risks and opportunities of engaging in policy considering the very different contexts in which the participants are active;
- › about the different ways, levels and sectors in which policy relevant to the access to social rights of young people is made;
- › what it means to act strategically, approaches to achieving the desired influence and how Council of Europe human and social rights mechanisms might be used effectively in the local context.

Important to note regarding the competence developed is that it did not always translate into ‘spectacular policy successes’ in the area of access to social rights, in the sense of the passing of new or the changing of (poor) existing policies. Rather, the success of this approach lies in the initiation of relationships between different stakeholders with common goals where there were none before because of prejudice, inertia or simple lack of knowledge and awareness, and the potential that those relationships have for improving access to social rights in the long-term if appropriately nurtured and developed. This can be understood as a sort of intercultural learning⁷⁵ as it demands of participants, whether civic actors or public officials, to work through their prejudices in regard of the other and to consider the potential of mutual engagement on the basis of another kind of information and direct contact, something that often seems impossible in the specific local context.

Nevertheless, it would be remiss not to point out that a lack engagement of local authorities (participation, in kind support, money, human resources, simple acknowledgement) remains the policy reality in so many of the localities in which participants ran their projects, despite the engagement of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, and often despite the best efforts of the participants to get them on board, as well.

› AWARENESS OF THE POTENTIAL AND LIMITS OF POLICY FOR ADDRESSING ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS

Many participants were and even remain sceptical about whether it makes sense for them engage with policy makers and local politics in their contexts, and with good reason, although maybe in some cases not for reasons one might immediately think of. In some of the participants’ contexts such engagement with anything political is tantamount to co-optation in the eyes of the general youth public and young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. These participants worried about their legitimacy in working with what is perceived as a corrupt and self-serving sector. Several participants, working inside and / or with municipal structures, experienced difficulties in getting their projects off the ground and even in seeing their participation in the course through to the end. Others raised the question of the extent to which it is appropriate

75 For relevant definitions and explorations of intercultural learning see: [The All Different – All Equal Education Pack. www.eycb.coe.int/edupack/12.html](http://www.eycb.coe.int/edupack/12.html)

or realistic to expect that youth workers combatting exclusion, violence and discrimination on the front lines with young people living disadvantage to engage in policy making, and to which it is possible given the attitude of the policy makers they would have to address. They rightly ask whether their limited time and mandate would not be better placed in the service of young people. And some made a conscious decision not to engage.

Yet, being able to come to such a decision consciously is an enormous step forward. The courses have helped participants to think in more political terms:

- › to reflect on their own position as youth leaders and youth workers in relation to the political sphere
- › to consider what policy and politics can help them achieve (in anything)
- › and to formulate their issues, concerns and demands towards that sphere explicitly.

In other words, the course has helped participants to engage with ideas of power and how that plays out in their efforts to improve access to social rights of young people.

Another dimension of this relates to the core policy competence and mandate of the Youth Department that promoted the *Enter!* project. This is, of course, in the area of youth policy, and as a result of the nature of intergovernmental cooperation within the Council of Europe, the mandate of the governmental representatives participating in the Youth Department's intergovernmental committee (CDEJ) often only extends to youth and/or European cooperation. Hence, there are objective challenges of transmission of good practice from the Council of Europe system to national systems when it comes to youth and policy related projects such as *Enter!* Most of the LTTC projects were dealing with issues that are within the mandate of specific sectoral policy areas, such as housing, social policy, employment, education, migration, asylum and citizenship to name but a few. So while access to a national youth policy sector was facilitated in some cases, the LTTC was not able to facilitate access to relevant national policy sectors for all projects that would have found that useful, with the exception of those for which it had access to national research experts by virtue of their participation in other activities under *Enter!*. At the same time, several participants of the LTTCs have identified local youth policy (development, review, revision) as important for redressing some of the challenges faced by the young people they work with in the disadvantaged neighbourhood where they are active.

› SPECIFIC POLICY ACTIONS AT LOCAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL

As will be clear from previous sections outlining the educational and access to social rights impacts of the LTTC participants' projects, the majority did not take an explicit policy approach. In other words, they did not set out to make or change specific policies as their primary project intervention. Yet, several have had specific impacts on policy situations and realities in their contexts. These range from changes to the organisations' policies around access to social rights

work with young people and ending with efforts to develop a new local youth policy, these initiatives were most often either positive side effects of the project or follow-up actions to it. It is important to note that these often take a more long-term approach to the access to social rights issue they attempt to address, and conceptualise their role as interventions to address structural disadvantage, identifying actions to eradicate root causes as well as alleviate symptoms of poor access to social rights.

> IMPACT ON THE YOUTH POLICY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The two LTTCs have also had implications for the youth policy of the Council of Europe, with potentially positive perspectives, but also significant challenges. In institutional terms, the Youth Department has gained experience and expertise in a field to which it has traditionally little access – local level youth work in disadvantaged neighbourhoods – and has gained insights into how to develop its engagement with this field of work which is certainly in need of complementary support and training. It is, therefore, in a better position as a result of *Enter!* to assess what of added value it can offer this field, considering its limited mandate, but also the renewed interest of both governments and other European institutions in issues related to social rights (for example, youth employment, NEETs and exclusion of young people). Furthermore, as a result of the participants' projects, the Council of Europe's Youth Department has gained some credibility and legitimacy in the field of social youth work and among certain publics engaged in it.

At the same time, the experience of the LTTCs reveals evidence of the extreme fragility of the voluntary youth sector working on issues of access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The fact that participants face a lack of resources and have to manage organisations and projects in a state of underfunding, over-bureaucratisation and state onslaught, to the point where many found their jobs at risk from cuts to social programmes as a result of, or legitimated by, the economic crisis, became more and more obvious over the course of the two editions of the LTTC. This has raised further awareness for the extent to which this field of work lacks recognition. Those working at the front line of social rights issues usually lack a strong mandate and decision-making power, and the action of the different sectors engaged with these issues (civil society, government and donors) continues to be extremely fragmented. This has necessarily raised questions regarding the effectiveness of the Council of Europe's instruments in the youth field. If the Youth Department has gained in credibility in some respects, it is also now challenged to consolidate and leverage what it has learned about engaging with the youth access to social rights agenda at local and national levels.

Several examples might be considered relevant for future consideration. A case in point is the European Youth Foundation and its support for this kind of work. On the one hand, the LTTCs have revealed the extent to which access to social rights work with young people in lo-

cal contexts is under-funded at all levels from local through international. On the other, a good part of the feedback received regarding the European Youth Foundation funding from those of the LTTC project carriers that tried to use it, is that the procedure are lengthy and complex considering the level of funding available, and due to the EYF's specific definition of youth organisation, many local initiatives working in the field of youth access to social rights would not be eligible to apply, because the organisation is classified as a social work organisation or a children's rights organisation.

Another relevant learning point is intersectoral cooperation within the Council of Europe and the challenges experienced in this regard during *Enter!* The onus is on the Youth Department to learn from the experience, and adapt its approach so as to avoid some of the pitfalls encountered during the implementation of the LTTCs, although evaluations indicate such challenges were not down to its lack of effort, but rather the lack of buy in from other sectors.

A third case in point is the experience of putative cooperation with the Open Society Foundations around funding the LTTC projects, which could not be brought to effective structural and institutional fruition due to differing expectations and interests which were not sufficiently well clarified among the partners.

Fourth and finally, the experience of the participants' projects shows that there is little real support from the political level for effective redress of the fragility of the 'enabling environment' for access to social rights work with young people in Europe. The LTTCs have revealed this fragility and, through a number of activities have attempted to bring it to the attention of the political level in the Council of Europe, the national governments engaged in the youth sector and Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, with mixed results to date.

> DIRECT INPUT FROM THE GRASSROOTS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A EUROPEAN POLICY AND INSTRUMENT FOR ADVOCACY

As a result of these two courses and the projects supported under the LTTCs, the Youth Department has a better understanding of the policy gaps and needs facing the community of practice engaged in this field of youth work. The LTTCs have acted as a transmission belt of evidence of need from the local to the European levels. Participants of the LTTC, using their work experience and the experience of their projects as a basis, have formulated specific recommendations to the policy sphere about what should be done to improve the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, in the form of direct input into a Council of Ministers Recommendation on the access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The next section attempts to assess the impact of that initiative under the *Enter!* Project in more detail.

> THE RECOMMENDATION ON ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOODS

In a very explicit attempt to practice what it preaches, the Youth Department initiated an experiment in participatory policy making, by launching the process to draft and adopt a Council of Ministers Recommendation on access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In so doing, it essentially turned the process of content development over to young people directly affected by the issue – young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods around Europe and their youth workers and youth leaders.

This is a very different approach to the way in which Council of Ministers Recommendations are usually developed. Standard practice involves the identification of key issues by the technocratic secretariat and the elaboration of the relevant content by national experts, nominated by governments, with it being at their discretion to engage in consultation with civil society or the representatives of the communities concerned.

The very form of the text of the Recommendation is an innovation. Those drafting realised early on that a 'classical' Recommendation might get an easier hearing in the corridors of power, but would likely not be as effective at the local level. Hence, the Recommendation itself is a formal political document that does not differ considerably from any other Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers. However, the second part, called 'Guidelines for the implementation of the Recommendation' develops in detail on how authorities concerned can use and implement it. This part is also written in more accessible language. Furthermore, the guidelines address practical and operational challenges usually faced by local authorities, public services and other community institutions in addressing access to social rights of young people. The Recommendation was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 January 2015 at the 1217th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies after a long and difficult process to get it accepted, which required several rounds of further discussion and revision. Nevertheless, the essence of what the participatory process insisted should be included remains.

At the 2nd Enter! Youth Meeting in July 2015⁷⁶, 180 young people and youth workers / leaders working on the front lines of access to social rights in Europe explored different ideas and approaches through which the Council of Europe, local authorities and they themselves can ensure that the Recommendation's provisions are implemented. The document they prepared not only acknowledges the potential utility of such an advocacy tool, it provides concrete suggestions for ways in which different actors, including young people directly affected by disadvantage, can go about implementing the provisions of the Recommendation. These suggestions are far-

76 Read more here <http://www.coe.int/en/web/enter/youth-meetings>

reaching, but nevertheless actionable, and emphasise the necessity of educating young people about their social rights, and relevant mechanisms they can use autonomously to ensure these are not violated or to access redress when they are. They also emphasise the role of existing youth work infrastructure and youth work (as a practice), whether organised by private / civic initiatives or by public authorities / institutions), in delivering not only such education, but experiences that can help young people to take responsibility for their own lives, communities and neighbourhoods. Furthermore, it makes a strong case for young people's participation and leadership in ensuring their own access to social rights and that of their peers, encouraging public authorities to engage more (often and directly) with young people and their youth workers, youth leaders and organisations.

Finally, they considered ways in which the Council of Europe could promote access to social rights, and support their and local authority actions to implement the Recommendation through information and dissemination, political visibility and attention to the 'access to social rights' as an agenda within the Council of Europe system and in exchanges with partner institutions, the provision of training for youth work / policy professionals active on the local and national levels on access to social rights and on the implementation of the Recommendation itself, monitoring and reporting on the progress of implementation of the Recommendation in member states.

At the time of writing this publication, plans for how to make the Recommendation known to relevant actors and for some activities to implement its provisions were being made by both the Youth Department and its partners in the field of youth access to social rights at both the European level and in member states. Specifically, an online 'youth friendly' version of the Recommendation to help youth initiatives, youth workers, young people and their organisations to work with it as an advocacy tool for improving access to social rights of young people in the local context is being developed. There **will also be a guide for how local authorities**⁷⁷ can use the Recommendation as a framework for improving the effectiveness of their actions in this relation. The Youth Department of the Council of Europe plans to provide support and advice for the implementation of the Recommendation in the member states and will prepare a new Long Term Training Course to support the implementation of the Recommendation.

The Joint Council on Youth has in the meantime adopted guidelines for the implementation of the Recommendation and agreed on the process of preparing a report on progress with its implementation in 2019.

It is still too early to identify specific impacts from the implementation of the Recommendation. Indeed, the extent to which another Council of Europe policy recommendation can contribute to substantive change in the situation of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods has to be questioned, given that it remains unclear at this point what kind of political backing from national governments or local authorities it might have, and this remains the major pre-prerequisite for real change to be possible.

77 "Taking it Seriously" downloadable at www.coe.int/enter

Nevertheless, three potentially interesting and positive developments are already visible. These are:

- > the commitment of the statutory bodies of the Youth Department to engage with this process and theme may encourage national governments and local authorities to engage in a substantive way with this agenda in accordance with the processions of the recon-
rendition;
- > the Youth Department of the Council of Europe and all those involved in its development have had a steep learning curve with the elaboration of this Recommendation. This has contributed to the capacity of the community of practice involved in the project from trainers running the LTTC to its participants to members of the statutory bodies;
- > the process has improved the self-esteem of the young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods who were involved. Such young people rarely, if ever, get a hearing from anyone in a position of authority, let alone to make their case for their needs, concerns and issues, without being mediated, changed, or fobbed off. For these young people being able to do that in the Council of Europe, towards 'important policy makers', has helped them to believe in themselves as competent for inclusion, to identify their own worth as contributors to the common good, and to reconsider their role as citizens with a right and a responsibility to make a stand for their own and others' rights.

> IMPACTS OF OTHER *ENTER!* PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Several other categories of activities were organised under the auspices of the *Enter!* project, notably

- > the production, translation and dissemination of Enter Dignityland! in several languages, an educational game about social rights that can be played with young people;
- > thematic seminars on topics related to social rights, such as youth policy, gender equality in youth work, information and counselling, youth participation, etc.
- > national level seminars to support the networking and promotion of innovative and co-ordinated ways of working on access to social rights;
- > research on youth work and youth policy aspects related to access to social rights for young people;
- > study sessions at the two European Youth Centres of a variety of European level youth organisations and youth networks on themes relevant to access to social rights.

These activities have several impacts in common, the most important of which results from the exchange of practices and learning that participation in such activities has facilitated. For many of those taking part, participation has helped them to assess the relevance of their approach to social inclusion, informed their reflection on how to work on such issues in a more effective manner, and actually changed their approach to follow the good practice developed in the context to the *Enter!* project. These activities provided a variety of platforms for exploring (access to) social rights issues with colleagues from different countries, systems and contexts, something which most practitioners and policy makers rarely have the opportunity to do.

RESUMÉ OF *ENTER!* PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

This chapter has attempted to present the impacts of the *Enter!* Project focusing on its two most important and relevant pillars – the two LTTC and the Recommendation. In sum, some important achievements of the *Enter!* Project can be identified, as follows:

- › **Knowledge development:** The project developed a lot of new knowledge and generated a lot of evidence for the situation, needs and challenges of young people in relation to social inclusion by bringing together people who maybe otherwise would never put their heads together;
- › **The Recommendation:** While the recommendation itself is not necessarily a big achievement for an organisation whose main work is the development of such documents, the participatory process undertaken for the elaboration of this recommendation was something new and was challenging for all the stakeholders involved. We now not only have a potential policy tool for supporting the social inclusion of young people, we have developed competence for participatory policy making;
- › **Experimenting with intersectoral cooperation:** While intersectoral cooperation in this project and in the LTTC especially fell short of expectations, the *Enter!* Project was an experiment, and has revealed the many pitfalls and some opportunities for intersectoral cooperation in the future. This learning experience will serve the further development of intersectoral cooperation in the future, and should help to make it more satisfactory;
- › **Supporting young people to access social rights:** The course achievements are many and are well documented between the evaluation of the course and the report of the project. Most important is that the projects contributed in some way to supporting young people to access their social rights, and the project leaders developed their capacity for working systematically on the question of social rights;

- > **Emergent community of practice:** The *Enter!* process has brought the Youth Department into contact with a whole lot of active individuals active in diverse areas of practice, policy and research, mostly not youth specific, but more broadly concerned with social issues and challenges faced by young people. This is slowly emerging as a community of practice that identifies, on the one hand, with the *Enter!* agenda and, on the other, with the approach of the Council of Europe. This is best evidence by the creation and continued consolidation of the Youth Social Rights Network.⁷⁸ This is an enormously valuable resource for both the Council of Europe and the end beneficiaries of such the youth access to social rights agenda;
- > **Access to social rights on the political agenda:** At least in the Council of Europe, *Enter!* has gone a long way to putting youth access to social rights on the political agenda. It remains no mean feat that the *Enter!* project has managed to pass a Committee of Ministers' Recommendation and that it was developed with the full participation of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.
- > **Multiplication:** The *Enter!* project and especially the Long Term Training Courses have proven once more the value of investing in the education and training of intermediaries that can and do multiply their learning to wider target groups, whether colleagues in their organisations, the communities where they are located or specific young people that benefit from their projects.

78 See Network on Access to Social Rights for Young People; <https://www.facebook.com/groups/socialrightsnetwork/>

CHAPTER 5

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SO, WHAT CAN YOUTH WORK DO FOR ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS?

INTRODUCTION

What does youth work do for access to social rights of young people?

- Youth work is a positive experience in a sea of negative ones
- Youth work provides opportunities to act responsibly
- Youth work provides space for non-threatening self-expression
- Youth work is education for citizenship and ‘education for life’
- Youth work is a safe space for experimenting with new approaches to issues of concern Youth work is a channel through which the ‘complete stories’ of young people can be learned
- Youth work provides young people with the opportunity to practice social rights, thereby improving access.

This last chapter of the publication will attempt to sum up the learning we can glean from the *Enter!* process, from all its achievements and impacts, and from the many challenges faced and shortcomings identified, about the role of youth work supporting access to social rights. It will attempt to answer one broad but relatively straightforward question in relation to European policy research about adequate and effective responses to such challenges⁷⁹:

79 For example: Helena Helve for the European Commission, 2012, [Social Inclusion at the Margins of Society – Policy Review of Research Results](#); Howard Williamson, 2015, [Mapping of barriers encountered by young people in vulnerable situations](#) (report of the expert seminar that took place at the EYCS in October 2015); Jelena Markovic, Miguel Angel Garcia Lopez and Sever Dzigurski for the Council of Europe – European Commission Partnership on Youth, 2015, [Finding a Place in Modern Europe: Mapping of Barriers to Social Inclusion of Young People](#).

Based on the experience of Enter!, what have we learned about what youth work (in all its diversity) can do to improve the access to social rights of young people experiencing exclusion, violence and discrimination in disadvantaged neighbourhoods around Europe?

All this said by way of introduction, however, it would be remiss not to remind ourselves of the extent to which ideas, concepts, aims and practices of youth work are diverse around the geographical Europe represented by the Council of Europe member states.

The Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio underlines the extent of this diversity when defining what youth work is and what it is for, as follows:

” *‘... Youth work around Europe is conducted by a large number of different institutions and organisations and by many different people, individually and in teams. It is very diverse, taking many different forms. Some countries have long traditions of professional youth work (qualified staff working with young people through local and national authority-funded programmes and institutions). Other countries have long-established voluntary youth work structures (activities provided by voluntary organisations). Other countries again have established youth work as part of social welfare provision, with youth work practices being put to the service of employability, social inclusion and social assistance. And, in some countries youth work takes place without the existence of a recognised “profession” of youth work, and the people doing youth work are volunteer leaders.’⁸⁰*

WHAT DOES ENTER! TELL US ABOUT YOUTH WORK AND ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS?

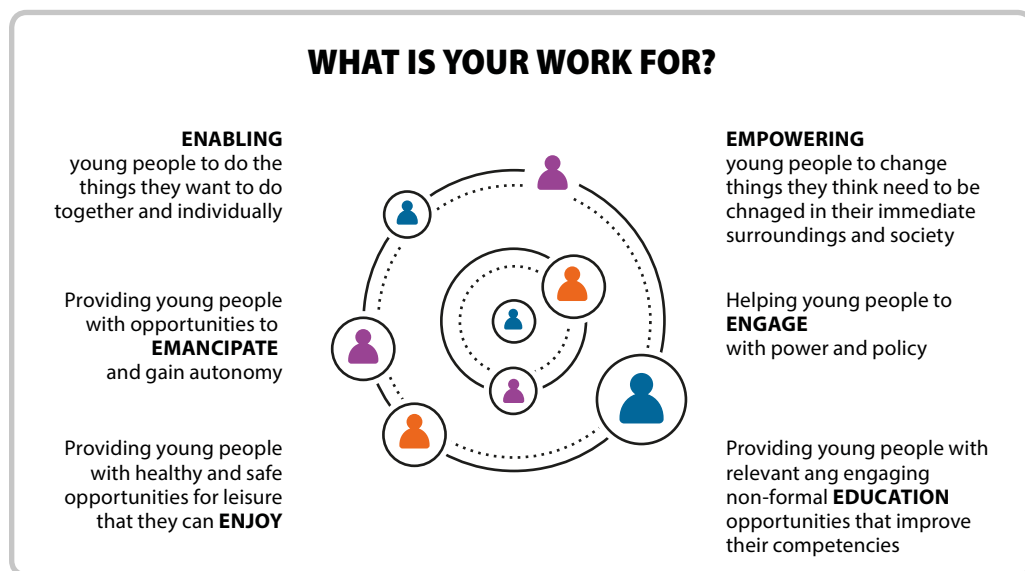
The Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio tells us that

” *‘... Youth work is commonly understood as a tool for personal development, social integration and active citizenship of young people. Youth work is a ‘key-word’ for all kinds of activities with, for and by young people of a social, cultural, educational or political nature. It belongs to the domain of ‘out-of-school’ education, most commonly referred to as either non-formal or informal learning. The main objective of youth work is to create opportunities for young people*

80 [The Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio](#)

to shape their own futures. The range of themes that youth work covers is just as diverse as the types of people and organisations involved. Political activism, street work, sports activities, social enterprise and leisure-time activities can all be termed 'youth work'.⁸¹

It visualises the objectives of youth work as follows:



Source: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio>.

These ideas about the main purposes and objectives of youth work are well reflected in the experience of the *Enter!* project. Summing that up, especially the experience of the two Long Term Training Courses, we can see six main ways in which youth work can support the access to social rights of young people experiencing disadvantage, including exclusion, violence and discrimination.⁸²

Although some of these might also be considered functions of general youth work, not directed at young people experiencing disadvantage, it is nevertheless important to acknowledge the fact that participation in youth work is often also something of a privilege, and is not always easily accessible for exactly those young people who could benefit the most from it.⁸³

81 [The Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio; www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio/youth-work-essentials](http://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio/youth-work-essentials)

82 Adapted from Yael Ohana, 'What can youth work do for social rights? Still trying to getting real', reflection paper prepared for the Preparatory Seminar for the new LTTC Enter! (September, 2012), unpublished paper.

83 See this especially in relation to European programmes, for example: the results of the Research based analysis of Youth in Action project: <http://www.researchyouth.net/publications/>

In situations where access to and participation in youth work cannot be ‘taken for granted’, the impacts it can have on the life courses of the young people it touches can be heightened. Below, we explore some of the ways this is so, and some underlying reasons for this.

> YOUTH WORK IS A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE IN A SEA OF NEGATIVE ONES

As can be readily interpreted from the overview of the contemporary social situation of young people in Europe presented in Chapter 2, living and experiencing disadvantage and being exposed daily to exclusion, discrimination and / or violence, has extremely negative impacts on young people’s self esteem and confidence, making some basic steps in the transition to adulthood, for example to employment or forming a functional family, even more difficult than they are already as a result of the current social climate and situation. More often than not, these young people have often experienced failure or rejection (in school, in society, in the labour market, etc.). As these experiences multiply, and accumulate, the less the young people concerned believe in themselves and the more they expect to be rejected or to fail. Before long, the young people and all those around them (often including those who are ostensibly there to support them, begin to lower their expectations of themselves and their peers, to avoid disappointment and ‘because it’s all hopeless anyway’. Furthermore, youth work with young people who experience disadvantage has revealed the extent to which social exclusion or marginalisation from rights is intertwined with the issue of social identity – questions such as: ‘Who am I?’, ‘Do I belong here?’, ‘If not, why not?’ and, ‘In that case, where do I belong?’ are part and parcel of the process of stigmatisation that many such young people live through.⁸⁴

Youth work can be a counter-point to this negative process and to these many negative experiences, which destroy self-confidence, self-esteem and hope. When conducted in the appropriate manner, in other words, in a manner that offers opportunities to take responsibility combined with empathy, understanding for the challenges represented by taking on responsibility, and support to achieve their goals and initiatives, then youth work can be a real opportunity to do something they feel proud of and to experience success. It is therefore an important function of youth work, and it should be added, an important responsibility of adult professionals working with youth to promote collective and constructive pride among the young people experiencing disadvantage.⁸⁵ This can give everyone concerned – the youth and other support workers, families and communities surrounding young people experiencing disadvantage included – a

84 For evidence of this see Helena Helve for the European Commission, 2012, [Social Inclusion at the Margins of Society – Policy Review of Research Results](#); and Jelena Markovic, Miguel Angel Garcia Lopez and Sever Dzigurski for the Council of Europe – European Commission Partnership on Youth, 2015, [Finding a Place in Modern Europe: Mapping of Barriers to Social Inclusion of Young People](#).

85 Leena Suurpa, presentation to the 2nd residential seminar of the Enter! Long Term Training Course (2012-2014) at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg in September 2014, and ‘Wandering Through Urban Solidarities. An Academic Seminar Hall as a Site of Collective Contest’, unpublished manuscript, 2015.

chance to enhance their respectability and status – something such young people often struggle with and for and demand, but rarely get. The stigma they experience in society unleashes in them a quest to be recognised as important members of the society, not only as victims to pity because they requiring some form of assistance. This quest also has a positive potential that can be harnessed for their sense of worth and for their motivation to continue in the face of adversity. A further and important point to note here is the role of the media – which often acts as an agent of stigmatisation by portraying a very incomplete and one-sided picture of the role, position and situation of such young people, but which can also be an important and constructive partner for youth work and policy.

> YOUTH WORK PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES TO ACT RESPONSIBLY

Closely linked to the process outlined above, it needs to be acknowledged that when young people lack opportunities for acting responsibly, and never receive recognition for so doing, it is more likely that they will act irresponsibly. If the only thing you have ever heard about yourself, and ‘your like’, is that you are ‘good-for-nothing, lazy, spongers’, then you understand very quickly that such behaviour is what society expects of you, and you will likely begin to emulate that.⁸⁶ In such situations, youth work can provide opportunities for young people with opportunities to be responsible for something (a project, other young people, their communities, etc.), gaining ownership and pride in their own potential and real contributions to the improvement of their communities and society as a whole. It can also provide them with positive role models, whether in the form of youth and community workers, peer educators, youth leaders or other young people that have ‘made something of themselves’ in the eyes of others. In so doing, youth work gives the young people positive examples of how things are when one does not conform to the stereotype. It helps the young people themselves and their peers to not only access much needed self-esteem, confidence and skills, but to construct an alternative, positive, or at least not negative, narrative around who they are, their social identity and their position in society.

> YOUTH WORK PROVIDES SPACE FOR NON-THREATENING SELF-EXPRESSION

An important facet of what has previously been explored, and exactly because it provides young people with the opportunity to act responsibility and to feel positive about themselves, youth work can help young people to shake of some of the negativity and aggression that is an almost natural consequence of stigmatisation and marginalisation. Young people living

⁸⁶ See Chapter 2 for the social situation of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods for further evidence of this.

disadvantage, experiencing exclusion, discrimination and/or violence, lack both physical and metaphorical lack space and resources to express themselves. One of the key complaints coming out of such neighbourhoods is that there is ‘nothing and nowhere’ for young people to go, meet, socialise, do constructive things. They are literally forced into hanging around in places where they necessarily end up being stigmatised as a social nuisance or worse still as a social threat, creating ‘demand’ for more policing and control of young people’s social behaviour.⁸⁷

As already explored, stigmatisation as violent, rowdy or threatening can (and often will) end up with the young people concerned behaving in that way. In many respects, the lack of positive and constructive opportunities for self-expression they experience in their communities – whether as a result of the education they are subjected to, or their exclusion from participation in mainstream cultural production and political discourse, – just encourages the young people to express themselves in ways that will guarantee them attention and space. Unfortunately, the result is often aggression. Again, participation in youth work can provide an alternative, by creating a safe and enabling environment for young people to learn how to express themselves more constructively, more clearly and in non-intimidating ways on the issues and concerns they have and are interested in, or on their demands towards authorities of different kinds. Doing this contributes to the creation and dissemination of alternative representations of young people experiencing disadvantage, and contributes to changing the social discourse and narrative around young people and their issues and / or problems.

> YOUTH WORK IS EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP AND ‘EDUCATION FOR LIFE’

As amply demonstrated in this publication, and as readily corroborated by research on the social situation of young people in Europe, young people experiencing disadvantage are both structurally and geographically marginalised from mainstream participation in all its dimensions, from economic through political to cultural. Geographical marginalisation is the result of a lack of physical proximity to centres of economic, cultural and political power, and therefore, opportunities the majority of which are concentrated in large urban centres, to which few of the young people concerned have the opportunity to travel, or even migrate. Often ‘prisoners’ in their own neighbourhoods as a result of non-existent poor or expensive local transport, and lacking confidence to ‘escape’ the isolation of the disadvantaged neighbourhood where they live, these young people have many fewer opportunities to engage in economic and cultural citizenship. Structural marginalisation interacts with and exacerbates geographical marginalisation. Discrimination in education, and resulting poor performance, is then reproduced

87 For more on this see: Henry A. Giroux, 2009, *Youth in a Suspect Society – Democracy or Disposability?*, Palgrave-MacMillan, London. In practical terms this approach has resulted in anti-youth policing and control measures. See: [Calls to ban ‘anti-teen’ device](#); [New asbos ‘will punish children for being children’](#); [Stop and search project aims to educate teenagers about their rights](#).

in the labour market. The same can be said for mainstream politics and culture with similarly exclusionary results. All three dimensions of citizenship entail rights and responsibilities. Yet, when one has no opportunity to exercise and practice citizenship, it is unlikely that one develops a strong sense of citizen responsibility. And even if many young people facing exclusion, violence and discrimination are channelled into compensatory programmes that offer them the opportunity to ‘simulate’ the experience of economic, cultural or political citizenship (for example, workfare programmes, training programmes, programmes for young political leaders or cultural actors of change)⁸⁸, when it comes to the ‘real’ labour market or the ‘real’ political mainstream, they have just as few opportunities to put their newly gained skills into practice as before participation in the programme. As a result, such young people’s understanding and experience of citizenship are often under-developed.

As in previous cases, youth work can act as a counterpoint for developing citizenship. First and foremost, in youth work young people can learn about their human and social rights – quite simply what they are, that they have them, that no-one can take them away, how they can access them and how they can seek redress when they are denied. Second, and not less important, young people can learn about the different dimensions of citizenship, and the ways in which rights and responsibilities interact. Third, young people can put their experiences of citizenship into a wider context and think about concrete ways to improve that experience. Fourth, young people can practice citizenship by engaging in activities relevant to the social, economic, cultural and political situation of their communities and their peers. And, last but not least, young people gain awareness and competence for the work needed to get their issues onto the agenda of those with power. As active agents or producers, of culture or other dimensions of citizenship, in the community and in society, young people gain citizenship learning. Seen from this perspective, youth work is a form of ‘education for life’ that compensates for many of the deficiencies and failures of education and training available to young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

> YOUTH WORK IS A SAFE SPACE FOR EXPERIMENTING WITH NEW APPROACHES TO ISSUES OF CONCERN

The experience of the *Enter!* Long Term Training Courses shows that there are often deep divides and prejudices separating the different stakeholder groups working youth access to social rights. Young people and their support workers often believe policy makers are corrupt because they are so close to politics or that they do not care about young people; policy-makers

88 Such projects often offer participants the opportunity to ‘act themselves’ in the practice of citizenship through simulation exercises. These can be valuable learning experiences. However, when it comes to real acts of citizen participation, especially decision-making, traditional youth participation structures (for example, youth councils and parliaments) and leadership training programmes (for example, Model United Nations or Model EU) often fall short – in that they do not have any political mandate to make real decisions.

often believe the young people are the cause of the problems of the communities for which they are responsible. Yet, more often than not, the paralysis that are the result of such divides, are caused by a lack of contact and a lack of mutual knowledge. When stakeholders have no relationship with one another, and there is no communication between them, there can also be no trust and cooperation. Furthermore, where scepticism and mutual suspicion reign, overcoming such divides can be extremely difficult. 'Passive-aggressive' attitudes to cooperation can be observed across stakeholder groups (youth work, policy and research), and experimenting with cooperation in such situations can entail 'risks' for those initiating. Such risks range from the benign not being taken seriously, to the not-so-benign being considered a 'traitor', with a variety of consequences. Risk-takers might stand to lose their position and status in the community, their job and livelihood, or their funding.

Youth work, however, can act as a platform for 'confidence building measures', because it can also be a safe space for experimentation with new ideas and with new approaches to the work one does and the themes one works on – ones that have not been tried before, or that have not even been considered before. Addressing 'taboos' side-on and then head-on, it can provide stakeholders with opportunities to work on their attitudes, stereotypes and prejudices about other stakeholders, to develop empathy and solidarity and to find new approaches overcoming mistrust. For young people, having the opportunity to express themselves, to be the ones to do the talking rather than the ones which are talked about, and having policy-makers listen, can be a way into discussion of cooperation with authorities until then shunned. For policy-makers, getting first hand information from young people, seeing that they have an analysis about their own issues, and ideas about how to deal with them that are neither crazy nor impossible, can be the justification they need to propose partnership with organisations and initiatives previously viewed with suspicion and avoided. As one researcher has put it: youth access to social rights is never only youth issues and problems, but also intergenerational ones.⁸⁹

> YOUTH WORK IS A CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH THE 'COMPLETE STORIES' OF YOUNG PEOPLE CAN BE LEARNED

Two further stakeholder groups of importance in this field are the media and researchers. When deciding what gets priority for policy attention, media reporting can be very influential. When they want to develop something new or to understand what might be needed to improve existing policy provision, youth research is often a first port of call. Yet both of these stakeholders face challenges in telling the complete stories of the young people they 'study'. In the media, there can be a strong temptation to 'sensationalise' the (mostly negative) situations of young people observed. In research, there can be a strong temptation to focus on the problems. For

89 Leena Suurpa, presentation to the 2nd residential seminar of the Enter! Long Term Training Course (2012-2014) at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg in September 2014, and 'Wandering Through Urban Solidarities An Academic Seminar Hall as a Site of Collective Contest', unpublished manuscript, 2015.

policy, the temptation can be to ‘jump on the bandwagon’ and prioritise only the latest, most widely reported and widely studied youth problem.⁹⁰

Youth work provides a much more differentiated picture. According to one youth researcher, youth work allows ‘... young people to be complex, ambivalent, ethically ambiguous and emotionally contradictory’.⁹¹ When young people feel safe and empowered, they do not need to pretend to be complete or fully formed. They can relax, learn and explore. For media and research, observing and participating in such can be an avenue to deeper understanding. Seeing and experiencing youth work first hand can help the various professionals engaging with young people to avoid the perpetuation of prejudices born of resorting to absolute moral categories – such as ‘powerless victim’ or ‘dangerous threat’. Such prejudices only serve to further stigmatise and sensationalise young people experiencing disadvantage, constructing them as citizens that are not civil and which demand intervention, policing and control.⁹²

> YOUTH WORK PROVIDES YOUNG PEOPLE WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRACTICE SOCIAL RIGHTS, THEREBY IMPROVING ACCESS

As mentioned above, young people engaged in youth work, irrespective of whether it is social rights specific or a more generic form of youth work, have the opportunity to practice social rights and to engage with issues and institutions in a socially responsible manner. On the one hand, this helps them to understand what social rights are and how these interact with responsibilities to the broader society and community, and this provides them with some pre-requisites for better access to social rights. Indeed, if you do not know your rights, how can you claim them or redress them when they are brought violated. On the other hand, youth work provides young people, irrespective of whether they themselves experience disadvantage to engage social rights issues and to practice solidarity among different communities and constituencies of young people. This also promotes access to social rights, because it fosters cooperation and common understanding of the communities’ agency for changing something for the better.

90 Leena Suurpa, presentation to the 2nd residential seminar of the Enter! Long Term Training Course (2012-2014) at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg in September 2014, and ‘Wandering Through Urban Solidarities. An Academic Seminar Hall as a Site of Collective Contest’, unpublished manuscript, 2015.

91 Leena Suurpa (ibidem)

92 Leena Suurpa (ibidem)

> CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

By doing all of the above, by explicitly and implicitly confronting the situation of youth access to social rights, by raising the challenges of exclusion, violence and discrimination faced by young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, by creating relationships and partnerships between policy, research and practice where none existed before, by bringing young people themselves into discussions of their needs, issues and concerns with other stakeholders, by listening, by talking, by exploring, by educating, by raising awareness, and by insisting on respect for fundamental human rights, youth work can contribute to promoting access to social rights.

This is the message that *Enter!* has tried to promote and be an example and role model for, indeed with some success.

Enter! has shown the importance of calling a spade a spade – social rights are human rights; and poor access to social rights is an assault on the human rights of young people; and poor access to social rights is widespread in Europe; and something needs to be done about it; not only by young people themselves, but also by responsible authorities.

Yet, the *Enter!* process has also revealed the vulnerability of efforts that promote this message. It cannot go unnoticed that this field of work is under-resourced, under-recognised and under-theorised at both the European and national levels. There is plenty of evidence to support that claim, and *Enter!* has only further underscored it.

Organisations and individuals engaged in this kind of work continue to find themselves in situations of precariousness – not least, but also not only, because many come from or are embedded in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and the communities of young people that live in them. Their jobs are often under-valued, under-paid and under-protected, if they are paid staff at all. There is, of course, no shortage of good work being done and someone is paying for it. More often than not, however, such work is being done in isolation from large-scale policy efforts, structural funding for inclusion, and mainstream recognition. It is not only potential impact of such social, youth, voluntary and charitable work that suffers from this lack of support from larger policy and programmatic efforts. The organisations and individuals doing it, and the young people they work with, do too.

There is also a political dimension to the fragility of youth access to social rights work. Whatever the economic and financial crisis may have done to put youth inclusion issues on the political agenda, a rights based approach to social, equality and equity issues is not particularly popular with governments and youth work (voluntary and statutory) is very often perceived of and conceptualised as one of the so called 'non-essential' social services that tend to be cut when

austerity measures are called for. This is despite the wealth of evidence to suggest that cutting youth work programmes only has the effect of creating social time bombs in neighbourhoods already disadvantaged over generations.⁹³

Finally, the fragility of the field is perpetuated by the poor scientific footing on which many of the ideas about what youth work can and cannot achieve for challenges of access to social rights. There is no shortage of research about young people experiencing disadvantage. However, the majority of that research describes the problems and the experience of disadvantage, without necessarily researching effective solutions and theorising about how youth work's role and effectiveness for addressing the problems and for prevention can be enhanced.

In some critical respects, this reality demands a re-thinking of the power of youth work and a reconsideration of the role and responsibilities it is assigned in the public discourse.⁹⁴ Such reflections on the potential and limits of youth work, as revealed by research and corroborated by the experience of *Enter!* entail important questions for the Council of Europe and its youth policy in regard of youth access to social rights – as a priority theme and as an important human rights issue for Europe.

Three key questions or dilemmas emerge from the previous reflections, as follows:

> HOW MUCH CAN TRAINING FOR YOUTH WORKERS IN ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS ACHIEVE?

Clearly the perspectives presented in this publication supports the idea that training youth workers in access to social rights can achieve a lot. Obviously in order to make a useful and relevant contribution, youth work, and the people and organisations who provide and run it, require quality competence. *Enter!* has shown that cornerstones in a potential competence profile for this kind of work include among others:

- > the effects of disadvantage on young people (psychologically, emotionally, physically, etc.);
- > concepts of citizenship and participation;
- > the practice of non-formal, intercultural, human rights education and its delivery to youth experiencing disadvantage;
- > the practice of social youth work;
- > formal and other mechanisms for changing social situations;
- > 'confidence-building measures' and partnership building with policy actors;

93 See the UK-based [In Defence of Youth Work Campaign](http://indefenceofyouthwork.com/); [indefenceofyouthwork.com/](http://indefenceofyouthwork.com/the-in-defence-of-youth-work-letter-2/) especially the [open letter that launched the campaign](#); indefenceofyouthwork.com/the-in-defence-of-youth-work-letter-2/

94 For more on the tensions between the reality of youth work resources and the ethos of youth work and youth workers (in relation to what youth work should be for) see among others, and [Leena Suurpa at the 2nd residential seminar of the Enter! LTTC \(2014\)](#), unpublished manuscript, [Howard Williamson at the 2nd European Youth Convention \(2015\)](#); [Yael Ohana at the RAY Triangular Summit \(2015\)](#).

- > participatory project development, implementation and management;
- > and rights in relation to disadvantage.⁹⁵

The major added-value of the *Enter!* Long Term Training Courses lay in the competence, confidence and motivation for change that they were able to develop among their participants, and hence in its contribution to the general political will for transformation in the social sphere.

They have also shown that more attention needs to be paid to supporting that part of the community of practice that does not yet competently and effectively work for social inclusion – mainly the authorities with policy implementation power and budgets, but not exclusively. Furthermore, to support intermediaries to engage in social change through access to social rights projects means to build their capacity for mapping the sector within which their work takes place and for social analysis.

At the same time, *Enter!* has also shown the limits of working in a policy perspective through intermediaries that do not have policy making responsibilities and mandates, and the extent to which entrenched divisions between those with the right to initiate change and those claiming that change is needed, play a decisive role in the prospects for change. The dilemma for a project like *Enter!* is how its interventions can best overcome such divisions. Certainly, *Enter!* has shown that those who take part in such training develop a better understanding of how to cooperate across the civil society/policy divide. Nevertheless, there are many limits, not least the fact that policy actors are rarely willing to cooperate with civil society actors or others who claim that they are not doing their jobs properly.

> WHERE ARE THE GOVERNMENTS?

Enter! has clearly shown that it is sectoral social policies, rather than youth policies, that are important for transforming the social situation of young people experiencing disadvantage. To support intermediaries to work beyond the youth sector means to develop their capacity for mapping policies that do have and might in the future have an important influence on the situation of their target groups, thereby prioritising policy areas that can be changed / transformed through advocacy towards policy actors with the power to change something. More often than not, the stakeholders in the community are not working effectively enough together to produce results for young people experiencing disadvantage.⁹⁶ *Enter!* shows that to help intermediaries to address this means working more in depth on identifying relevant stakeholders, partnership building and developing confidence building measures. It also shows that the work of government is essential, and that often it is government which is not working. This is not only a matter

95 Yael Ohana, 'What can youth work do for social rights? Still trying to getting real', reflection paper prepared for the Preparatory Seminar for the new LTTC Enter! (September, 2012), unpublished paper.

96 Hillary Cottam, Our Social Services are Broken. How can we fix them?, TED Talk, London, September 2015: https://www.ted.com/talks/hilary_cottam_social_services_are_broken_how_we_can_fix_them?language=en

of good or bad governance, or missing political will. It is simply a fact that many government sections and departments, especially at the local level, experience financial resource penury and lack suitably qualified human resources for their regular work. How much more true for themes and issues they are not used to seeing as part of their remit - youth, social rights, etc. And, yet governments are essential to addressing access to social rights and it is highly problematic when civil society or non-state actors are expected to fulfil the role of the state. The dilemma for a project like *Enter!* is how to engage government in more than a declarative manner.

> (HOW) CAN YOUTH WORK INFLUENCE POLICY?

Asking the question how can youth work influence policy is rather leading. It somehow already assumes that such an influence is possible, and that learning about that is just a matter of describing how it happened. Would that only be the case! The experience of *Enter!* shows very clearly that youth work could influence policy, but that in those rare cases of projects through which it has, the factors leading to success are so context bound and complex that it is difficult to draw any representative conclusion about how to replicate such influence. In other words, it all depends ... It all depends on too many things – the good will of the political actors, the timing of the project, the motivation of the young people, and their luck to be singled out for support just at a moment when they are ready and able to take action, the youth worker being in the right place at the right time, or at the wrong time for that matter, their mandate and job description, the personalities of all the individuals involved, there being elections in a particular local authority, there not being elections in a particular local authority. The list of conditions and factors that influences the potential for and actual policy outcome of this kind of social rights youth work is endless.

Possibly the more relevant question to be asked and also the dilemma for a project like *Enter!* is the extent to which it is appropriate or realistic to expect that youth workers combatting exclusion, violence and discrimination on the front lines with young people living disadvantage to engage in policy advocacy. If anything, *Enter!* has show that to support intermediaries and the youth groups they work with to become strong advocates for the improvement of access to social rights of young people experiencing disadvantage means to develop their understanding of and competence for engagement with the public sphere and politics, and the nature of social change and impact. The dilemma for a project like *Enter!* is how to do this with people who are often suspicious of politics and politicians, who are often not clear about the difference between being a politicians and a policy maker, and who exist/function at the margins of the public sphere. Unfortunately, and despite the best efforts of the *Enter!* project to engage members of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, the Council of Europe's political system is very limited in its access to grass roots communities and the local realities of promoting access to social rights around Europe.

> WHAT CAN EUROPE DO FOR YOUTH ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL?

Enter! is a European initiative, and the European dimension it added to the access to social rights work being done across Europe has been enlightening and inspiring for all of its participants. The European dimension, and the link it makes between social rights and human rights, has been a key learning point of the project. Nevertheless, *Enter!* has also made obvious some uncomfortable truths. Notably, while participants accept the necessity of cooperation across sectors (civil society and local authorities, for example) and often diligently try to integrate a dimension of cooperation with local authorities and/or a policy dimension into their projects, the same cannot be said for the majority of local authorities. Furthermore, *Enter!* has raised awareness of the ethical imperative of working with 'quality standards' as guiding principles for conducting youth work with young people experiencing disadvantage,⁹⁷ and the extent to which a European perspective is important and useful for the elaboration of such standards.

These dilemmas point in the direction of some key lessons learned about how a European level youth work based intervention can act to promote access to social rights of young people experiencing disadvantage. The successes and challenges of the *Enter!* process provide us with clues to some 'do's and don'ts' for promoting an access to social rights agenda through this kind of institutional initiative. Some of these might be followed up by the institutional partners that initiated and carried *Enter!*. Others have relevance for the broader group of stakeholders concerned with access to social rights of young people from European through local levels of governance.

Watch out for the 'usual suspects': The *Enter!* project did not manage to create access routes to new target publics as some of the previous large-scale projects of the youth sector have (e.g. the first all different – all equal campaign, human rights education month of action). If anything, the experience of *Enter* has shown that although local level actors, especially youth workers involved in the LTTCs, may not be 'usual suspects', most of those involved in a statutory capacity, and very many those recruited as participants for some of the activities, were already somehow connected to the Council of Europe youth sector or have been involved in its activities previously. While this is not a problem per se, it does pose a challenge regarding innovation, which is one of the key ambitions of this kind of project, and it does limit the extent to which the project can act as a developmental impulse for the Youth Department's work, and for the Council of Europe's work in regard of access to social rights.

A good match between policy objectives and policy opportunities/mandate is essential: The Council of Europe has a limited political and policy mandate. That of the youth sector is even more limited, given its main policy interlocutors are national authorities responsible for youth.

97 Adapted from Yael Ohana, 'What can youth work do for social rights? Still trying to getting real', reflection paper prepared for the Preparatory Seminar for the new LTTTC *Enter!* (September, 2012), unpublished paper.

Many of the objectives of the project and of its core activities (c.f. the LTTC) were hampered by being overly ambitious in relation to the potential for policy interventions and change an organisation with such a limited mandate has, and regarding the ability of projects focused on youth work can deliver policy outcomes.

Measure your ambitions as regards potential for change: To an extent, the project and certainly the LTTC, communicated the ambition to change the situation of access to social rights among young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Laudable as this may be and while the project has certainly made its small contribution, *Enter!* was not structurally adapted to extensive change on the ground. For that, policy stakeholders with executive power would need to have been actively involved in more aspects of the project, including the development of the recommendation and the projects supported by the LTTC. In fact, and linked to the question of innovation, the involvement of representatives of public authorities with responsibility for youth in the local contexts in the LTTC as participants (following the principles of the 50-50 training concept) may have significant potential.

You need to work with the ‘right people’; but for that you need to find them: As is often the case in the social sphere, those with the ‘real’ expertise and access to the people who are most in need are also those with the least power (in its broadest sense of power to change something). *Enter!* was no exception, in that it found it easiest to work with those who have no power. Alternatively put, the project did not work to the extent that would be required with those who have the power to change something real in the situation of access to social rights in most of the member states of the Council of Europe – i.e. national governmental authorities with mandates and resources for social policy and their counterparts in regions and cities. As explored above, this does not mean it could not bring about change or it did not have any impact. In fact, it has been remarkably successful under the circumstances. Nevertheless, the *Enter!* experience shows that engaging the ‘right people’ is anything but straight forward, and that it is the cooperation between those without power, but with real expertise, and those with power, even when they lack expertise that can make change happen.

The internal functioning of the project can be a make or break factor: *Enter!* experienced quite some internal management problems, for example, the poor engagement of the Reference and Support Group (RSG) especially with the LTTC; difficulties in making intersectoral cooperation work and dissatisfaction with what it contributed for the investment it required; time and workload pressures, especially as concerns *Enter!*’s online presence and facilitation of intersectoral cooperation; difficulties in communication across different stakeholder groups (staff, evaluators, RSG, other sectors of the Council of Europe, etc.); administrative and human resourcing problems. A further challenge for *Enter!* has been its positioning as the ‘little brother’ among projects and agendas addressing youth social inclusion issues in Europe. The European Commission is active in this field in its own right, and increasingly it insists that the youth di-

mention be treated under the auspices of the Partnership on Youth between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. While this is a logical approach to take for the European Commission, it has been problematic for *Enter!* as cooperation between the youth department and the Partnership on this issue has not always been optimal.

Emphasising authentic participation of young people experiencing disadvantage is a winner: *Enter!* and especially the LTTCs have shown the extent to which valuing authentic participation of the young people experiencing disadvantage is crucial for the effectiveness of any project aiming to address access to social rights. The courses highlighted the extent to which youth participation is widely conceptualised as activities for young people, possibly with young people, but rarely enough by young people. The LTTC has created an opportunity for youth workers to develop their understanding and practice for accompanying youth-led processes of project development and implementation, and therefore for youth-led social change. This was a steep learning curve for the majority. Many of the participants really had an 'Aha' moment in the 1st training seminar, realising that they needed to listen to what the young people they were working with, even 'representing', wanted, needed and could imagine doing. A revealing quote comes from the evaluation of the introductory seminar to the 2nd LTTC: **"I need to go back and rebuild my project with the young people"**. But this was echoed by very many others voicing similar sentiments. A large number of the participants went back home and started a genuine and honest participatory process with the young people they wanted to engage in their projects. As a result the projects took a long time to develop, and to get started. Using usual criteria including the common SMART approach to projects, an institution might question whether 'anything is happening'. What was happening was the development of a reflective practice of youth work demonstrating more coherence with the values of participation and human rights. This practice sees young people as rights holders, not only beneficiaries of youth work and youth work projects. Furthermore, these projects were often therefore not so easy to identify as projects in the classical sense, because they were in fact developmental practices and processes. Taking time to decide what to do with young people is something in which participants now really believe in as a fundamental process for the young people through youth work, in fact for many participants youth work became the symbol of one of the few places where young people can learn true democracy and real participation beyond the simulacra of participation which we find in youth work projects, even in those done with the best intentions. They understood the need to give young people space to even negotiate the youth work framework and not only the topic of a project. This was often the hardest thing for the youth workers concerned to explain when asked about their projects, especially to funders whose main concern is often about the project output. This is key for the future of any training based intervention seeking to promote access to social rights, and for future editions of the LTTC *Enter!*. The experience of *Enter!* has proved that the effective promotion of access to social rights is made of more than doing good projects. It is

about changing the approaches and practices used in youth work with these target groups and all the way up the youth programming and policy chains.

And finally ...

In 1958 (!), Hannah Arendt reminded us that '(...) *being able to 'act' is the defining feature of freedom and therefore freedom only exists in the context of 'action'*'.⁹⁸ Although she was less concerned with education much of her philosophy has been an inspiration for those who have brought the idea of a 'critical pedagogy of hope' into the mainstream of youth work practice.⁹⁹ At its best, *Enter!* represented a return to the most basic principles of the critical pedagogy. Maintaining this focus in the face of the bureaucratic and technocratic will be its biggest imperatives of its anchoring in the world of European intergovernmental cooperation remains its biggest challenge.

98 Hannah Arendt, 1958, *The Human Condition* (2nd edition), University of Chicago Press. For an explanation of these ideas see: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/arendt/>.

99 For more on this concept, consult the works of Paulo Freire, Augusto Boal and Paul Giroux. A comprehensive introduction can be found on the following website: <http://www.freireproject.org/>.

CHAPTER 6

APPENDICES AND MORE INFORMATION

TIMELINE OF *ENTER!* PROJECT ACTIVITIES FROM 2009 TO 2014

DATES AND VENUE	TITLE
5 – 7 March 2009, Budapest	LTTC preparatory seminar
19 June 2009	Reference and Support Group meeting
20 – 30 September 2009, Strasbourg	LTTC Introduction seminar
14-15 January 2010	Reference and Support Group meeting
15 – 20 June 2010, Budapest	Consultative meeting on youth information and counselling
15 – 20 June 2010, Budapest	Expert meeting - New ways of participation in multicultural youth work
23 – 28 June 2010, Strasbourg	Seminar on gender equality in youth projects
30 June – 1 July 2010, Strasbourg	Conference on the social mobility of young people
26 September – 6 October 2010, Budapest	LTTC Consolidation seminar
30 November – 4 December 2010, Strasbourg	Seminar on access of young people to social rights: youth policy approaches and responses
30 April – 8 May 2011, Strasbourg	LTTC Evaluation seminar
3 – 4 May 2011, Strasbourg	Policy Recommendation on the Access to Social Rights for Young People from Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods – first meeting of an expert group
14 – 18 September 2011, Strasbourg	Enter! Youth Meeting – Access to social rights for all young people
19 – 20 September 2011, Strasbourg	Policy Recommendation on the Access to Social Rights for Young People from Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods – first meeting of an expert group

DATES AND VENUE	TITLE
20-26 February 2012, Budapest	Study session "Shape the change: advocacy for youth rights", in cooperation with WOSM- World Organisation of the Scout Movement
4 – 11 March 2012, Budapest	Study session "Special needs: education, participation and social inclusion", in cooperation with OBESSU - Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions
15 – 22 April 2012, Budapest	Study session "Bridging the age gap working together to develop rural communities", in cooperation with RYE - Rural Youth Europe
7-12 May 2012, Budapest	Study session "Minority Rights Protection – 20 Years On", in cooperation with MoE - Minorities of Europe
18 - 20 September 2012, Strasbourg	Preparatory Seminar of a second Long-Term Training Course for Youth Workers (2012-2014)
21–28 October 2012, Strasbourg	Study session "Supporting the involvement of young disabled people in human rights advocacy at the national and european level", in cooperation with ENIL - European Network on Independent Living
15 - 16 November 2012, Leicester, United Kingdom	National seminar on "The state of youth work: exploring the future of youth work and young people's access to social rights "
2-8 December 2012, Budapest	Study session "Building a Fairer Society through the Participation of All Young People", in cooperation with ATD QUART MONDE - Mouvement International ATD Quart Monde
3 - 8 February 2013, Budapest	Study session "More farmers, better food", in cooperation with ECVC -European Coordination Via Campesina
25 February – 2 March 2013, Strasbourg	Study session "Together for Social Rights! Youth workers and local authorities promoting and networking for access to social rights for young people", in cooperation with the Youth social rights network
6 – 7 May 2013, Strasbourg	Enter! Advisory Group Meeting
26 May - 2 June 2013, Strasbourg	Study session "Coaching for Inclusion: Closing the gap between urban and rural youth – inclusion for all", in cooperation with RYE - YEN - Rural Youth Europe (RYE) and Youth Express Network (Y-E-N)

DATES AND VENUE	TITLE
26 May - 2 June 2013, Budapest	Study session "Social Inclusion for Active Youth Participation", in cooperation with PARTICIPATION FOR ALL!
6-13 October 2013, Budapest	Study session "Deaf Youth and Politics: Human Rights, Empowerment and Active Citizenship", in cooperation with EUDY - European Union of Deaf Youth
20-26 October 2013, Budapest	Study session "We participate, therefore we are", in cooperation with ADYNE - African Diaspora Youth Network in Europe
29 – 31 October 2013, Strasbourg	Seminar with National Youth Councils on Access to Social Rights for Young People
4 - 6 November 2013, Pisa, Italy	National seminar "From Regional and local youth policies opportunities for young people to access to social rights for all young people "
13 - 15 November 2013, Strasbourg	Seminar on local youth participation and access to social rights
3-7 March 2014, Budapest	Study session "Standing together action and advocacy against bullying", in cooperation with the International LGBTQ Youth and Student Organisation (IGLYO) and Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU)
3-7 March 2014, Budapest	Study session "Preventing youth homelessness through access to social rights", in cooperation with FEANTSA - Youth Homelessness Network
11 - 23 March 2013, Strasbourg	First residential seminar of the Enter LTTC
3 –5 June 2014, Faro, Portugal	Consolidation Meeting of the LTTC
29 June 2014 – 5 July 2014, Strasbourg	Study session "Understanding and countering multiple discrimination faced by young people with disabilities in Europe", in cooperation with ENIL - European Network on Independent Living
14 - 19 July 2014, Budapest	Study session "Inclusion Express", in cooperation with YEN - Youth Express Network
4 - 15 of September 2014, Strasbourg	Second residential seminar of the Enter LTTC

> DESCRIPTION OF THE *ENTER!* LTTC

The two Enter! LTTCs had each their own life span and dynamics and slightly different competences framework and duration, which also meant different activity types (notably, the first LTTC had 3 residential seminars, while the second one had only two).

What follows is a description of the curriculum of the second LTTC, as core information about the LTTCs.

> AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE LTTC

The *Enter!* project has its main core in the Long-Term Training Course (LTTC) for youth workers on access to social rights for all young people. The experiences of the training course have a particularly important role in informing other activities of the project, by bringing the direct input of youth workers and young people and by bridging experiences from the European to the local level. This is a complementary training offering youth workers who undertake activities with young people that experience disadvantage the opportunity:

- > to gain insights into how the European level and engagement with policy actors can support their efforts to empower young people, and,
- > to promote access to social rights for young people, in an effort of overcoming the disadvantage young people face due to exclusion, violence and discrimination.

The LTTC is a European level complementary training for youth workers, which aims to develop their competences in designing and implementing responses, projects, partnerships in support of youth-led initiatives that promote access to social rights and overcome discrimination, exclusion and violence.

The objectives of the course are:

- > introduce participants to evidence based needs analysis, to socio-educational project designing, management, implementation and evaluation
- > support participants to develop socio-educational projects with young people that promote access to social rights and overcome discrimination, exclusion and violence
- > develop participants' understanding and knowledge of the human rights framework and the policy fields and mechanisms that are relevant to the situation of young people with whom they work, from the local to the European level;
- > support participants in using human rights based approaches and human rights education in their youth work
- > develop participants' competence and confidence for engaging with policy makers and other actors in the youth and social policy fields for improving access to social rights for young people;

- › contribute to the social and educational recognition of youth work and non-formal education in participants’ realities and at European level.

› LEARNING AREAS ADDRESSED THROUGH THE LTTC

For each course objective, more specific learning areas were identified, as follows:

<p>Objective 1: To introduce participants to evidence based needs analysis, to socio-educational project designing, management, implementation and evaluation</p>	<p>Learning areas: Project management, including fundraising and financial management Evaluation in youth work Research and evidence-based needs analysis</p>
<p>Objective 2: To support participants to develop socio-educational projects with young people that promote access to social rights and overcome discrimination, exclusion and violence</p>	<p>Learning areas: Democratic and participatory approaches and methods Non-formal education Evaluation in youth work Communication and presentation skills Access to social rights Discrimination, exclusion and violence</p>
<p>Objective 3: To develop participants’ understanding and knowledge of the human rights framework and the policy fields and mechanisms that are relevant to the situation of young people with whom they work, from the local to the European level;</p>	<p>Learning areas: Human rights and social rights Access to social rights Discrimination, exclusion and violence Facilitation Policy development and approaches Attitudes: respect, solidarity, empathy, non-discrimination, sense of self-worth and the worth of others</p>
<p>Objective 4: To support participants in using human rights based approaches and human rights education in their youth work</p>	<p>Learning areas: Human rights based approaches to social issues Human rights education: principles, values, methodology Social analysis (power, change, society etc.) Facilitation Intercultural learning Democratic and participatory approaches and methods Conflict transformation</p>

<p>Objective 5: To develop participants' competence and confidence for engaging with policy makers and other actors in the youth and social policy fields for improving access to social rights for young people;</p>	<p>Learning areas: Social analysis (power, change, society etc.) Policy development and approaches Communication and presentation skills Networking and partnership building Advocacy</p>
<p>Objective 6: To contribute to the social and educational recognition of youth work and non-formal education in participants' realities and at European level.</p>	<p>Learning areas: Self-directed learning Recognition of youth work Non-formal education</p>

> YOUTH WORKERS' FUNCTIONS WITHIN THE LTTC

The LTTC is an opportunity for participants to develop/improve complementary competences as youth workers, particularly linked with the objectives of the course.

The functions of the youth workers and their abilities that the LTTC aims to strengthen were developed on the basis of the approaches included in the "European Portfolio for youth workers and youth leaders". This framework will be the basis for participants' self-assessment of their abilities and also the starting point for the development by the participants of learning and development plans, adapted to their needs that they will pursue during the training course.

The key youth worker's functions in the framework of *Enter!* LTTC were defined as:

Function 1: To empower young people

I am able to:

- > accompany, motivate and involve young people in collectively planning, delivering and evaluating socio-educational initiatives;
- > ensure space for young people to identify issues/problems and take action independently according to the situations they face;
- > interact with young people in a way which is respectful of their dignity, their autonomy, their place in society and their voice;
- > inform and motivate young people to use all opportunities and resources to address their access to social rights, especially those identified in the *Enter!* project;
- > enable young people to work for the improvement of access to social rights;
- > manage emotions in the work with young people;
- > widen young people's awareness of the concepts of power and change in relation to social rights.

Function 2: To develop relevant learning opportunities

I am able to:

- › help the development of the confidence, knowledge, critical thinking, problem solving skills of young people affected by exclusion, discrimination and violence;
- › work with both individuals and groups in learning processes;
- › be a resource person for young people, providing appropriate guidance and feedback;
- › take advantage of spontaneous learning and development opportunities;
- › identify special learning needs of young people;
- › use a variety of educational methods and techniques;
- › encourage the creativity and curiosity of young people;
- › explain relevant concepts in an appropriate language adapted to the target group;
- › plan, implement and evaluate non-formal activities;
- › assist young people to transform any learning that occurs into concrete and useful action;
- › use appropriate information technology tools, according to the reality, needs and interests of the target group.

Function 3: To accompany young people to access their rights

I am able to:

- › facilitate young people's learning about social rights, from the international framework, to challenges on the local level and mechanisms related to human rights in daily life;
- › inspire young people to act for access to social rights and social change in general;
- › facilitate the development of young people's attitudes in line with the values of human rights, particularly respect of human dignity, solidarity, empathy, non-discrimination, sense of self-worth and the worth of others;
- › facilitate young people's awareness and understanding of the impact that exclusion, violence and discrimination have on access to social rights;
- › work creatively with conflict towards peaceful solutions;
- › assist young people to define their place in a changing world;
- › empower young people to defend their rights and the rights of others.

Function 4: To contribute to organisational and relevant policy development

I am able to:

- › locate, understand and practically apply the relevant both local, regional, national and European programmes, instruments and policies for improving the access of young people to social rights;
- › work independently, in teams and manage others;
- › build capacity within the organisation to work on access to social rights and youth policy

advocacy;

- › development dialogue, cooperation and partnerships between young people and relevant social actors for the improvement of policies related to access to social rights.

Function 5: To use evaluative practice

I am able to:

- › plan and apply a range of participative methods of evaluation to youth work and to the socio-educational projects they implement;
- › communicate, present and report on their actions to a variety of audiences;
- › include systematic evaluation in the youth work;
- › research and use results to influence practices, policies and projects.

Expected results and learning outcomes

Throughout the course and as a result of its educational process, participants will:

- › Improve their core competences in the areas related to the course curriculum;
- › Follow an experiential learning cycle, from needs assessment to evaluation of learning;
- › Design, implement and evaluate socio-educational projects with young people that promote access to social rights and overcome discrimination, exclusion and violence;
- › Receive institutional and educational support to develop projects with young people, as increased visibility for their youth work activities;
- › Increase their organisations' capacity on the topic of improving access to social rights for young people within and with the resources of their local community;
- › Develop dialogue and partnership with local and regional authorities and with civic society organisations;
- › Exchange practices with other youth workers from different contexts and networks among each other, for instance in international projects on access to social rights for young people;
- › Participants are associated to other *Enter!* project initiatives and more broadly to the Council of Europe's work in the area of youth and social policies;
- › Receive social and educational recognition for their involvement in the training course;
- › Improve their competences in using European programmes for youth work and tools at the local level.

The process of learning within a LTTC covers a variety of areas and it is based on participants' needs and the conditions of an intercultural learning environment. For this reason, the trainers' team has drafted a proposal of specific expected learning outcomes for participants that would be negotiated with participants according to their needs and interests.

The learning outcomes will be defined according to the learning and development plan (which will consider the needs, expectations and the starting point of each participant in the course).

It is expected that, as an outcome of the LTTC, participants are able to:

- › ensure space for young people to identify issues/problems and take actions independently according the situations they face;
- › motivate, involve and accompany young people in collective planning, delivering and evaluating socio-educational initiatives that promote access to social rights and overcome discrimination, exclusion and violence;
- › enable young people to work for the improvement of access to social rights;
- › enable young people to overcome discrimination, exclusion and violence in their local contexts;
- › plan, implement and evaluate non-formal education activities;
- › plan and apply a range of participative methods of evaluation to youth work and to the socio-educational projects they implement;
- › communicate, present and report on their actions to a variety of audiences;
- › include systematic evaluation in the youth work.

› LTTC CALENDAR AND METHODOLOGY

The LTTC is composed of four phases, which participants need to follow:

Preparatory phase January – March 2013	This phase will include preparatory activities for the course. Participants will get to know each other and develop an analysis of social rights related policies in their realities.
First residential seminar 10 – 23 March 2013, European Youth Centre Strasbourg	The residential seminar is an essential element of the course, allowing for participants to improve their competences on the key course curriculum elements and to kick of their projects, by reviewing and developing their project idea.
Project development phase and on-going learning April 2013 – September 2014	During this phase, participants will implement local youth-led projects in cooperation with local authorities and civil society.
Evaluation residential seminar September 2014, dates to be confirmed	During this evaluation seminar, participants will evaluate their learning and the impact of their projects for the young people which were involved in their project. The seminar will also include training elements in order to consolidate participants’ competences development.

The methodology of the course will allow for a good balance between theory and practices, learning and project implementation. A diversity of working methods will be use, based on non-formal education.

In terms of the trainer team's approach towards the group of participants, the core elements to keep in mind identified were as follows:

- > Participants are experts in youth work, so the role of the team is to create a good learning space for participants to learn from each other and together
- > The trainers team has a role in enhancing the sense of ownership by participants over the whole LTTC process
- > The trainers team will also support the development of a good learning and living together atmosphere
- > The trainers team and organisers are aware and acknowledge the effort of every participant to dedicate almost 2 weeks of their time to a residential seminar
- > The trainer team will carefully choose the methods during the seminar and the online learning phase, so as to enhance participants to get inspiration from those methods also in their daily work with young people.

LTTC support measures for participants

Throughout the training course, a series of support measures will be implemented in order to support participants learning and development, as follows:

- > A self-assessment system accompanied by a learning and development plan
- > Mentoring
- > Project visits, undertaken by trainers and representatives of the organizer's institution
- > Access to knowledge produced by the organising institutions and other scholars on the main topics of the course (also, through an online library and hard copies publications)
- > Contacts with participants involved in previous *Enter!* project activities, particularly the participants in the first *Enter!* LTTC
- > Contacts and enhanced co-operation with the members of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
- > Information about funding opportunities, mainly those available at international level, as the Open Society Foundations, the European Youth Foundation and the Youth in Action Programme
- > Participants will be encouraged to be associated also with other *Enter!* project activities, as national level seminar, conferences, and regional meetings
- > Participants can benefit from the expertise and partners involved in the *Enter!* Project Advisory Group
- > E-learning platform: learning and sharing resources through online learning

Mentoring in the Enter! LTTC

“Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be.” (Eric Parsloe, The Oxford School of Coaching & Mentoring)

In the Enter! LTTC, mentoring can be described as a structured process of providing advice and support for the purpose of personal and professional development of the participants, as learners and youth workers.

The mentoring relation is based on:

- › trust
- › seeking further learning opportunities
- › a mutually agreed “contract” between the mentor and mentee in a co-responsible process
- › the understanding that the mentoring process grows, changes and needs to be adapted to the reality of both parties involved
- › sharing knowledge, experience and skills
- › gaining an understanding of different viewpoints, interests and issues
- › a dialogical process, open and encouraging

The main objectives of mentoring in this LTTC are:

- › To support participants in their professional learning and personal development
- › To support participants in the development and implementation of their projects
- › To support participants’ engagement and motivation throughout the entire course (help them to stay connected to the course)

Each trainer will mentor 6 or 7 participants from February 2013 until the end of the course. It is expected that the average mentoring sessions will be 2 times per month, with peaks at the beginning of the course and in the first months after the residential seminar. However, since each mentoring process is different, this might not hold true for all the participants.

Mentoring will be announced at the beginning of the training course.

A specific aspect to mentoring in this LTTC is the mentees working with a given mentor form a peer group which (the so-called Reflection and learning group). This means that beside the one-on-one mentoring in the LTTC we will also be using the group of mentees as a constructive peer group process of reflection and advice regarding learning and project development.

Participants’ profile

Participants are youth or social workers, working directly with young people, and

- › they carry out their activities in a non-governmental entity (for example, a youth organisation, a human rights organisation, an organisation working on specific social rights or with

- specific target groups etc.) or in a local authority (for example, local community centres, youth centres, information office of a Municipality, school communities, etc.),
- › they have experience in projects tackling exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people,
 - › they are either professionals or volunteers.

Participants were also selected keeping in mind the following:

- › participants have the motivation and capacity to develop projects for and with young people on access to social rights;
- › participants have an interest to work in partnerships with local authorities on enhancing dialogue for improving access of young people to social rights;
- › participants have a specific target group of young people they will be working with throughout the LTTC;
- › participants are motivated to learn and to develop their professional and personal competences;
- › participants intend to remain active in their organisation/institution for the next 2 years and multiply their learning in their organisation/institution and community;
- › participants are aged 18-35, with exceptions possible;
- › participants are resident in one of the countries of the European Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe;
- › participants are able to work in English;
- › participants are available for full participation in all four phases of the course.

Participants are supported by their organisation for the whole duration of the course. This means, concretely:

- › the candidate must present a support letter from their organisation in the application phase;
- › the candidate should be allowed to participate in the residential seminar of the course and in other local and regional meetings for the whole duration of the course;
- › there should be a priority among the organisation's work plan on developing partnerships with local and regional authorities and policy-makers and respectively civil society organisations for candidates working in the public sector;
- › the candidate will implement a local project for and with young people, with specific quality criteria, and this means support from other colleagues will be needed.

It was a requirement for the selection that candidates' organisations have developed or are in a position to develop partnerships with local and regional authorities/civil society for the enhancement of social inclusion of young people.

Role of the participants' local youth projects in the LTTC

During the training course, each participant is expected to develop a local youth-led project based on active participation of young people and addressing specific challenges that young people face in their access to social rights, and as a consequences of the negative effects of discrimination, violence and exclusion.

Projects provide the practical basis for learning about how to promote the social rights of young people and how best to use youth research for youth policy action. They should be implemented in co-operation with local or regional authorities. Through the involvement of local authorities, other organisations and various actors in the social field, the projects aim at bringing real change and impact at community level concerning the access to social rights of the young people. The community awareness of the project is also important to secure the sustainability of the project and its support by the local authorities.

Trainers' team has developed as a first step of the project development process a framework of quality criteria for the projects, accompanied by a proposal of indicators which are to be used during the course as a continuum for participants to place their initiatives. Participants will also be encouraged to develop, on the basis of these indicators, personalised evaluation indicators for their projects.

Quality criteria for the *Enter!* LTTC's participants' projects

Quality criteria	Support indicators for participants in the process of developing their project
1. The project is a project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project follows the project cycle stages (preparation, implementation, evaluation, follow-up) • The project is financially feasible • The project has specific, clear and measurable objectives • The project includes an action plan • The project has a vision of results and follow-up
2. The project is a participatory youth project, run by and for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people identify the needs for the project • Young people propose, develop, implement and evaluate the project • Young people can have a say in adapting the project to their needs and aspirations • Young people are involved in the project because they want to • In the project, young people have clear roles that they agree with • Young people take significant decisions in the project • During the project, young people are becoming more active in community life

Quality criteria	Support indicators for participants in the process of developing their project
<p>4. The project is relevant in relation to the issues/problems faced by young people in access to social rights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project responds to a need in relation to access to social rights for young people in a clear and defined context • There is an explicit link between social rights and policies and the project • Through the project young people become (more) aware of their social rights • LTTC participants use human rights education and approaches in the work with young people • The improvement in access to social rights is planned as an impact of the project • The project makes proposals for youth and/or social policies development (from the local to the European level)
<p>5. The project responds to situations of exclusion, discrimination and/or violence affecting young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is linked to situations of exclusion, discrimination and violence • Young people take action against exclusion, discrimination and violence through the project
<p>6. The project is supported by an organisation/institution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is run as part of the organisation's plan of activities • The LTTC participant is supported by their team • Organisations place "access to social rights" on their agenda even after the project is finished • The project is part of the participant's role in the organisation
<p>7. The project promotes interactions and partnerships between public institutions and community actors for social change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project considers the work of relevant authorities at local level in charge of social policies • The project is run in cooperation with other community organisations or takes into account their work • The project is supported by and through the work of relevant youth and social policies authorities • The project leads to the creation of new partnerships and synergies • Project documents and presentations are available and understandable to those not directly involved • The project identifies a specific policy change it tackles • Participants connect their project and local policies to the instruments at local, regional, national and/or European levels
<p>8. The project is sustainable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project has a vision of follow-up • The project has different sources of funding • The project is visible in the local community and the media • The project outcomes and approaches are used for other initiatives • Participants in the project are motivated and empowered to stay active after the project ends

Quality criteria	Support indicators for participants in the process of developing their project
<p>9. The project is clearly linked to European realities and policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is open to input from other participants of the LTTC • The project is planned and run with a clear link to European youth and social policies and standards • The project contributes to European policy development through the wider <i>Enter!</i> project • The project contributes to create/develop a sense of European citizenship of young people • The project takes into account existing good practices from elsewhere in Europe

> PROJECTS ORGANISED WITHIN THE TWO ENTER! LTTCs

*All the details of these projects can be found on the Enter! project website:
<http://www.coe.int/en/web/enter/local-youth-projects>*

> ALBANIA

Rifat DEMALIJA, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **'Youth in Free Initiative' organisation**

Project: **From social exclusion to opportunities**

The project was based in Kukes region, north and north east of Albania and included three districts; Kukes, Has and Tropoja with a population of 116,000 inhabitants. Kukes Region is the poorest in Albania and interventions are needed not only to improve the economy of the region but also to educate people and specifically in this case youth on human and social rights. The main aim of the project was to provide knowledge and skills to address social inclusion of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods through non-formal education.

> ARMENIA

Karen MKHITARYAN, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Caucasian Institute for Peace Problems Research - CIPPR**

Project: **Training Course "Development and Implementation of Participation Projects at Local and Regional Level"**

Within the project a training workshop on participation was organized in Gyumri for 25 young people. The project supported foster greater participation of young people in the democratic structures and processes at local and regional level based in the principles promoted by the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life.

> AZERBAIJAN

Agshin ASGAROV, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Human Rights in the XXI Century**

Project: **Let's Create Social Inclusion Opportunities for Young Orphans**

“Let’s Create Social Inclusion Opportunities for Young Orphans” in two directions in order to achieve the main aim of the project which was to provide the young people from orphanages with necessary tools to integrate into society and to help them to be responsible citizens and free individuals. Within the project, trainings covering social rights as part of human rights were delivered and trainings were addressed mainly to the themes like housing, health, education, employment, legal and social protection, movement of persons, non-discrimination

Turkey GASIMOVA, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Prison Watch Public Association**

Project: **Preparation courses for the life after prison**

The project responds to the young prisoners’ lack of information about social rights. Very often, after they exit prisons, young people face recidivism and unemployment. The project includes trainings for young prisoners who will be released in the following three months and the publishing of booklets on the rights of prisoners. The topic of the trainings will be social rights, especially right to education, right to employment and right to legal and social protection.

> BELARUS

Anna GORSKAYA, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **SOS Children’s Village Association of Belarus**

In independent life, youngster-orphan and youngsters without parental care meet with a lot of difficulties and can’t to assert one’s rights in practice. The project aims to prepare young people from foster families, small children’s homes (after school education) for the full personal and vocational development and formation of social competencies during the transition for the independent living. Individual and group work (round tables, trainings, seminars, consultations, supervisions) will focus on increase awareness and access to social rights such as education, employment, housing, health.

Ihar ZAHUMIONAU, LTTC 2009-2011

Project: **Capacity Building for local authorities (LA) and non-state actors (NSA) cooperation on social inclusion and empowerment of disadvantaged young people in Belarus communities.**

The overall objective of the project was to build the capacity for local authorities and NSA cooperation in meeting the needs of vulnerable groups of young people and their social inclusion in 2 rural and 9 urban Belarus communities. The project was aimed at facilitation of equal participation of non-state actors and local authorities in policy dialogue and partner-

ship in policy formulation processes; capacity-building of non-state actors to represent their target groups; capacity-building of local authorities for cross-sectorial cooperation and social inclusion of disadvantaged groups of young people; changing attitudes of citizens towards vulnerable youth groups.

> BELGIUM

Lysiane SCHMITZ, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Ville de Namur**

Project: **Act'heure (Act'hour)**

The main objective of the project was to create way (shows, blogs, and exhibitions) to inform and to give access to social rights to the population of disadvantaged neighborhoods, in which the citizens could find all the services and infrastructures that gave them access to them.

> BULGARIA

Tania TISHEVA, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation**

Project: **Promotion of the access to social rights and the right to education of disadvantaged youth in Sofia, Dimitrovgrad and Bourgas through HRE – mission possible**

The aim of the project was to promote access to social rights and the right to education of disadvantaged youth in Dimitrovgrad and Bourgas through human rights education.

The project consisted of the following activities: Study and meetings with local authorities, school in Dimitrovgrad, youth centres and orphanages in Bourgas, Design and implementation of workshops on human rights education and social rights (with accent on the right to education, right to work, right to rest and leisure etc.), Information campaign for raising awareness on the educational needs of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods in terms of access to social rights and non-formal education.

> CROATIA

Danijela LOVRIC, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Youth Centre for non-formal education-Creators, not consumers**

Project: **Change Factory**

The project included a training course for youth leaders from 10 countries in Osijek Croatia.

Participants learned how to empower themselves by using theatre as a tool to promote social inclusion. The goal of the projects was to create multipliers, who when returning to their countries will use the methods that they have learned. The training course was positively evaluated both by the organisers and the participants.

> DENMARK

Janni Nielsen, Anne Mette GLARBO, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Save the Children Youth**

Project: **Save the Children Youth Group**

The project aims at handling the feeling of exclusion and discrimination and reduces conflicts associated with these that young boys in a neighbourhood at risk in Copenhagen, Tingbjerg, are experiencing. The project will include training sessions for young boys on developing social skills and awareness on their social rights. The future phases of the project will aim at breaking the barriers between the young boys and the services offered by local authorities, of which very often young boys are not aware of or do not trust

Mia SCHMIDT JENSEN, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Red Cross Youth**

The project includes the training of youth street mediators, and detached youth work in a disadvantaged area in Copenhagen, as a tool for crime prevention. Street mediators will support young people in linking with the opportunities available for them related to their social rights in the City of Copenhagen.

> ESTONIA

Marco PAULO LARANJEIRA DOS SANTOS, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Eesti Erinoorsootöö Ühing noOR**

Project: **Sailors on the CitizenShip – Harbors of CitizenShip**

Sailors on CitizenShip - Harbour of CitizenShip was a national and local level training course, which was developed as a module for youth workers/trainers to help them answer their questions concerning active citizenship issues. The main idea behind stays the same: how to make young people active on all levels, how to make them feel responsible for the local community, for the place they belong to and how to make them aware of their interdependence within global society.

> FINLAND

Samiuela ELONE, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **City of Helsinki Youth Department, Vuosaari Youth Work Unit (Vuny).**

Project: **Intercultural Learning, Youth Participation and Youth Access to Social Rights**

The content of the project was based on the needs of the young people. Non formal learning methods such as workshops, role plays, outdoor activities, and excursions were used to promote active participation, to promote learning and understanding of each others' cultures, to promote social inclusion, to raise awareness on access to Social Rights, and to facilitate the young people's personal and social development. The project was also aimed to build young people's competences on tolerance, respect human rights and the rules of law, democratic principles are important values for themselves as individuals as well as European citizens.

Niina LJUNGKVIST, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **City of Lappeenranta Youth Service, Sammonlahti Youth Centre**

Project: **Smokers quitters**

The project includes the development of the services of the City youth centres, by enhancing more cooperation with youth NGOs. Moreover, the project includes training session with and for young people, by which they will develop their social and civic skills. Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life both clearly demand that local authorities organize educational and counseling facilities for people facing trouble with tobacco, alcohol etc and this is where we saw a chance to use our expertise and status as youth workers.

> FRANCE

Fadela AOUIR, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Centre social et culturel Papin**

From a survey conducted by the Social and cultural Centre Papin and the Territorial Coordination of Security Prevention of Mulhouse, for a public of teenagers aged 13 to 16 years old who lives in the Franklin-Fridolin sector, we developed actions in order to solve recurrent issues such as addiction and non-civil acts.

Alexandra BOUDIA, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Association des Travailleurs Maghrébins de France**

Project: **EUROdépayse toi!**

The main aim to the project was to strengthen youths' knowledge concerning Europe through education (improvement of their language skills through non-formal education and information about job opportunities that it can offer), to strengthen mobility (development of an exchange with another European country) and to strengthen personal development (construction of self confidence and self-esteem.)

Estelle GARDETTE, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **IPEICC**

The project addresses the right to employment and non-discrimination. Young people have little competences in understanding the discrimination affecting them in their access to jobs and they also need to develop more competences through non-formal education. The project includes several educational activities for young people aged 18 to 25 in a disadvantaged area in Montpellier, on the following topics: self-esteem, communication, discrimination and ways to combat it, guidance towards the labour market, etc.

Abdenour LADJI, LTTC 2009-2011

Project: **Colonie internationale des jeunes.**

The rights addressed in this project were the right to mix with other people and to share our competences and culture. We give information on the situation of human rights in the world. We open the children's eyes concerning the actions we could have in order to change things around us.

Badia LOUKILI-RAIHANI, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Au-delà des Ponts**

Project: **La gazette: les dires et les écrits jeunes**

The objective of our project was to create a space where young girls and women could meet, exchange, inform themselves, around a book, a news, a testimony etc. 2 afternoons per week were reserved for them to answer their questions and respond effectively to their needs. The goal was to facilitate their integration in the society, to reinforce their communication abilities, to propose an access to information, law and culture.

Julie MERCIER, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **ARPOMT**

Project: **Être scolarisé ne veut pas forcément dire être intégré!**

Traveller children face discrimination in schools and are treated differently than other kids either

by their comrades or their teachers. The clichés and stereotypes are the main causes for this difference. But not being able to adapt to a different public is also important. Teachers sometime don't know how to be with travelers. The idea was to come in to the schools to present the culture of traveler people to teachers and school kids by organizing exhibitions, training time, exchanges, to create tools together.

Lavinia RUSCIGNI, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Association Migration et Echange pour le Developpement**

The project aims to raise the awareness of young people living in a disadvantaged area in Strasbourg (Hautepierre) on education, social inclusion, non-discrimination and intercultural learning opportunities through non-formal education activities. The project will increase young people's self-esteem and inform them about local policies on access to social rights provided and also international opportunities at international level (training courses, youth exchanges, work camps).

Ozlem YAVUZKAN , LTTC 2009-2011

Project: **Insertion des jeunes dans la société par le sport**

The aim of the project was to help youths discover other cultures, to help them be conscious of their socioeconomic rights, to create moments for sharing and gathering for participants.

> GERMANY

Sandra RABBOW, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Initiative Grenzen-Los!**

Project: **JugendtheaterBüro Berlin - Das Unternehmen „Freedom Festival“ (Youth Theatre Office Berlin)**

In July 2009 the NGO Initiative Grenzen-Los!e.V. started a new project: The Youth Theatre Office Berlin. The project pursued the aim to plan, organise, run and implement an (inter-)national, non-formal theatre festival: The Freedom Festival in autumn 2011. The festival was realized by youngsters from disadvantaged neighbourhoods of the age between 14 to 22 years, mostly with migrant and Muslim backgrounds. The project offered a variety of perspectives and opportunities in the area of human and social rights, participation and developing capabilities to disadvantaged youth such as the right of non-discrimination, education, social and cultural participation and vocational guidance.

> GREECE

Mary DROSOPOULOS, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Institute for European and Mediterranean Studies**

Project: **EMIS for social cohesion**

What made it disadvantaged was the rise of criminality due to poverty and unemployment partly as an outcome of the country's dire economic straits and the coming of migrants, esp. from Albania and the Russian Federation. Criminality shows itself in the form of thefts, prostitution in the streets and drug dealing. The locals started blaming immigrants for the situation, exhibiting suspicion and discrimination against them. The immigrants reacted by exhibiting hate and vengeance against locals. The area was downgraded. Unemployment rose. The aim was to improve the living conditions in our neighbourhood by providing better opportunities with a long term effect for its young people; locals and legal immigrants and by eliminating discrimination and social stereotypes.

Achilleas STAVROU, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **ARSIS Social Organisation: for the Support of Youth**

In Greece, a raising number of young people are excluded from basic social rights: employment, housing, education, health services, quality of food, representation and participation, living with dignity. During this project a core group of five young people was created. Through a fully participatory process we designed a three hours mobile workshop for young people, which is addressing the issues of discrimination and exclusion. The follow up will be the implementation of the workshop to various youth groups and the beginning of a network.

> HUNGARY

Balázs LETTNER, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Pro-Cserehát Association**

Project: **Tátorján project: increasing the dialogue between minority and majority through social voluntary work**

The aim of my project was to increase the dialogue between minority and majority through participant based social voluntary work. During the project 2 groups of youngsters took part non-formal education activities on Human and Social rights. They articulated their local needs and problems and they developed and implemented voluntarily some local mini projects to raise awareness about the problems. Hopefully their activities will get attention from the local communities and generate a discussion about the problems.

> IRELAND

Fiona JOYCE, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Canal Communities Regional Youth Service**

Project: **Social Rights – An Issue for YOUth**

The aim of the project was to work with young people on a weekly basis through a social rights programme to raise their awareness and ability to access their human & social rights in comparison to that of other young people throughout the world. This project focused on a participative volunteering/learning trip to Mwika, Tanzania & it's follow on effects.

> ITALY

Monia DE PAOLI, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Ufficio Servizio Sociale Minorenni di Venezia**

The project responds to the question of transition of young offenders to independent life after they leave prison, particularly young Roma people. The projects aims at establishing a coordinated network of youth organisations, social services and community organisations to enhance the transition from prison life to independent life of young offenders. The project will also include human rights education activities with young people, making them aware of their rights and their responsibilities and also enhancing a closer dialogue between the young people and different social actors involved in their transition from prison to independent life.

Mohammed MARFOQ, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Liberitutti**

Project: **Sourire**

The idea of the project was to give back to youths their voices on everything concerning their lives in realtions with their social rights, in the context of the passage from human rights to social rights approach, by offering them social and informal education related to social rights.

Federico TSUCALAS , LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Cooperativa Sociale Camelot**

Project: **Action to promote and improve the social integration of young asylum seekers and refugees living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods of Ferrara**

The idea was to promote concrete actions to improve social integration of young refugees, concerning housing and job opportunities. The project addressed the rights to housing and to employment.

> LATVIA

Sintija LASE, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **RED - Creative Effects' Workshop**

Project: **When you don't go to Europe, Europe comes to you**

Creativity, art, communication and visibility are important key-words not only for businesses, but for the social life of every individual – you and me! Do I know my social rights? How can I tell others about them? How can I use different media and art forms to spread this knowledge at limited cost? The youth exchange “Creative Effects' Workshop”, was organized with 8 partner organizations from the EU, the dates from the 28th of August to the 4th of September 2010. Three topics were addressed: creative non-standard media, social rights and intercultural dialogue.

Ljuba TIHOMIROVA, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Latvia's association for family planning and sexual health**

The main idea of the project is to create a group of both Russian and Latvian school aged youngsters and to train them on health related topics with non-formal methodologies as peer-to-peer educators for building collaboration among two different communities. The idea is to use health education also as a tool for intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding among these 2 ethnic groups which are often involved conflicting.

> “THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA”

Elez BISLIM, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Association of Citizens Sumnal**

Project: **Inclusion of Young Roma People (Roma Youth Information Club)**

The main aim of the project was to raise the awareness among of young Rroma from 3 Roma neighbourhoods in Skopje about their social rights and to improve their access to employment and health services through human rights education, mediation with social services. The project covered the following main themes: Human Rights, Social Rights, Unemployment, Health and Education.

Eleonora POPOSKA, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Journalists for children and women rights and environmental protection**

Project: **Better access to social rights and social services for the young Roma people**

The project took place in a DN Saraj, a peripheral area of Skopje, where Roma young people live in very poor conditions and face numerous problems. The authorities are not intervening enough

to improve the situation, while as far as the NGOs are concerned, it was necessary to emphasise that no other NGO is working in this neighbourhood and with this population in spite of all the problems that these young people are facing. The aim of the project was to raise awareness about the social rights and improve the access to social services for the Roma young people living in DN in Saraj municipality through non-formal education in order to improve their living conditions.

Milos RISTOVSKI, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Center for Intercultural Dialogue**

The project is based on the need of young people to have a better understanding of their social rights and social policies and to be better involved in local decision-making processes that concern them directly. The project includes human rights education activities with young people from the three ethnic groups present in Tetovo, Albanian, Macedonian and Roma, and will focus also on the strengthening the local youth council through the involvement of groups excluded usually from this participatory processes

Biljana VASILEVSKA, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Centre for Human Rights "AMOS" Bitola**

Project: **HIV/AIDS prevention among young people in Bitola - Get more knowledge and skills**

The idea was to prevent HIV infection among young people in Bitola, by increasing the knowledge and skills of 300 young people from 15 – 25 years of age that live in Bitola about HIV risks, ways of transmission and ways of protection by: Establishing a network of young peer educators that will provide information and education related to HIV infection; Educating 300 young people in secondary schools in Bitola and in other NGOs, on HIV/AIDS through peer educational sessions; Raising public awareness on specific ways for protection of young people concerning HIV infection and promoting the development of a sense of an individual responsibility (inspiring behavioural changes)

> PORTUGAL

Dynka AMORIM, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Citizens of the World/Bué Fixe**

Project: **Youth Media to promote the Access of Young People Living in Disadvantaged Neighborhoods to Social Rights**

The main goal of this project was to actively engage particularly vulnerable Young People coming from Portuguese speaking countries in Africa and living in Vulnerable Communities in

Portugal, to their Social Rights, Media tools such as the on-going radio programme, magazine Bué Fixe as well as the related Blog, were used to disseminate adequate information produced by the Young People themselves with the supervision of specialist to the different contents. Non-formal education was used such as Peer Education and role playing in order to help these young people to experiment situations that they may face in their daily life regarding their constitutional rights as much as European ones. Cultural diversity was a priority as these groups of young people although having in common the Portuguese language have different cultures, religious believers and values.

Miguel LAMAS, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Associação Nacional de Futebol de Rua (Street Soccer National Association)**

Project: **Enter the Game Too**

The project “Enter the Game Too” is based in the disadvantaged neighbourhood of Padre Cruz, Lisbon, and responds to the need to reduce school failure and dropout, unemployment; youth risk behaviours and indiscipline in schools, parental neglect, and the need for acquisition and reinforcement of psychosocial skills necessary to the lives of children and their inclusion in the society. The project will promote access to social rights through sports (“human street soccer”) and media activities where young people will have the main role.

Ana Sofia MARTINS, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **ECOS - Cooperative of Education, Cooperation and Development**

Project: **“TALK ABOUT IT!”**

In order to encourage young people to be active in defense of their Sexual and Reproductive Rights, the Algarve region decided to “TALK ABOUT IT!” The project “TALK ABOUT IT: Cooperation and Youth Participation for the Access of Sexual and Reproductive Rights in the Algarve” was released at the beginning of this year, with the main objectives of creating spaces of dialogue between decision-makers, organization:s working with youth and youth, highlighting the issues related to the area of Sexual and Reproductive Rights while, at the same time, encouraging youth participation within this area.

Ana SILVA, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **APSDC**

Project: **Have you an hour to spare?**

The aim of the project is to establish a school bank of volunteers through peer education. Young people from a disadvantaged neighbourhood will be the ambassadors of this project and will

mobilise other young people and local entities to joint, with the mission of involving young people in voluntary activities in organisations that work on social rights access.

> RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Olga INZHUVATKINA, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Saint Petersburg Charity Public Organisation: “Shag navstrechu”**

The project takes into account the specific situation of children with special needs and their integration in mainstream education. The project will include several training sessions for schools, including the school staff and students, about the way to integrate children with special needs. A specific phase of the project is an arts project, that will aim at increasing the awareness of all students of the situation of children with special needs.

Fransua TULIKUNKIKO, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Organisation humanitaire de la Region de Pskov «Heureuse Enfance»**

Project: **Promoting socio-economic rights of youth living in rural areas of the Russia’s North-West Region**

This project was elaborated to promote socio-economic rights of youth living in rural areas of the Russia’s North-West Region through human rights education, development of intercultural exchanges and good practices with a European dimension. It was called to indicate the slopes and help them in solving social problems: insufficient food, lack of access to medical care, equal education, housing, and unemployment exacerbated by the economic crisis, almost non-existent civic participation and social inactivation in the field of protection of his rights, freedoms and legal interests.

> SERBIA

Suzana KAPLANOVIC, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Red Cross Belgrade**

Project: **Let’s play for humanity**

The aim of project was to create a positive and friendly environment in school contributing to inclusion of Roma pupils. The problem of discrimination and exclusion was often a problem of Roma minority in Belgrade. Red Cross Belgrade attends to use participative drama especially Theatre of the oppressed technique as a tool to provide better inclusion of Roma children in school and promote peace, tolerance, solidarity and non-discrimination.

Petra MILOSAVLJEVIC, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Youth Creative Center**

Young people are often discriminated in school, hospitals, social service offices, police and other settings in our town. There are laws and policies that guarantee access to social rights for young people and forbid discrimination, but it is still happening and their access is not easily accomplished. The reason is the lack of information about social rights, prejudices and the lack of sensitivity for their needs. Young people affected the most are the ones that belong to vulnerable groups (Roma people, people with disabilities, Muslims...). The project will involve young people aged 13 to 19, students of high schools in Jagodina in awareness raising activities on their entitlements in relation to social rights and how they can access them.

> SLOVAKIA

Roman BARTOS, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **NGO Life and Health**

The problems identified in the project are discrimination, antigypsyism and segregation in accessing social rights by Roma youth and a lack of Roma activists on local and regional level to participate in the decision-making processes that affect their lives. The project aims at empowering young Roma in building network of activists promoting better access for disadvantaged youth to social rights

> SWEDEN

Rami AL-KHAMISI, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Megafonen**

Project: **The Megaphone**

The aim of the project was to create a platform, a newsmagazine where young people from the age 16 to 25 in the suburbs of Stockholm can become aware of and discuss issues such as racism, violence and discrimination. Young people involved in the project were able to create their own agenda and tackle the issues that concern them. The overall purpose of this project was to raise awareness among young people of their social rights, so that they are more able to access them.

> TURKEY

Seda CEVIK, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Community Volunteer Organisation (TOG)**

Project: **"The Youth Said: Life is Hard!"**

The project aims to analyse the reality young people face in relation to their access to social rights and to have an effect on the national and local decision making mechanism to consider the young people. "The Youth Said: Life is Hard!" project aims to empowerment young people who are between 16 – 25 and living Turkey. The process includes the creation of a project team, training courses which are related with social rights, youth policies and services and advocacy for youth, dissemination the Life Is Hard! game, preparation of a research paper about most debated topics and needs of young people by using the game reports and advocate to effect local and national decision making process.

> UKRAINE

Oleksiy MURASHKEVYCH, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Lugansk Regional Center for Youth Initiatives Support**

Young people in the Lugansk region aged 16 to 21 face health issues (STD, violence, depression) and lack of opportunities to participate in social life of their communities. A group of 10 young people will be trained as peer educators and organise training sessions with their peers on access to health and healthy lifestyles, as well as presenting to their peers opportunities for getting active in community life, for example through volunteering.

Igor NOSACH, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **International Charity Partnership for Every Child**

The main project idea is to encourage a group of active young people from institutional care to establish and sustain a social network (informal or youth-led non-governmental organisation) which will provide support to wider group of young people in the local community in advocating for and accessing their social rights at the local level.

> UNITED KINGDOM

Jean CASE, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Bulwell Riverside Centre, Nottingham City Council**

The project aims to create a local campaign with young people from one of the most deprived

areas of Nottingham that will address the issue of domestic abuse. The numbers of young people involved in abusive relationships is growing quickly. The young people will create either a piece of art, a music CD, or a performance for the stage or video, that will be given to schools and youth centers in the surrounding neighbourhoods to raise awareness about domestic abuse (rather than tackling it as taboo) and to prevent it.

Alex COLLOP, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Muirhouse Youth Development Group**

Project: **My future, social enterprise for young people in youth work**

The aim of the project was to promote the awareness and access to social rights for young people in Muirhouse and surrounding areas. The project worked alongside young people involved in the MY Future (training and development) and MY Adventure (social enterprise) projects in various activities and actions designed to develop a better understanding and access to social rights especially relating to education, employment and access to sport, outdoor and leisure activities. The STABLE (Support and Training through Activities Building Long Term self-Esteem) element of the project, a pilot project funded by EYF, aimed to increase access to social rights for young offenders.

Fionn GREIG, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **Voice of Youth**

The project includes human rights education activities for young people aged 12 to 19 from the area of Hackney, London. Young people will develop their awareness of social rights. The project will aim at enhancing youth participation also in international youth work non-formal education activities. Young people involved in the project are often discriminated against by the police, and often have low aspirations for their future. Learning more about their rights, and being able to participate more in local community life will give them more confidence for their future, but also in their motivations towards present opportunities.

Sean PETTIS, LTTC 2009-2011

Organisation: **Public Achievement**

Project: **Social Rights for All**

The aim of my project was to support 18 young people from 3 disadvantaged communities in Belfast to identify important social rights issues and undertake four action projects that seeks to address their issue as means to increase young people's active participation, awareness of human rights and understanding of political processes and structures.

Elizabeth SMITH, LTTC 2013-2014

Organisation: **CATCH-22**

The project will increase the participation for all young people who are at risk of exclusion from two mainstream schools in south London. It aims to create an environment for the young people to be fully respected, valued and accepted within their school and to review the schools behaviour policy. They will work to develop their competencies to deliver peer-to-peer training to a wider audience and engage more in the school life. Parents and teachers will also be involved in the process, in order to also break the barriers between the young people, parents and the school.

THE *ENTER!* RECOMMENDATION - AS ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

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

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

The Committee of Ministers, in accordance with Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe, Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity between its members, in particular by promoting a youth policy based on common principles;

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

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

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

- › Recommendation Rec(2003)8 on the promotion and recognition of non-formal education/ learning of young people;
- › Recommendation Rec(2003)19 on improving access to social rights;
- › Recommendation Rec(2004)13 on the participation of young people in local and regional life;
- › Recommendation Rec(2006)5 on the Council of Europe Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015;

- › Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)13 on gender mainstreaming in education;
- › Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 on the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education;
- › Recommendation CM/Rec(2011)12 on children’s rights and social services friendly to children and families;
- › Recommendation CM/Rec(2011)14 on the participation of persons with disabilities in political and public life;

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

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

Having further regard to:

- › the final Declaration adopted by the 5th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth (Bucharest, 27-29 April 1998), in particular to the references pertaining to youth participation and active citizenship, non-formal education, integration into society and social cohesion;
- › the final Declaration adopted by the 6th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth (Thessaloniki, 7-9 November 2002), in particular to the references pertaining to the access of young people, notably those from disadvantaged groups, to information which concerns them and to encourage the development of national youth policies based on general common principles and involving young people and their organisations as much as possible in the drafting of these policies;
- › the Declaration and Action Plan adopted at the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Warsaw, 16-17 May 2005) which stated that the Council of Europe would further develop its unique position in the youth field;
- › the Declaration “Making gender equality a reality” of May 2009, whereby the Committee of Ministers urged member states to commit themselves fully to bridging the gap between *de jure* and *de facto* equality through effective gender mainstreaming;
- › the Strasbourg Declaration on Roma adopted by the Committee of Ministers (CM(2010)133) on 20 October 2010 in which the member states of the Council of Europe agreed to adopt and implement anti-discrimination legislation, in particular in the fields of employment, access to justice and the provision of goods and services, including access to housing and key public services, such as health care and education;
- › the Declaration adopted at the 8th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth and the Agenda 2020 – Programme for the future of the Council of Europe youth policy;

- › the General Policy Recommendation No. 13 (CRI(2011)37) of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) on combating anti-Gypsyism and discrimination against Roma;
- › Bearing in mind the work carried out by the Council of Europe youth sector to promote human rights, social inclusion and the active participation of young people, particularly through the “Enter!” project, implemented since 2009;

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

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

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

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

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

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

- a. improve the living conditions of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods by providing accessible, affordable and youth-friendly public services and other measures in the fields of education and training, employment and occupation, health, housing, information and counselling, sports, leisure and culture;**
- b. implement concrete measures to work towards abolition of the segregation and isolation that negatively affects disadvantaged neighbourhoods irrespective of their location;**
- c. promote meaningful opportunities and programmes for consultation and participation of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods in all matters related to the planning and management of their living environment;**

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

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

The respective authorities are encouraged to engage in following up, recording and evaluating the progress of youth and social policy initiatives resulting from this recommendation, taking an inter-disciplinary approach, by gathering evidence of youth needs from as many relevant sources as possible, by involving the broadest possible range of social partners and by ensuring that those who are most concerned (such as young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, youth work and youth organisations supporting them) are included as equal partners in such efforts. The realities of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, so often determined by multiple discrimination, disenfranchisement and marginalisation, must be at the centre of concern throughout.

> A. IMPROVING THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOODS

1. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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

- > investing in education and training for disadvantaged neighbourhoods from pre-school through the tertiary education;
- > implementing gender-sensitive and other forms of beneficiary sensitive budgeting to promote equal access to and enjoyment of educational resources;
- > updating educational curricula to make them more relevant to the needs of young people for their employability and the challenges facing young people entering the labour market;
- > making vocational training more attractive and relevant to young people who are not used to academic methods;

- › improving the status, recognition and resources of vocational guidance in the school system;
- › providing additional support (to purchase books, clothes, meals, etc.) to those for whom the costs associated with participation in education above and beyond tuition are unaffordable to ensure that access to education is not dependent on financial resources of individuals and their families;
- › creating mechanisms through which schools and educational staff can assess and identify learning and social problems and cultural or any other barriers to the successful completion of education as early as possible and implement specific measures to prevent students from dropping out of school;
- › making available quality “second chance education” opportunities to young people who have left education early, including non-formal education and mobility programmes for increasing self-confidence and entrepreneurship and work-based training for the acquisition of skills and qualifications;
- › promoting the development of non-formal educational partnerships between schools, youth workers and independent youth organisations as part of a holistic lifelong learning strategy at the centre of which is placed the learners’ needs and their active participation;
- › including education for democratic citizenship and human rights education in school curricula, particularly at primary and lower-secondary levels, and creating partnerships between teachers and youth workers for mutual support in their delivery;
- › implementing specific measures through mediation activities, among other things, to make schools safe and free from bullying as well as all manifestations of prejudice, discrimination, segregation, sexual harassment and all forms of violence;
- › promoting comprehensive health, nutrition and sexual education and information for young people in order to support them in making informed decisions;
- › developing participatory school communities through mechanisms for the inclusion of student-elected representatives in decision-making processes in schools;
- › adapting teacher-training programmes to the challenges of working with young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods through the inclusion of new contents (such as social issues, social identity and concerns of young people) and new approaches (intercultural, gender equality and mediation, for example), and by developing partnerships between professionals close to young people in the neighbourhoods (such as youth workers) and relevant training programmes;
- › promoting and facilitating mobility for learners between different learning sectors, in other words, between school and non-formal education/learning programmes, through specific measures, including the possible recognition and certification of learning acquired through non-formal and informal education/learning;
- › taking into account the special circumstances and barriers which complicate access to education experienced by young people whose families lead a nomadic lifestyle, are

engaged in temporary migration (for example, labour migration) or who have refugee or asylum-seeker status in the development of education strategies and policies.

2. EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATION

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

- › adapting apprenticeship, training and vocational programmes so that they are inclusive, linked to employment opportunities and have clearly defined paths of progression;
- › developing all efforts (in particular through legislation) to ensure that apprenticeships are adequately remunerated, so as to be a viable option for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- › ensuring (in particular through legislation) that internships are a secure and legal form of employment and a viable entry point into the labour market for young people starting out. Involving employers in the process can ensure better results;
- › improving existing and developing new approaches to youth information and career counselling, taking into account the specific barriers experienced by young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods in searching for and acquiring vocational training opportunities, apprenticeships and later employment;
- › facilitating access to work-based learning opportunities in both the public and private sectors for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, including through partnerships between relevant social partners;
- › encouraging responsible authorities (local authorities, educational institutions, etc.) to work in partnership with other social partners (local businesses, large companies, trade unions, chambers of commerce) to develop work experience programmes for young people who have difficulties in acquiring such experience without additional support;
- › studying the feasibility of creating and implementing a “youth guarantee”, including necessary measures to ensure that no young person is out of education, training or employment for longer than four months;
- › recognising experiences gained through non-formal education and community work as relevant work experience for the labour market. This requires the exchange of good practice among relevant social partners (education and training providers, employers and their associations, youth organisations, youth work providers, etc.);
- › investing in improving public access to information technologies through existing public

- services (youth centres, public libraries, media centres, youth information and counselling centres, etc.);
- > including career counselling and support measures for job-seeking youth in the programmes of public youth work and community work providers and formal education establishments (workshops on seeking employment information, writing a CV, interview techniques, etc.);
 - > facilitating young people's access to micro-finance and co-operative financing schemes, thereby improving conditions for youth entrepreneurship and social enterprise;
 - > proposing incentives, through relevant tax breaks and other forms of financial support, to private-sector stakeholders, especially local businesses, to provide quality employment;
 - > investing in affordable public childcare facilities that can be made compatible with working hours to facilitate young parents' access to the labour market;
 - > providing incentives to public and private stakeholders for implementing measures sensitive to the challenges experienced by young families in harmonising their work and family lives (parental leave schemes for fathers, flexible working arrangements, childcare facilities, etc.);
 - > taking into account the specific barriers to entering employment that young people experience, when developing employment strategies and policies.

3. HOUSING

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

- > encouraging responsible authorities to implement measures to improve the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to adequate affordable housing;
- > actively considering the special housing needs of the most vulnerable groups, including young people at risk of homelessness or already homeless, young families, young people, especially those belonging to minorities and victims of domestic violence, in housing strategy planning and implementation by considering the possibility of involving them in decision making;
- > simplifying processes for acquiring housing assistance through intensive co-ordination between public housing and other relevant social services;
- > facilitating the dissemination of up-to-date information on available housing and housing assistance through relevant youth-friendly means of communication and taking

advantage of existing public infrastructure such as youth information centres and youth work locations;

- › encouraging and helping the competent authorities to develop “mixed housing markets” offering the full range and diversity of housing forms from social housing through private rentals, adapted to the needs of young people beginning an independent life;
- › supporting responsible authorities in rolling out “mixed housing schemes” so as to ensure the internal diversity of local communities, and prevent segregation and ghettoisation;
- › putting in place mechanisms to ensure that minimum standards of safety, health and hygiene are respected across the mixed housing market (private and public), including the implementation of measures for bringing non-respect of such standards to the attention of relevant authorities (spot inspections, complaint mechanisms) in co-operation with consumer protection or other relevant institutions. Information about such standards and mechanisms should be widely disseminated using youth-friendly means of communication;
- › providing “halting sites”, with access to clean water, electricity and proper sanitation, for use by Traveller communities, complemented by relevant mediation support should such initiatives meet with community resistance.

4. HEALTH

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

- › facilitating access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to free quality health care through youth-friendly health and social services and health information through youth-friendly means of communication (especially Internet-based social media);
- › paying special attention to the health needs of especially vulnerable groups of young people experiencing multiple forms of exclusion (including young Roma and migrant women, young people suffering from poor mental health, young people with disabilities, young people with HIV, etc.);
- › addressing cultural, attitudinal or other barriers hindering young people’s access, including language barriers between patients and medical professionals, through appropriate measures (for instance provision of interpretation, cultural mediation, etc.), as necessary;
- › investing in the development and implementation of youth health programmes and crisis counselling services through educational, awareness-raising and support programmes on healthy and responsible lifestyles (addressing in particular any substance misuse, addiction, sexual and reproductive health, early, unplanned or crisis pregnancy, mental health,

sport, nutrition, family and work perspectives and overall well-being) through existing public youth work, education and community institutions. Youth workers, social workers and nurses could be effectively engaged in promoting and updating such programmes in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;

- > creating programmes to encourage medical practitioners, nurses and community health workers to update their competence in areas such as intercultural aspects of patient-medical professional relations, gender sensitivity, reluctance to discuss medical issues, youth-friendly approaches in health care, etc., through a variety of measures (including lifelong learning opportunities, exchange of practice and expertise with other professionals working in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, etc.);
- > elaborating health strategies taking into account the needs of the young people concerned, by involving young people and youth workers from disadvantaged neighbourhoods directly in development and decision-making processes;
- > promoting sport as a way of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and for the prevention of future health problems, inside and outside school, with measures to ensure full and equal access to public sports amenities, including investing in their provision or improvement.

5. INFORMATION AND COUNSELLING

Young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods have limited access to information and counselling because of their location and lack of resources. However, they are among those who need such services the most. The following approaches improve access to information and counselling for these young people:

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

6. SPORT, LEISURE AND CULTURE

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

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

› B. BREAKING DOWN SEGREGATION AND THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL INCLUSION

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

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

› C. PROMOTING MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF THEIR LIVING ENVIRONMENT

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

- › developing inclusive and transparent processes which allow young people and their representatives to participate in the planning of their living environment (at urban, community and neighbourhood level) and in which the needs of young people, the accessibility of essential public services and community amenities are at the centre of planning duly recognised. Examples of good practice include the establishment, at local and regional level, for example, of youth consultative bodies such as municipal youth councils, youth parliaments or forums, allowing all young people, whether or not they belong to organisations or associations, to express their opinions and present proposals on the formulation and implementation of policies affecting them, as well as the principles of co-management in place in the youth sector of the Council of Europe;
- › using locations and media that are popular with young people (social media, youth organi-

sations and centres, sport clubs, public spaces they frequent) for the purpose of informing and consulting young people on planning processes relevant to them;

- › providing youth organisations active in disadvantaged neighbourhoods with sustainable support and resources for reaching out to the least enfranchised young people and for facilitating their participation in relevant debates.

› **D. ENSURING THAT ALL YOUNG PEOPLE ARE FULLY ABLE TO EXERCISE THEIR ROLE AS ACTIVE CITIZENS WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION**

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

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

> E. RECOGNISING AND SUPPORTING NON-FORMAL EDUCATION, YOUTH WORK, YOUTH ORGANISATION AND YOUTH WORKERS IN DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOODS

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

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

> F. IMPROVING GENDER EQUALITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOODS

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

- › encouraging young parents (especially young mothers) from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to continue or return to education or training, or to pursue employment through a variety of measures including appropriate benefit systems and childcare support services;
- › providing specific support measures for young women and men living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods to voice issues of concern to them in the public sphere, through dedicated platforms for their participation in youth organisations political life and in society;
- › supporting young people's leadership in the community through a variety of measures, including supporting gender-specific youth organisations, co-educational youth work and gender-sensitive boys/young men's initiatives.

› G. PREVENTING ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE IN DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOODS

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

- › creating platforms for dialogue between the various responsible authorities at local, regional and national levels (including police, youth justice and probation services, health and social services and youth workers) and young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and their representatives (youth organisations, youth work providers, etc.) to identify causes of and strategies for effectively combating all forms of violence in the neighbourhood;
- › creating and implementing formal and non-formal education programmes that address bullying, sexual harassment, gender-based violence, and all other forms of violence prevalent in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- › making available support measures for the recovery process of young victims of violence and disseminating information widely about these measures in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, using youth-friendly means of communication;
- › encouraging young victims to report gender-based violence to the police, while ensuring that they have access to services to ensure their safety, including the availability of places in alternative accommodation for them and their children, relevant counselling and financial support;
- › implementing gender-sensitive human rights training for police, legal professionals and representatives of other responsible authorities involved in addressing violence in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;

- › encouraging police officers to protect young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods from violence including through clear and effective sanctions for not doing so;
- › facilitating initiatives that aim at supporting the recovery process of perpetrators of violence, the social re-integration of young offenders and the prevention of hate speech and hate crimes.

* * *

GLOSSARY

Active citizenship: The capacity for thoughtful and responsible participation in political, economic, social and cultural life. Young people learn about active citizenship through introduction to the concepts and values underpinning citizenship in a democracy (usually through some form of education, formal or non-formal), by being active and responsible members of their community (through the activities of civil society) and, once they have reached the relevant age, by practicing the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy (voting, standing for elected office, etc.). It is at one and the same time a human right and a responsibility. Active citizenship requires both opportunity and competence. Young people experiencing barriers to accessing social rights are also more likely to experience barriers to exercising active citizenship and participating responsibly in society.

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

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

Disadvantaged neighbourhoods: Areas or communities in which residents, including young people, experience poverty, deprivation, violence, exclusion, marginalisation, a lack of opportunities, poor living conditions, a degraded environment and vulnerability to a higher degree than the majority of the population. Disadvantaged neighbourhoods lack important infrastructure and services for young people, which has negative impacts on their life chances and future development. Such infrastructure and services include youth centres, schools and other education amenities, sport and cultural facilities, public meeting spaces, health centres, employment and training agencies, as well as local businesses and community initiatives. These neighbourhoods are often denied or overlooked in terms of funding from national, regional and local authorities and the private sector. Furthermore, they are often at a distance from city centres without

adequate transport systems, leading to isolation and segregation.² In this recommendation, the terms “disadvantaged neighbourhoods” refer essentially to urban areas but also to the rural areas where Roma³ communities are settled and generally live in poor conditions.

Disadvantaged young people: Young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods (as defined above) experience various and multiple forms of (social) disadvantage (as defined above), including a lack of economic, cultural, and social capital and/or resources; a lack of access to or success in education; a lack of training or employment; a lack of perspectives for the future; a greater risk of homelessness, conflict with the law, sexual exploitation and/or violence and substance abuse, etc. Furthermore, some young people from certain categories could become disadvantaged young people, including young people growing up in care or without their families; young people from migrant backgrounds or from ethnic minorities; Roma young people; young people with disabilities, mental health problems or living with illness and young people living in segregated or isolated communities are much more likely to experience social disadvantages than other young people. Disadvantaged young people are among the most marginalised in society and require special support measures to access the same opportunities as their peers.

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

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

Non-formal education: “Non-formal education” means any planned programme of education designed to improve a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational setting.⁴

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

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

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

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

> ENDNOTES

- ¹ In daily discourse the term “young people” is often used to describe people older than 12 or 13 years. For statistical purposes, the UN defines persons between the ages of 15 and 24 as youth, without prejudice to national definitions.
- ² Inspired by the definition of vulnerable regions provided by Mary Daly, *Access to social rights in Europe*, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, October 2002.
- ³ The term “Roma” used at the Council of Europe refers to Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and the Eastern groups (Dom and Lom), and covers the wide diversity of the groups concerned, including persons who identify themselves as Gypsy.
- ⁴ Cf. Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education.

> MESSAGE FROM THE 1ST ENTER! YOUTH MEETING (2011)

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

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

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

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

Recognise us, for we're the solution

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

- > Implementing sustainable youth policies at local and national level that are based on social rights
- > Raising the attention of member states to the challenges faced by young people in accessing their social rights and to call upon them to seriously address them
- > Regular and consistent monitoring of the obstacles young people face in accessing their human rights at local, national and European level, notably through national youth policy reviews, and involving non-governmental youth organisations
- > Realising and valuing the potential and creativity of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, including in the artistic, social, and cultural fields
- > Setting up and supporting local youth councils and youth advisory mechanisms as exam-

ples of good practice and to ensure democratic participation as well as the involvement of local authorities

- › Facilitating closer communication and cooperation between decision makers and young people
- › Providing human rights education through formal and non-formal education, including accessible and decentralised information about the rights in the European Social Charter
- › Securing the right to free education, through the provision of quality education and vocational training for all - regardless of legal status - advise and counselling for young people and the democratic governance of schools
- › Ensuring that all schools are a supportive environment for learning and free from violence
- › Providing quality and affordable public services, especially in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, including free health care, affordable housing, access to water and sanitation
- › Paying special attention to gender-based discrimination, particularly the obstacles to the equal participation of young women
- › Effectively addressing discrimination, stigma and prejudices that young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods face, including the combined effects of multiple discriminations
- › Adopting specific measures to secure the rights of young people with disabilities and particularly vulnerable groups such as Roma, the homeless, offenders and those in care institutions
- › Paying particular attention to ensuring social rights of young undocumented migrants, asylum-seekers, internal displaced people and refugees
- › Launching a Europe-wide youth campaign against all forms of discrimination and racism
- › Promoting and creating opportunities for intercultural and interreligious dialogue and exchange in public spaces such as schools, community, culture, leisure and sport centers
- › Addressing the causes of exclusion and violence through prevention, not punishment and repression
- › Recognising the role of youth work and of young people in promoting social rights and providing accessible funding and support for their projects through simplified procedures
- › Developing specific programmes for employment and entrepreneurship of young people
- › Promoting and supporting youth mobility programmes addressed to young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

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

Exclusion, violence and discrimination are not inevitable.

> MESSAGE FROM THE 2ND ENTER! YOUTH MEETING

by the participants in the *Enter!* Youth Meeting 2015

We, the 180 participants of the *Enter!* Youth Meeting, coming from the entire continent, want to express our appreciation for the possibility given to us to create and live together at home in the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe.

We are committed to human rights and citizenship for all and want to play our part as actors for change.

We shared our experiences and views about the realities we face regarding social rights, especially the discrimination in accessing them. All young people in Europe today should grow up and live under the protection of the Council of Europe's human rights system. Yet, we are concerned about the living conditions and prospects for many of us whose human rights are too often threatened or denied.

The economic and social crises, aggravated by austerity policies and systemic violence, impact deeply on the living conditions for many young people and families. Access to work is a precondition for other rights to be effective and for our autonomy. Too many young people are pessimistic about their future. We need to be able to dream and believe in dreams coming true!

We are outraged with the cuts in public services, especially the health and social sectors. We are alarmed by growing disparities in accessing quality education. Quality education is a right, not a privilege!

We are frustrated by the increasing presence of discrimination and the re-emergence of racism, sometimes exemplified by governments themselves. We support the No Hate Speech Movement campaign, which needs to be taken more seriously by our authorities. We claim equal dignity for everyone, everywhere!

We are appalled by armed conflicts on the continent and their impact in the lives of millions of young people and their families.

We are worried by the lack of solidarity in Europe. We are especially upset by the fate of millions of migrants at the heart and the shores of Europe. Building walls cannot be the solution!

Young people are a key resource to any society and should be valued accordingly.

We welcome the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of the Recommendation on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights. We hope that it reaches its full potential and serves its purpose: to prevent and eradicate poverty, discrimination, violence

and exclusion faced by young people. It now needs to be taken seriously by the authorities in our countries. It is imperative that all the measures proposed in the Recommendation are given equal attention. We hope that the programme “Building Inclusive Societies” will also contribute to its implementation. As active young people, as multipliers in youth organisations and projects, as members of local authorities, we are committed to making a positive change in our communities. We need the Council of Europe to help us on this mission by:

- › Recognising the important role of youth work and youth workers in supporting people in their transition to autonomy and exercising their rights. More possibilities for training of youth workers need to be created. The Enter! Long Term Training Course should continue as a model to be replicated. Valuing youth workers as professionals is an important step to better the impact of their work.
- › Investing in youth centres, and similar agencies working with young people, for their potential to promote the values of non-formal education. Young people also need places to be together and grow their own initiatives.
- › Valuing sports, culture and leisure time activities as platforms for self-development. In the process of transition to autonomy, interaction among young people is a way to promote social inclusion and prevent destructive processes leading to racism and extremism.
- › Furthering the recognition of non-formal education and youth work. Closer links between non-formal and formal education should also be encouraged. Non-formal education has the potential to contribute to curricula in promoting human rights and citizenship education. The youth friendly and reality-based methodologies of non-formal education are an asset for quality education.
- › Putting pressure on governments to dedicate financial resources for youth work and the promotion of social rights for all. Youth work cannot rely on unpaid volunteers alone.
- › Following on the statement of Human Rights Commissioner regarding the negative impact of austerity measures on children and young people.

In our meeting we have developed strategies to support the implementation of the recommendation in our communities. We need the Council of Europe to support our actions by:

- › Involving local, regional and national authorities to implement youth policies and other measures for transforming the realities of young people in ways that correspond with the content of the Recommendation. The needs of young people ought to be the starting point and to be put at the centre of all actions.
- › Regularly reviewing the implementation of the Recommendation and sharing of best practices across member states. The future Enter! Youth Meetings should contribute to this. We should be part of this process, too.
- › Encouraging the dissemination of the Recommendation through support to its translation in all the official languages of the member states and promoting youth friendly versions. Securing that grants for youth-led projects are made easier to apply for by young people.

These grants are even more important during times of economic crises. Youth meetings like the one we have attended at the European Youth Centre are exceptional learning opportunities. The outcomes of the *Enter!* projects need to be consolidated and followed up. More young people in Europe should benefit from projects and meetings like this.

Exclusion, violence and discrimination are not inevitable! Human rights and social inclusion are achievable!

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The Council of Europe has introduced the *Enter!* project in 2009 to mobilise youth work responses to violence, exclusion and discrimination affecting young people in Europe, especially in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. As a result of this project the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted in 2015 the *Enter!* Recommendation on access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights. The recommendation proposes the development of policies taking into consideration the specific situations and needs of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Such policies should aim at preventing and eradicating the poverty, discrimination, violence and exclusion faced by young people and have a strong dimension of youth participation and agency.

This study highlights the impact of and key lessons learned from the experience with two long-term training courses for youth workers. It identifies and analyses the results achieved in four main areas: educational impact; policy impact; impact on access to social rights of young people and the impact on communities of young people or communities experiencing disadvantage. In praise of the value of youth work for human (social) rights, the study provides also inspirational examples of action, with testimonies from youth workers and youth policy actors active on issues of access to social rights.



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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.



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