

EUROPEAN ACADEMY ON YOUTH WORK - WORKSHOP REPORT

Building Policies & Developing Youth Work in the Republic of Moldova

Ion Donea, Head of Youth Department, Ministry of Education,
Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova
Contact: donea.ion@gmail.com

TOPIC DISCUSSED

The aim of the workshop was to present the experience of the Republic of Moldova regarding the development of youth work and youth policies. A particular objective of the workshop referred to the financial issue for youth work development at local level. Moreover, during the workshop I tried to envisage whether the approach to youth work development and its support instruments in the Republic of Moldova are connected to current European developments, or eventually future developments of youth work implementation.

METHODOLOGY

The workshop was planned to last for about one hour, thus it was structured properly according to the time frame available.

At the beginning of the workshop, participants were invited to briefly present themselves (name, organisation, country and professional affiliation – youth worker, researcher, policy maker, trainer, volunteer etc.) and to share their expectations for this workshop. After this round of introductions, I introduced myself and explained the reasons for choosing the topic of this workshop.

The topic was introduced by means of a power point presentation (available as a separate document). During the presentation, participants could ask questions of clarification and receive answers. My objective was to initiate discussion and reflection questions after the presentation, related to innovative elements of youth work implementation, suggested recommendations, good practices, similar experiences known by participants etc. Furthermore, during the last part of the presentation, I involved the participants in an open discussion about the presented model of youth work development in the Republic of Moldova and its connection to current European developments.

THE EXAMPLE OF MOLDOVA SHOWS HOW
A NON-EU COUNTRY IS DEVELOPING
YOUTH POLICIES AND PROMOTING
THE RECOGNITION OF YOUTH WORK
IN LINE WITH ONGOING TRENDS FOR
DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE.

**KEY ISSUES
RAISED SUCH
AS CHALLENGES
AND INNOVATIVE
RESPONSE(S)
TO THOSE
CHALLENGES**

During the presentation, I spoke about the development of youth policies, building the identity of the youth sector, support programmes for youth work, the financing structure for youth work and other complementary elements and challenges we are facing in Moldova. The most important challenges identified by the workshop participants were: youth migration, government spending on the youth sector, promotion and development of volunteering in youth work, accessing opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ programme etc.

As far as youth migration is concerned, this phenomenon truly persists in the Republic of Moldova. I briefly described the context, namely the migration of young people from rural to urban areas, because towns offer more possibilities and better living conditions for youth. Migration from Moldova abroad, however, is an increasing phenomenon, among the general population as well as youth. One reason for the emigration of young people is their desire for studies, but the majority leave the country to find a (well-paid) job. Here, it is worth referring to the opportunities and rights owned by Moldovan citizens, like the right to double citizenship. Most Moldovans emigrating to the West have Romanian citizenship, and a small number have Bulgarian or Italian citizenship. Those who emigrate to the East (especially to the Russian Federation) have the right to work there without acquiring the citizenship of the country of immigration. Thus, people's decision to emigrate, or temporarily migrate, is based on objective reasons; but it still represents a challenge for Moldova, especially in the rural areas, where it is quite difficult to develop efficient youth policies having a small number of young people and an under-developed infrastructure.

Another challenge referred to is the limited budget assigned to the youth sector: about 1 million EUR annually at central level (relevant ministry) and about 2 million EUR within local budgets, without including here any cross-sectoral financing of the youth sector. Therefore, the use of the financial resources dedicated to the youth sector according to a budgetary classification of 5 types of youth activities is very important: (1) Development and promotion of youth work; (2) Maintenance of youth centres; (3) Strengthening youth representative structures; (4) Grants programme for youth initiatives; and (5) Youth services delivering.

Participants also appreciated the way the voluntary sector has been developed and the contribution it makes to the promotion of youth work, while noticing the existence of rather extensive bureaucratic instruments of accreditation: In the accreditation process, applicant organisations must submit several documents to the Commission on Certification of Host Institutions for Volunteering Activities (copy of the certificate of public utility (if it is held); copy of registration certificate or the confirmed decision of registration; copy of organisational status; annual programme of volunteering of the institution; confirmation concerning the training and appropriate experience of the volunteer coordinator within the institution etc.). Furthermore, accredited organisations must adhere to a number of criteria that are part of the quality standards in the voluntary sector (completing volunteer registers, having a volunteer coordinator, ensuring the release and distribution of the volunteering contract; nominal volunteering certificate; voluntary book; letter of recommendation etc.). Consequently, there is a risk of formalising (bureaucratising) non-formal volunteering activities, if we continue to require additional documents.

One more challenge discovered by the participants relates to the status of the Republic of Moldova within the Erasmus+ programme. It was recommended that in the future, Moldova should more strongly insist on obtaining the status of Programme country within the Erasmus+ programme, in order to be able to provide more benefits for the Moldovan youth sector.



KEY TRENDS IDENTIFIED (COMMONALITIES BETWEEN COMMENTS/PARTICIPANTS)

Participants identified some key elements indicating the necessity of identity building of the youth sector in order to strengthen its capacities and components.

Moreover, the budgetary classification of youth programmes according to five components (listed above) represents a trend in the development of the youth sector that is based on an innovative approach. It is worth mentioning that for each of the five financial components it is necessary to implement specific programmes.

Generally speaking, participants noted that youth policy development in the Republic of Moldova, and especially the identified trends related to youth work, are inspired and in accordance with developments supported by the Council of Europe. It was emphasised that this example shows how a non-EU country is developing youth policies and promoting the recognition of youth work in line with ongoing trends for developments in Europe. In this context, the following was recommended:

- Moldova should support EU projects and programmes carried out by youth organisations (such as those supported by Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps).
- The European Union and the Council of Europe should support such examples and approaches of youth work and youth policy development. Activities organised by a country holding the presidency of the EU and the Council of Europe could offer an opportunity for this (e.g. in 2020, Germany could promote such components of policies and youth work development at the European Youth Work Convention).
- In addition, SALTO EECA should enhance cooperation and offer support for youth policy development in the Republic of Moldova and other countries in the region. Moldova, for its part, should continue implementing youth activities according to the commitments made within the Association Agreement signed with the EU;
- Finally, any further development of the youth policies system and youth work development needs support at national and European level.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

- *“An interesting example and approach of youth policies and youth work in Moldova. It’s great.”*
- *“I did not expect to discover during this session another aspect of youth work, and namely the way youth policies are built. I have to recognise that I did not know what is happening with this domain in the Republic of Moldova.”*



European Academy on Youth Work



ANG
AGENCIJA
NACIONALNA
PENTRU TINERET



FINNISH NATIONAL
AGENCY FOR EDUCATION



AGENCY OF
INTERNATIONAL
YOUTH
COOPERATION



JINT
Jugend International
Network Team



JUGEND
für Europa
Nationale Agentur Erasmus+



Österreichische
Nationalagentur
Erasmus Jugend in Aktion &
Europäische Solidaritätskorps



MOVIT



SALTO-YOUTH
RESOURCE CENTRES
Erasmus+



Youth Partnership
Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth
Erasmus+ Youth Partnership

The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily express the official view of the European Commission or the partners behind the European Academy on Youth Work. Reproduction of texts and pictures is authorised.

Published by MOVIT, Ljubljana, Slovenia
October 2019

Design and layout: AIKO, Maja Cerjak s.p.

More information about the EAYW:
www.eayw.net