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European Youth
Card Association



Inclusive Youth Mobility

Better Mobility Opportunities for Young People with Disabilities or from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

Report of a European Seminar

Joint Activity of the European Youth Card Association and the
Council of Europe Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility through the Youth Card
Organised in the framework of the Austrian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe
Hosted by Jugendkarte, Austria
6-7 May 2014, Vienna, Austria

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Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility
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A European Seminar: Better Mobility Opportunities for Young People with Disabilities or from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

Joint activity of the European Youth Card Association and the Council of Europe Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility through the Youth Card in the framework of the Austrian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe

Event co-financed by the Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility through the Youth Card and part of the Partial Agreement's Work Programme 2014-2015

Seminar report available for download at www.eyca.org/youth-mobility/partial-agreement.

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1. Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility through the Youth Card and its co-operation with EYCA

The Partial Agreement (PA) was created in 1991 and its statute states: *“The Partial Agreement shall be aimed at developing the Youth Card scheme, particularly at European level in the best interests of young people [...] with a view to facilitating their mobility as well as their access to the various goods and services necessary for their personal and cultural development”*.

Currently the Partial Agreement comprises 21 Council of Europe member states which, on the one hand, contribute to the development of a more effective policy and practice response to youth mobility, and , on the other hand, benefit from the expertise of the Partial Agreement and its partners in this field. The Partial Agreement is open to membership for countries both outside the Council of Europe and outside Europe.

The aims of the Partial Agreement are achieved through the implementation of a bi-annual programme of activities which follows the priorities and values of the Council of Europe’s youth sector and is carried out through an administrative arrangement between the Council of Europe and EYCA.

The specific objectives for the PA work programme 2014-2015 are to:

- Generate and mobilise knowledge about youth mobility in Europe;
- Support Governments to offer better policy responses to youth mobility issues;
- Engage a wide range of stakeholders to devise youth mobility-related policy including European institutions, governments, business, experts and young people;
- Support youth card practice that contributes to better youth mobility solutions.

European Youth Card Association (EYCA) is an Association of 41 member organisations in 38 countries across Europe, which distribute youth cards to almost five million cardholders.

The EYCA vision is a Europe where all young people are mobile and active. EYCA’s mission is that member organisations work together to stimulate more young people to be socially, culturally, educationally and economically mobile by:

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

This is achieved through cooperation with a large numbers of partners and stakeholders and with support from the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

Partial Agreement - EYCA Seminar in Vienna

A European seminar on 6-7 May 2014 in Vienna was the first event in the PA work programme 2014-2015. The specific theme for the seminar was “Inclusive mobility for young people in Europe: better mobility opportunities for young people with disabilities or from disadvantaged backgrounds”. The seminar included a wide range of

participants and considered research evidence in relation to these issues as well as examining specific practical case studies. Participants reflected on the expert contributions to the seminar and identified recommendations for further action on this agenda.

The Council of Europe and EYCA would like to thank all participants and partners for their inspiring contributions and participation. **Special thanks** go to the Austrian Ministry of Families and Youth and to Jugendkarte GmbH for the excellent organisation and hosting.

This brief report summarises the inputs, discussions and recommendations from the seminar, which we hope provide some additional food for thought in developing future work and cooperation on inclusive youth mobility.

2. Introduction and background

2.1 Youth mobility is a current priority for all policy-makers with an interest in youth issues in Europe. Youth mobility connected to young people's ability to succeed in global labour markets is one aspect of policy concern related to youth mobility. Some national policy makers have deep concerns about the risk of 'brain drain' as young people leave in search of opportunities, whilst some parts of Europe still report skill shortages and the need for more suitably qualified young people.

2.2 Young people's experience of youth mobility can also impact on attitudes towards other cultures, minorities, and social norms. Mobility can serve to broaden young people's horizons and to help contribute to tolerant societies. Youth mobility affects all young people, including those with fewer opportunities.

2.3 Policy makers want to understand how to ensure more positive outcomes for young people and for society and to engage positively with a cross section of stakeholders to debate youth mobility issues more widely and to devise more effective solutions.

2.4 There is growing recognition that youth cards are a useful tool to help strengthen young people's mobility, a tool that has high levels of credibility with young people. Youth cards connect young people to information, services and opportunities which can contribute to more effective youth mobility. Youth Cards provide communication channels which can enable policy-makers to provide young people with information, and to consult young people directly. Many youth card organisations create innovative practice to engage young people as active citizens and in co-designing solutions. And youth card organisations have the ability to reach a very wide range of young people, including those with fewer opportunities.

2.5 The seminar on 'Inclusive youth mobility - better mobility opportunities for young people with disabilities or from disadvantaged backgrounds' was designed to consider barriers to mobility for young people who are disadvantaged through disability or who have access to fewer opportunities. The aim was to identify approaches to removing these barriers and consider how youth cards and youth information can contribute to more inclusive mobility opportunities.

2.6 Austria is a member of the Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility. The seminar was organized in the framework of the Austrian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers that concluded on the 15th May 2014 and was part of the Austrian Government's official programme of events. The Austrian Chairmanship carried out a number of activities relating to education, democratic citizenship and human rights, including a focus on topics like gender equality and human rights of persons with disabilities.

2.7 Jugendkarte GmbH is the Austrian member of EYCA and host of the event.

3. Participants

The seminar targeted Governmental representatives dealing with questions of youth mobility, those engaged in academic, policy and practice related to youth mobility and youth work organisations, agencies with a specialist focus on youth mobility.



Meet the participants (from left): Evaldas Rupkus, Rasim Zeynalov, Jitka Burianova, Natalja Turenne, Rene-Louis David, Katrina Thomson, Tuesday Berry, Markus Albrecht, Catriona Burness, Oksana Trecento, Kristiina Ling, Marc Boes, Milanka Nolic, Irada Ismayilova, Janez Plevnik, Davide Capecci, Ulrike Werner, Emanuel Alfranseder, Melanie Jacobs, Bob Forsyth, David Hayrapetyan, Lara Vegas, Franc Chabriac, Kristo Vukadinovic

4. Programme and methods

A two-day programme was designed to combine inputs from a range of experts with interactive opportunities for participants to share ideas, experience and knowledge in workshop sessions.

Contributions included academic perspectives and policy and practice case studies.

On the second day participants worked together to generate concrete recommendations for European Youth Cards, Council of Europe and other youth information/policy partners to create more effective inclusive mobility for young people with disabilities and from disadvantaged backgrounds.

5. Summary of seminar inputs

5.1 Dr. Markus Wolf - Austrian Federal Ministry of Families and Youth, Department of International Youth and Family Policies

Dr. Markus Wolf from the Austrian Ministry of Families and Youth opened the seminar with a powerful personal reflection about the accessibility of public spaces and information for people who have lost sight or have disabilities.

5.2 Dr. Max Rubisch - Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection

Dr. Max Rubisch from the Austrian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs presented the relevant legislative backdrop, stressing the importance of implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in relation to youth mobility.

5.3 Natalja Turenne - Council of Europe Youth Department

Natalja Turenne from Council of Europe Youth Department introduced the Council of Europe (CoE) priorities in relation to inclusive societies, which involves more inclusive mobility opportunities for young people. Natalja Turenne explained the purpose of the CoE “Partial Agreement for Youth Mobility through the Youth Card” with EYCA. It is one of the tools to support governments to prioritise better youth mobility policy.

5.4 Bob Forsyth - European Youth Card Association

Bob Forsyth, Director of European Youth Card Association, connected the seminar objectives directly to the vision and mission of EYCA - a Europe where all young people are mobile and active.

Through the Partial Agreement work programme EYCA works to support governments to make better policy responses to youth mobility issues, generates knowledge about youth mobility in Europe and supports youth card practice that contributes to better youth mobility solutions across the EYCA network. The reflections, ideas and recommendations from this seminar inform EYCA’s future work programmes.

5.5 Dr David Cairns - Lisbon University “Approaching barriers to mobility in contemporary European societies”

This presentation was based on Dr Cairns’ research conducted in Ireland and Portugal during 2009-2014. The presentation explored three main questions:

- Why aren’t young people mobile?
- What are some of the barriers to becoming mobile?
- How can young people overcome these barriers?

Main barriers to youth mobility highlighted in this research are:

- Dependence on home-based resources and the failure to understand value of mobility in families
- Lack of foreign language capacity and non-exportable skills
- No peer support and bad mobility role models
- Lack of access to foreign educational opportunities
- Precarious working conditions and economic instability

The presentation concluded that the current policies fail to take into account young people’s own needs, particularly in mainstream contexts. Governments should focus on policy reflective of quality of the mobility experience not just numbers of young people participating in mobility programmes or opportunities.

5.6 Mag. a Beate Heher from the Austrian National Council of Disabled Persons

This presentation introduced specific initiatives in Austria for people with disabilities:

- Tourism for all - dealing with the accessibility of tourism offers for all people and raising awareness of the accessible services at schools
- Ways4all - technology developed in the University of Graz using smartphones, GPS and an intuitive user interface to use public transport
- Mobihelfer - mobile applications for navigation and personal assistance.

5.7 Josep Moliné Soler from the Catalan Youth Agency: “Youth Card for looked-after young people”

The Catalan Youth Agency introduced a case study of European Youth Cards being used in new ways to support the social inclusion of disadvantaged young people who do not live with their families and are looked after by local authorities. The presentation prompted extensive discussion and questions.

Carnet Joven, Catalonia, Spain

- Catalan Youth Agency has 30 year of experience with the youth card.
- Catalan Youth Plan is a framework for developing and coordinating youth policy in Catalonia, connects the youth card with programmes which support social integration and independent life/autonomy for young people.
- The main purpose of the Carnet Joven is to promote and facilitate inclusion and equality of young people, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, cultural background,

family or social status.

- The European dimension of the Catalan youth card is connected to mobility, quality information about European opportunities and European citizenship.
- In 2014 the number of young people using Carnet Joven in Catalonia is 525,709.

Youth cards for looked-after young people

- Since 2008 the Catalan Youth Agency operates a special programme for young people who do not live with their parents as a result of difficult family backgrounds.
- Many of these young people are taken care of by the government until they are 21 years old.
- Some live in foster families and, as they grow older, in shared flats with other young people.

Looked-after young people receive support via the youth cards in the following ways:

- Receive the youth card for free when they reach the age of 14
- Are able to access the same services and advantages as all other cardholders
- Have opportunities to take part in programmes and services delivered by the Catalan Youth Agency
- Youth Card opportunities and publications are regularly sent to centres for young people who are looked after
- Briefing and training provided to those who work in specific social work services in Catalonia.

In 2014, 987 looked-after young people are cardholders in Catalonia.

5.8 Frank Chabriac: “La Trace - social and educational activities for the blind”

Frank Chabriac introduced the La Trace project, started in 2006 to develop social and educational activities for the blind.

- La Trace takes young people with disabilities and from different social and cultural backgrounds on a life-transforming journey 200 km above the polar circle in Lapland, Finland, together with 22 sled dogs.
- During one week young people are empowered through the responsibility of creating a relationship with 22 sled dogs and with other participants in the group. They go through challenges of overcoming fears of the unknown.
- Young participants report that they have improved their self-confidence, feel trustworthy and have opened up to life and sharing with others.



Franc Chabriac from La Trace asbl: *“Disability is not a barrier to face challenges. Inclusive youth mobility for me is “mixity” meaning that you need to understand who is the “other” and be open to share your life valuing the differences between people”.*

5.9 Ulrike Werner - International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of Germany (IJAB): “Approaches towards a more inclusive mobility”

This presentation offered approaches to creating better practice for more inclusive youth mobility. The presentation introduced the preconditions for ensuring effective inclusive mobility:

- Awareness of special need
- Inclusive education and the role of schools in developing common values of being open to differences and diversity
- Understanding inclusion as a process that involves the attitude of curiosity and readiness to adapt to social contexts so that everybody can participate and be mobile nationally and internationally.

Positive effects of inclusive youth mobility are:

- increased acceptance of diversity
- willingness to develop constructive solutions for all young people
- enrichment of communities and organisations.

5.10 Tuesday Berry and Katrina Thomson from RNIB Haggery Youth Forum

Tuesday Berry and Katrina Thomson are two young people from Scotland, UK who presented the Haggery Youth Forum, a project of the Royal National Institute for the Blind, that works with young people living with sight loss in Scotland aged 12-25 years.



Tuesday Berry and Katrina Thomson from RNIB Haggeye Youth Forum Scotland: *“A year ago I would not have dreamed of coming to this seminar in Vienna. Haggeye has*

helped me to get out of my house and really live my life”.

- Haggeye aims to encourage more local and national facilities and services to be made more accessible to people living with sight loss.
- Haggeye creates opportunities to enable young people's voices to be heard and for young people with sight loss to meet new people and make new friends, take part in social activities, discuss issues, influence the provision of services and, importantly, to campaign for change.
- Young people from Haggeye have helped to revise and improve the services of youth cards and youth information offered by Young Scot, which distributes youth cards to more than 500,000 young people all over Scotland.
- Presentation included general work of Haggeye and shared with participants some of the tools and technical aids young people in Haggeye use.

6. Discussion on creating more effective inclusive mobility

6.1 Participants identified keywords which relate to inclusive mobility in their practice and experience:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Safe spaces for mobility | • Learning opportunity for all involved | • Sharing |
| • Mobility for all, by all, to all | • Equality | • Being part of wider society |
| • Information | • Availability | • Exploration of opportunity |
| • Encouraging | • Accessibility | • Inclusive educational exchanges |
| • Empowerment | • Independence | • Openness |
| • A process | • Experience | |
| • A human right | • Opportunity | |

- | | | |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|
| • Curiosity | everyone's needs | • Awareness of |
| • Growth | • Mixity | difference and |
| • Support | • Understanding | diversity |
| • Enabling | • Adaptation | • Will |

6.2 Working in six discussion groups, participants identified recommendations in response to three questions:

- How can we work together to create more effective inclusive mobility?
- How can we create more opportunities for youth cards to contribute?
- What are the implications for Council of Europe and other youth policy or youth information partners?

6.2.1 How can we work together to create more effective inclusive mobility?

- **Engage with a sufficiently broad range of young people: include young people with disabilities and from disadvantaged backgrounds in the design and development of inclusive youth mobility opportunities.** Services need to do more to better understand the needs of disadvantaged young people by developing meaningful processes to consult and engage them. Knowledge from these processes should be used to inform policy responses by governments, youth organisations and youth information providers.
- **Reach out to specialist networks and organisations that work with young people with disabilities or from disadvantaged backgrounds to help to understand how mobility opportunities should be customized for their needs.** There are already many organisations with specialist expertise (such as Haggeye presented in this seminar). More should be done to connect mainstream youth information services and youth card organisations to these specialist networks.
- **Better connect youth cards to youth work and generalist youth information and counselling centers as sources of support for all young people.** Opportunities should be identified to cooperate on initiatives with a specific emphasis on inclusive youth mobility.

6.2.2 How can we create more opportunities for youth cards to contribute?

- **Make special efforts to reach young people who have access to fewer opportunities and are more vulnerable by learning from good practice examples within the EYCA network e.g. Catalonia, Spain where youth cards are connected through social work structures with young people without families or with difficult family situations, Young Scot which works with specialist agencies. European Youth Card website in Comunidad de Madrid, Spain has recently been awarded a double A status for an accessible website for people with disabilities (<http://www.carnejovenmadrid.com/es/>). EYCA should do more to disseminate these and other examples of good practice.**
- **Promote positive mobility role models by disseminating personal stories and testimonials of young people with disabilities and from disadvantaged backgrounds who have had positive and inclusive mobility experiences at schools,**

youth information and counselling centres, open youth work centres, events organized for young people participating in the European Voluntary Service. Tuesday and Katrina from Haggeye are two inspirational ‘case studies’ to start with.

- **Consult young people with disabilities and fewer opportunities in relation to the accessibility and inclusive nature of European Youth Card services.** EYCA member organisation already have extensive experience and expertise on consulting young people generally. More attention should be given to also consulting disadvantaged young people, both to improve European Youth Card-related services and to make ‘mainstream’ consultation processes more inclusive.
- **Have targeted discounts offered by European Youth Cards giving positive stimulation to inclusion.** EYCA needs to understand to what extent existing discounts, benefits and opportunities contribute to inclusive mobility and what changes are required to make them more inclusive. In addition, EYCA should explore how to connect the youth card logo to e.g. international accreditation to demonstrate services and opportunities which offer accessibility for young people with disabilities.
- **Create opportunities for European Youth Cardholders to give peer support to young people with fewer opportunities or with disabilities** by connecting with them through youth information centres, youth organisations, EVS programme activities and other youth events.

6.2.3 What are the implications for the Council of Europe and other youth information or youth policy partners?

- **EYCA should work with the Council of Europe to ensure that policy-making is informed by ideas about more inclusive youth mobility.**
- **European Youth Foundation should revise its application procedures to make it more accessible for young people with partial or loss of sight** and monitor the implemented projects to share good practices of inclusive youth mobility projects for young people with disabilities or who have access to fewer opportunities.
- **Council of Europe should create more opportunities for Governments to demonstrate what they already do to create more inclusive youth mobility opportunities, e.g. through an Award for Inclusive Youth Mobility.**

7. Conclusions and actions related to inclusive youth mobility

More effective inclusive mobility creates obvious benefits for individual young people but also enriches services, organisations and communities by creating better opportunities for more young people.

Inclusive mobility needs to be embedded in all aspects of designing youth policy and practice rather than an “add-on”. Services and opportunities for inclusive youth mobility will be more powerful if young people themselves are engaged in designing them. Additional efforts are needed to involve more young people as co-designers -

especially young people with experience of social and physical exclusion, which could extend in some instances to engaging with families and with others in the community.

Many specialist agencies and networks already create specific opportunities for more inclusive youth mobility. And there are many examples of positive cooperation between specialist agencies and the networks of youth information and youth card services aiming to provide 'universal' services to all young people. More should be done to disseminate the impact of these cooperation examples.

Part of the success of initiatives examined in his seminar (such as La Trace project in Luxembourg or the Haggeye project in Scotland) was due to taking risks and thinking outside of the box. Those responsible for delivering services and opportunities should encourage innovation.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an important part of international legislation for developing more inclusive youth mobility for young people with disabilities. Better inclusive mobility needs to be informed by a wide range of legislation.

The following specific actions are identified for EYCA to take forward:

- EYCA will improve its Quality Standards to encourage members to mark accessible discount places with internationally recognized signs and share good practice examples of making information about youth cards accessible to young people with loss of sight.
- EYCA communications will feature more information about young people with disabilities who have positive experiences of youth mobility.
- EYCA will encourage more members to reach young people with fewer opportunities by disseminating good practice examples.
- EYCA will consider how to support good practice in involving disadvantaged young people as co-designers of inclusive mobility measures, and to encourage more cooperation with specialist agencies and services.
- EYCA member organisations will be encouraged to engage more young people in existing and future consultation processes such as EU Structured Dialogue.



