The Needs Analysis Report

Grant Agreement No. 2015-2-UK01-KA205-014061

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union
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Executive Summary

This study is a needs analysis which is the first intellectual output of the RIDE (Erasmus + KA2 project) Project. The aforementioned output (Output 1) of the RIDE project, which is undertaken in partnership with England, Turkey, Italy, Croatia and Slovakia, is aimed at defining the needs in youth work education and training programmes in the fields of inclusion, diversity and equality.

The research was conducted by means of a semi-structured interview form (appendix 1). The data was obtained through interviews held with youth workers, young people and organizations.

Thus, with these interviews conducted in line with the above mentioned objective, it was aimed to obtain answers to the following questions:

1) Do issues with regard to the Erasmus+ Inclusion and Diversity Strategy in the Field of Youth such as educational difficulties, cultural differences, disability, health problems as well as economic, social and geographical obstacles impede young people from participating in formal and non-formal education, employment, trans-national mobility, democratic process and society in general?

2) How do youth practitioners/organisations exert themselves to render their services more inclusive, and what policies, approaches and methods do they intend to implement/accept?

3) What kind of additional support is provided by youth work projects/organisations so as to help those who may be considered out of mainstream and may confront difficulties?

4) How do youth work projects assess the level of success in these areas?

5) What examples relating to successful interventions and to lessons learned from failed efforts come to the forefront?

6) What particular education and training programmes promote inclusion, equality and diversity across young people, including student youth practitioners and youth workers/youth professionals?

7) What current resources can be explored for youth practitioners?

8) The report, prepared in accordance with the results of the research, is structured as follows: introduction, methodology, results and conclusion.

In the introduction section, the studies carried out in the countries of the RIDE project that address the state of youth works, the organizations undertaking youth works, educational backgrounds of youth workers and main reasons affecting young people were reviewed.

In the methodology section, information with regard to ways through which the research was conducted in each partner country as well as demographics of the respondents of the research was provided.

As for the results section, the data obtained was analysed and listed in terms of themes as follows:

- Understanding The Terms and Practice of Youth Work
- The Characteristics of A Good Youth Worker
- Understandings and Importance of The Terms Inclusion, Diversity And Equality
- Understanding The Terms and Practice of Youth Work
- The Characteristics of A Good Youth Worker
- Understandings and Importance of The Terms Inclusion, Diversity And Equality

Finally, in the conclusion section, general evaluations were carried out in light of the findings of the research.
1. **Introduction**

“Youth” is a concept for which it is not possible to address a single universally accepted definition. Youth can be defined on the basis of sociology in terms of time, place, cultural and social variables. Although the United Nations (UN), the United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) and World Bank (WB) define those aged 15 to 24 as “young”.

1.1. **Youth Work**

In the United Kingdom; there is an important document which sets the standards for youth work qualifications, The Subject Benchmark Statement for Youth and Community Work (QAA, 2009, p9) acknowledges that “youth and community work is a contested practice [and] is clear from the range of names and titles which the practice bears, and from the connected, but different, histories of the practice across the four jurisdictions of the UK. The contestation occurs not only between nations, but also within and across them, and is evident in the academic literatures on which the subject draws.”

This is further complicated by the fact that youth work is not a protected title which means anyone who works with young people could potentially call themselves a youth worker.

However, the Subject Benchmark Statement for Youth and Community Work (QAA, 2009, p.9) seeks to outlines some of these debates and describes them as being:

- The extent to which community development provides a model for all practice, against the view that youth work requires a specific pedagogy and definition, which makes central the position and needs of youth.
- Whether the definition of youth work as informal, social and political education is sufficient, or neglects the close historical connection between youth work and practices of information, support and guidance.
- Whether ideological modifiers of the terms 'youth work' or 'informal education' (such as Catholic; socialist; Islamic; feminist; Quaker; Jewish) enhance or detract from the understanding of the core practices.
- Whether practice and the academic subject theorised is to be developed from theory or public policy (a top-down approach) or from practice or community-based initiatives (a bottom-up approach).
- The roles of the state, the market and the third sector in relation to the field of practice.
Whether professionalism is an essential part of practice or whether it is most characteristically a form of activism or volunteering whether some (participative and inclusive) research methods are more congruent with this field of practice than others.

Despite, these discussions, clarity has been sought through the development of an agreed set of Youth Work National Occupational Standards (NOS) (NOS, 2012) which seeks to describe the skills and knowledge a professional youth worker maybe required to undertake and exercise during their career. As such, the NOS document begins by defining the purpose of youth work, which is to:

“Enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential” (NOS, 2012, p.4).

In Italy; there is not an official definition of youth work and a youth worker is not an officially recognised profession (“Country Specific Overview Italy”, 2014). Even if there is no common agreed definition and translation of these terms, two main translations are usually used by public authorities and NGOs: animazione socio educativa (the translation provided by the European Commission in 2009), and operatore giovanile (the translation provided by the Italian National Youth Council).

These two terms seem to be the ones that match more closely to the definition of “youth work” adopted in Europe. (“Working with young people: the value of youth work in the European Union Country Report Italy”, 2014). When talking about youth workers (operatori giovanili, formatori, volontari, insegnanti, docenti di sostegno, animatori), it usually refers to a person who works with young people with the aim of involving them in informal education process. There are no national laws regulating youth work or focused on young people in Italy. The main players in youth policies are the regional and local authorities. Thus, there is a lack of coordination and information at national level leading to different standards in the territory.

The issues addressed by youth work are many, for instance: environment, youth policies, social and cultural activities, active citizenship, equal opportunities, entrepreneurship, social activities for children, integration of migrant people, etc.

In Turkey; the most general definition of youth work is “working to create a learning environment designed to address the needs of young people in their quest for self-actualization. At the same time, youth work is generally framed towards assisting young people in gaining life skills.” Although the other institutions define those aged 15 to 24 as
young when the conditions in Turkey is taken into account, all individuals between the ages of 14 and 29 are included in this definition without any discrimination.

Significantly limited sources have been obtained during the body of literature research in Turkey which has only recently acquainted with the terms of youth politics and youth work. It is essentially important to ensure suitable communication channels with young people in order to develop public policies while considering the factors such as young person's age, gender, economic, social, family and cultural conditions, level of education, place of residency, etc.

In Croatia; the development of youth work has a long history and it is very important to observe its development through a cultural and historical lens because its origins date before the Croatian independence. Although there are no official records and documents that would confirm this development (Bužinkić et al., 2015), there is lot to be said about the challenges and changes in the field of youth work in Croatia.

But, despite the long history, youth work in Croatia is an area that is not sufficiently formalized nor recognized. There is still no legal strategic approach to its development or professional competencies that are needed for youth workers (National Youth Programme, 2014). The development of youth work in Croatia is usually associated with the development and engagement of the civil sector so research papers and studies on this subject are almost non-existent (Kovačić and Ćulum, 2015).

Considering that the concept of youth work in Croatia is not clearly defined and that there are no official documents defining the framework, those who work with young people assess youth work individually, according to their personal experiences. Further to this, there is no unique definition of youth work but the most comprehensive one is definition that splits youth work into two terms: youth work in the narrow sense and youth work in broad sense. Youth work in the narrow sense is planned and organized process of empowering young people for personal growth and development. Also, it includes process of building human relationships, inclusion and active participation in society which is based on partnership and friendly approach that allows young people to be equal creators of that process. In short, youth work is organized process of individual and social development of young people that is happening in cooperation with the young person. Youth work in broad sense is any type of interaction between young people and people working with young people (education, police, centres for social welfare, homes for abandoned children, etc).

In Slovakia; youth work is defined as purposeful activity that responds to the needs of young people and leads to a positive development of their personalities, so that participants
can fully apply in life. It is based on the principle of voluntary participation of youth, partnership approach and mutual respect. Its mission is to contribute to maturity, finding meaningful life direction and self-awareness of individuals and groups. It should create space for young people's involvement on matters that affect them, to motivate them to participate and thereby contributing to building civil society. Youth work is carried out by people specifically trained for, actively working in this area, as well as volunteers.

1.2. Organisations Undertaking Youth Work

In the United Kingdom; there is a diverse mix of organisations who work with young people in many different ways. In the UK there is a significant voluntary sector comprising of small to large organisations, incorporating specialist youth organisations, uniformed groups, faith based groups, special interest groups and sports groups. There are also private companies who also undertake working with young people.

There continues to be large changes to how national and local government funds youth services. In some areas there is a recognised ‘youth service’ which provides open access groups as well as specific targeted support to those most in need. However, due to challenges in funding, many government funded projects are now concentrating on meeting the needs of young people who are most vulnerable, leaving either local voluntary agencies or local councils to provide a more generic service provision for young people locally.

In Italy; this country has a long tradition of socio-educational and leisure activities for young people implemented by third sector organizations. The reality of organizations undertaking youth work is very wide and diverse: associations, small formal and informal groups, church groups, etc. In fact, most of them are people who want to spend their time and their professional commitment for young people.

However, there are some realities in Italy which have carried out for years a decisive engagement in the youth field:

- the National Youth Forum (Forum Nazionale Giovani), a National Platform of more than 75 organisations which represents about 4 million young people. The strength of the Forum is the variety of associations that are represented: there are Forum student associations, youth associations of professionals, associations engaged in non-formal education, associations of different religious faiths, Regional Forums, sports associations and many others. Its main objectives are:
to create a space for debate and sharing of experience between the youth organisations of different backgrounds and nature, between Italian and European institutions;

- commitment to the involvement of young people in the social, civic and political life of the country by involving them in decision-making processes of the country;

- to facilitate the establishment of Forum, advice and Regional Councils, provincial, territorial and local youth.

- “Arci”, the largest Italian association for social promotion, is committed to cultural and educational issues, peace, rights, welfare and democratic legality. It organises every year numerous initiatives involving many volunteers.

In Turkey; there are lots of governmental and non-governmental organizations which are working in the field of youth work. Many activities are carried out by Ministry of Youth and Sports, National Agency. Following the foundation of the Ministry of Youth and Sports in 2011, youth workshops, to which 8000 people of whom most were young people attended, were organized in 17 different regions (15 workshops in Turkey, 2 workshops abroad) with a view to determine youth problems and offer solutions. As a result of these workshops, the Youth and Sports Policy Document was formed. The National Youth and Sports Policy Document is the first and unique official document issued and enforced in 23.01.2013. National youth policies are an indispensable factor for the participation of young people as active individuals in every area of the social structure and for revealing the skills and capabilities they have. Moreover, youth policies are the means which protect young people from abuse and neglect (The National Youth and Sports Policy Document, 2013).

Youth work which constitutes an important pillar of the youth policy is at the forefront for ensuring youth participation. This means that youth work promotes the active participation of young people as citizens in the society, improving their skills and capabilities for further enhancement.

While youth policies can be executed under the aspices of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, they can be conducted by means of non-governmental organizations, foundations and associations on a voluntary basis. The collaboration between young people and institutions increases the confidence of young people and also plays a role in changing the social perception. Realizations of the projects enable young women and men to gain acceptance and respect of others in terms of their personality and work they carry out.
Hence, popularizing youth work nationwide and conducting extensive awareness and consciousness raising studies in relation to youth participation are deemed to be significant in promoting the social perception regarding the inclusion of young people in decision-making process.

In this context, it will have beneficial effects to increase the scope and efficiency of the cooperation among diverse organizations such as youth centres, non-governmental organizations, youth council, and youth clubs, and to increase that of local-national and international youth work.

It has been observed that in order for different youth groups to reach their potential regarding partnership development, coordination and representation at a non-hierarchal scale is a prerequisite for youth participation which is closely associated with the democratization of decision making processes and with co-occurrence of differences. (Recommendations for Youth Participation and Youth Policies, 2010)

In Croatia; In the past, during and after the war in Croatia, a great many international charities and aid organizations were based throughout the country in an effort to alleviate consequences of destruction and help re-build life in war-devastated communities. Many of these charities worked with children and young people. They organized free-time activities, encouraged youth organizing and initiated youth work infrastructure in the form of a network of youth clubs. Newly formed civil society organizations took over when international charities left after the war. Since then, in the past 20 years, youth work in Croatia has proliferated, taking on many forms and shapes. However, it has remained largely in the hands of the voluntary sector, unrecognized by the state.

Today, youth workers are working with young people on a daily basis in various civil society organizations, family centres, youth clubs, youth centres and youth organizations. They provide programmes in different areas, offering educational, cultural, social, sport and political activities. Young people, through a variety of programmes, can develop their personality, get more knowledge and most importantly they can gain skills for active participation in society (Morić and Puhovski, 2012).

It must be noted that youth work in Croatia is project and funding oriented. It seems that civil society organizations today produce projects so they could keep their organizations running. There is not enough opportunities for addressing issues that young people face in a particular environment. Instead, we are tackling problems that are defined in EU context.
In Slovakia; One of the forms how to achieve youth work quality is through the accreditation programs of non-formal education based on Act no. 282/2008 of Codex on Support of youth work, and on Act no. 131/2002 in Codex on Universities. In Slovakia, the design of innovative systems for enhancing the quality was supported in initiatives of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic Priority of youth policy (Programs for Youth - 2014 to 2020). In other types of organizations (except children and youth subregional organizations) at the level of regions, cities and municipalities have not yet achieved any consensus on what constitutes quality in youth work. There is also a need for greater support for the introduction of quality systems through the use of various tools in order to create a motivating environment where organizations are able to inspire each other and learn.

Moreover, there are two traditions of working with young people. One tradition is related to education (leisure time education, out-of-school time education) with strong educative nature and the second tradition related to social work with a strong focus on working with individual and safeguarding his/her needs (especially low-threshold centres operating in disadvantaged areas like urban ghettos or community centres in socially deprived areas). There are various providers of youth work: municipalities, civil society, church, business. Most of the youth work provisions are related to schools (out-of-school time/afterschool clubs run by schools) and school related institutions (leisure time centres/hobby centres, art schools), to civil society - various types of NGOs - traditional ones as Scouts, YMCA, etc. There is also a specific category related to sport activities of children and young people in sport clubs. There is also a growing number of self-organized youth groups especially on local level who prepare and run their own projects and providers with business backgrounds providing summer camps and afterschool sport, hobby and art activities.

1.3. **Education Background of Youth Workers in the Field of Inclusion, Diversity and Equality**

In the United Kingdom; there is a mixed approach to training depending on the organisation or agency that someone may volunteer or work with.

Some organisations once they have recruited a volunteer through safe recruitment procedures may just mentor them into them into their role, whilst other organisations may require volunteers to undertake a certain amount of standardised training e.g. The Scouts Association or Girl Guiding UK (examples of uniformed groups) which is recognised within their own organisation.
There are then other organisations who guide their volunteers and sessional staff to undertake more formalised qualifications. These can start from a level 2 certificate for those in the 16+ age group and a level 3 certificate or diploma for those 18+ (NYA, 2016). These qualifications can be delivered by a range of providers.

In the UK there is also a developing use of apprenticeships for training and developing staff. A youth organisation can offer an apprenticeship and as such the ‘student’ will receive paid experience and the opportunity to gain a level 2 certificate in youth work practice (NYA, 2016).

Those who achieve their level 3 qualification will be able to call themselves a JNC qualified youth support worker (ABC Awards, 2015).

Those who wish to achieve professional youth work status will then need to undertake a higher level qualification validated by a University and the National Youth Agency which holds ‘JNC recognition’. These routes include:

- BA (Hons): three years full time and part time equivalent – level 6
- PG Dip: one year full time and part time equivalent – level 7
- MA: one year and part time equivalent – level 7
- Graduate Diploma: two years full time – level 6 (NYA, 2016)

**Types of Subjects Covered**

For uniformed groups with their own in house training programme, subjects include:

Understanding the leader role in the programme, the organisation, in ensuring safety, appropriate financial administration and effective management (Girl Guiding UK, 2016).

Scouting has 38 training modules available for those within the movement to take, depending on their role. For new leaders they have up to five months to undertake three modules which explore: the fundamentals of scouting, key policies and support available, roles, responsibilities and practical ideas for activities. All new members also have to undertake a training plan (Scouts UK, 2016).

For those who undertake level 2 or 3 youth work qualifications they are required to take these core subjects: theory of youth work, safeguarding in a youth work setting, young people’s development, engaging and communicating with young people, group work within a youth work setting, working with challenging behaviour in youth work settings, reflective practice in a youth work setting and work based practice in youth work. They then have a large list of optional modules to choose from. (ABC Awards, 2015)
For those undertaking higher based qualifications – these need to be informed by the NOS (2012) and the Benchmark Statement for Youth and Community Work (QAA, 2009). The specific areas required are too numerous to list but the content could be possibly put under these following themes:

Working with young people and others, Facilitate the personal, social and educational development of young people, Promote inclusion, equity and young people’s interests and welfare, Develop youth work strategy and practice and Develop, lead and manage self and others. (NOS, 2012) Plus, working with communities, working with young people and adults, approaches to learning and development and developing community based organisations. (QAA, 2009) Key skills include understanding, developing and managing their professional role, Fostering democratic and inclusive practice, Maintaining and developing organisations which support practice, Facilitating personal and collective learning development and capacity building, Networking and multi-agency working, plus those of a graduate. (QAA, 2009)

_Inclusion, Diversity and Equality_

In organisations such as The Scouts, a new volunteer will understand basic information linked to safe practice and inclusion related to anti-bullying but after completing the 3 core modules, they will have access to a module entitled ‘Scouting for all’ which is an introduction to equal opportunities and practice advice about how to make scouting inclusive for all (Scouts UK, 2016.p.11)

In terms of level 2 and 3 youth work qualifications, within the core modules the students are required to understand the terms inclusion, diversity and equality and demonstrate inclusive practice (ABC Awards, 2015, p.2). These key principles are then also to be found in optional modules based around the topics of faith, disability and anti-discriminatory practice.

In terms of high level qualifications these terms occur in many different places. In the National Occupational Standards (2012), the specific standards which are linked to inclusion, diversity and equality include:

- YW06 Enable young people to working groups
- YW07 Encourage young people to broaden their horizons to be effective citizens
- YW14 Facilitate young people’s exploration of their values and beliefs
- YW17 Work with young people in promoting their rights
- YW21 Develop a culture and systems that promote inclusion and value diversity
32 Involve, motivate and support volunteers
33 Promote equality of opportunity and diversity in your area of responsibility
34 Develop structures, systems and procedures to support volunteering
39 Provide learning opportunities for colleagues (NOS, 2012)

In the Benchmark Statement for Youth and Community Work (QAA, 2009) inclusion, diversity and equality are seen as integral knowledge and skills for youth and community courses to develop in their students. For example:

Fostering democratic and inclusive practice:

- the ability to build trusting relationships as a foundation for learning
- the ability to foster participation and support for young people and adults in playing an active role in their communities, increasing their voice and influence in contexts and on issues that affect them
- the ability to create inclusive environments and to identify and counter oppressive attitudes, behaviours and situations, at both interpersonal and systemic levels
- the capacity to build practice on an understanding of issues of power, empowerment and the complexity of voluntary relationships
- the capacity to promote, publicise and share good practice (QAA, 2009, p.19).

However, practically, as the following research demonstrates, youth workers also receive induction to the organisations’ policies and practices to do with inclusion, diversity and equality.

In Italy; there are no specific educational or professional courses to follow in order to become a youth worker. There are no minimum qualification standards for youth workers at national level. At regional level the situation is uneven: some regions, such as Piedmont and Lombardia, have stipulated regional laws between 2004 and 2008 that define minimum standard requirements for youth workers; while other regions have not.

Thus, anyone can become a youth worker, even if the following competences are considered an asset:

- professional experience in organizations, associations, public institutions working in the social and educational field for young people;
- traineeships or volunteer activities in the field;
- training courses related to the field.
Youth workers in Italy tend to have considerably different educational backgrounds (e.g. social work, science education, psychology, sociology, sport instruction); unfortunately, no statistics are available on this. Here are some examples of degrees related to youth work:

- Educational Sciences focuses on the issues and problems regarding the pedagogical sciences and the management of educational processes within institutions and training institutions, companies and public administration structures. It includes courses on pedagogy, early childhood pedagogy, philosophy of education, anthropology, etc. During the studies the student is enabled to have a professional experience, through internships and guidance, close observation of aspects and key aspects of their professional role, in a logic of empowerment. The degree aims to prepare students to act in professional contexts and educational tutoring acquiring technical and operational skills related to organisational culture of public and private educational contexts and developing a professional approach to work.

- Social and Cultural Education includes courses on pedagogy, psychology of adolescence, sociology, social inclusion processes, intercultural pedagogy.

- Social Sciences include courses on pedagogy, sociology, developmental psychology, etc.

Further to academic studies, a youth worker can follow training courses and traineeships focused on issues related to youth and in providing skills and tools for people working with youngsters.

There is no specific educational background that youth workers should have, so it is difficult to analyse the role of inclusion, diversity and equality in their education paths. However, although these themes are not the main topics of the degrees analysed in the previous paragraph, most of them include some courses on social inclusion and promotion of diversity. By searching on some universities’ websites, some examples of courses on these topics include:

- special education for inclusion (Course at University Bologna): the course is focused on the epistemological, cultural and theoretical assumptions to develop an inclusive perspective and on the inclusion of disabled people at school and in society;

- psychology of disability and integration (Course at University Bologna): it also focuses on the integration of disabled children in the educational path;

- intercultural education (University of Verona and at University of Bologna): to enhance the competences of the students in the intercultural dialogue and in the promotion of cultural diversities to promote integration;
citizenship and new models of social inclusion (University of Verona): aiming at offering to future educators some essential analytical tools for the study of social policies and the welfare state with particular attention to the dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion.

In Turkey; there are currently no undergraduate or graduate programs in the field of youth work. However, Youth Work Application and Research centres have recently been founded within universities. For example; Akdeniz University Youth Work Application and Research Centre, Abdullah Gül University Youth Factory, Bilgi University Youth Work Unit, etc.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports and NGOs are fulfilling the gap that has been created academically. The Ministry of Youth and Sports are engaging in transforming youth work, which has started progressing from an unprofessional work field, into a profession. The voluntary workers are now classed as youth leaders. Youth leaders are being employed in 220 youth centres across Turkey. The Ministry provide training that are based on work from the Council of Europe, such as “Human Rights”, “Democracy and Human Rights”, “Voluntarism”, “Youth Work and Participation” as well as “Intercultural Learning”, “Conflict Resolution”, “Council of Europe and EU Youth Programs and Strategies”, “E-presentation” and “Social Media”. In addition to this, the Ministry also gathers youth leaders in Turkey ever year for 5 days, firstly to evaluate the previous year and secondly to organize training for the forthcoming years.

However, since there are no specific standards in the field of youth work, the NGOs define their own program, training and activities while carrying out youth work. For instance, TEGV (Educational Volunteers Foundation of Turkey) undertake youth work on a voluntary basis and they provide “Basic Volunteer Training” when learning how to become a volunteer. Another educational program organized by TEGV is “As Citizens, We’re Active Participants” which was developed to support children and young people to become modern individuals and citizens who know their rights, are against stereotyping, biased behaviours and discrimination, are not involved in violence, and are able to assess social issues, -generally in a critical manner. In addition to these trainings, trainings on gender, racism and peace are also provided throughout the year.

In Croatia; youth workers work as volunteers or professionals in youth organizations and they are people with diverse educational backgrounds (Morić and Puhovski, 2012). Most often youth workers are people with background in social studies and humanities, such as social workers who deal with social and economic barriers, social pedagogues who deal with the prevention of risky behaviour among young people and pedagogues concerned with the education of young people.
The Ministry of Social Policy and Youth initiated a long-term process which aims to establish a common ground for a coordinated strategy towards recognition of youth work. The goal is to develop occupational standards for youth workers, encourage the creation of targeted educational programmes in the formal education system, thereby raising the overall availability and quality of youth work activities.

So far, there are no specialized educational programmes for youth workers, at least not in the formal education system. In the non-formal system, there are many available training opportunities for youth workers generally, but not that many in field of inclusion, diversity and equality. However, rare are those that are comprehensive and that include holistic approach. One example of non-formal education programme are Youth Studies established by the Croatian Youth Network in 2010. The aim of Youth Studies is to encourage young people to become active members of society, to engage in participatory processes of democracy, to encourage critical thinking methods, techniques and possibilities for action in the community with an impact on youth policy development and positive social change. Also, Youth Studies strives to give specific guidelines for youth workers (Morić and Puhovski, 2012).

National Youth Programme (2014) throughout defined guidelines highlights the concept of inclusion and equality while the concept of diversity is almost non-existent. Inclusion is usually mentioned in the context of involvement of young people in the decision-making processes that directly affect them. Also, inclusion is mentioned in the context of discriminated social groups and there is need for enabling young people to participate in various processes of non-formal and informal learning. In terms of equality, National Youth Programme indicates the guidelines of social interventions that should contribute to ensuring equality of opportunity to all the sub-groups of young people in achieving their life goals and adequate social integration.

In Slovakia; the status of youth worker can be achieved in two ways: 1. by undergoing university studies (both undergraduate and postgraduate) and 2. by active involvement and training in voluntary organizations working with young people. There are three main university approbations that are related to youth work profession: 1. leisure time education (out-of-school time education), 2. social pedagogy and 3. social work with children and young people. In some cases there is a combined approbation of leisure time education and social pedagogy offered by some universities. There are some subjects that are focusing more on issues related to IDE like special and inclusive education (working with young people with special education needs, especially disability and behavioural problems),
community (social) work (especially with Roma communities, socially marginalized and affected by poverty), pro-social education, multicultural education etc. Also more general subjects forming foundations of these professions like philosophy, psychology, sociology, foundations of education and social work are based on humanism that is strongly connected to the roots of IDE.

Each NGO has its own way and system of preparing and training its youth workers - some basic, some more advanced and elaborated. Organizations paying specific attention to the training of (their) youth workers in IDE principles are those that are working directly with disadvantaged groups, especially young people with disabilities and from marginalized social background. Training in these issues are also organized at national level by the National Agency (NA) for the Erasmus+ program in the field of youth under its TCA strategy in cooperation with other international partners and by IUVENTA - Slovak youth institute, institution of the Ministry of education of the Slovak republic for youth policy and youth work.

1.4. Background Research on the Main Issues Affecting Young People

In the United Kingdom; there are many issues that affect young people in the UK and there is not the space here to go into great depth on each of the below topics. Instead under each area there are some important headlines which give an indication of some of the issues being discussed and explored at present.

However, to begin within in 2015 a survey was undertaken by the national organisation Barnados to “capture what young people think about their future” (Barnados, 2015, p.4). In response to the question – What do you think are the biggest challenges facing people your age (14-22) in UK today? The following were the answers that they received back from young people:

- Beating stereotypes of the youth today
- Becoming financially independent
- Being able to express who we are
- Being judged for my race
- Being Listened to
- Bullying relationships
- Debt
- Deciding what to do with your life
- Fitting in
- Getting a job if you haven't gone to university
- Getting a job that pays enough to get on the property ladder
- Mental health problems
- Not being given a chance
- Peer pressure
- Pressure from exams
- Pressure to look a certain way
- Schools don't prepare us for life
- Self-confidence
- Student fees
- Unemployment
- You need experience to get a job but you need a job to get experience

Such research gives a glimpse into those issues that young people deem to be important to them and needs to be held in contrast to those areas below which are predefined areas under the Erasmus Plus Inclusion and Diversity Strategy in the field of Youth (European Commission, 2014) which as a result may have specific policies and funding ascribed to them and so such may or may not be addressing such felt needs from a young person's perspective.

The United Kingdom has a great deal of statistical research in the areas of disability, health issues, educational difficulties, NEET (Not in Employment, education or teaching) young people, cultural differences, social differences and specific barriers such as geographical ones. Please look in the specific UK report for these findings. The figures all show that there are some real needs/issues that those who fall into these categories face, which need to be considered when developing resources for the RIDE toolkit.

In Italy; social inequalities have increased in the last years, in particular due to the economic crisis. Likewise, in recent years the share of young people (18-24 years old) living in conditions of discomfort and social exclusion has increased. Italy ranks second to last in terms of intergenerational justice. Aside from the poor prospects for young people in the labour market, the country is one of the demographically oldest countries in the EU and carries also one of the highest public debts. The fiscal burdens for today's young people as well as future generations are thus immense. At the same time, investment in research and development has remained low with only 1.3% of GDP (Schraad-Tischler, 2015).
The main causes of exclusion are linked to a lower demand for labour and the lack of adequate educational opportunities for young people (“Information Template on Social Inclusion of Young People Italy”, 2014).

In particular, due to the economic crisis, one of the most urgent issues is the increasing youth unemployment rate: 39.3% in January 2016 (Istat) – with huge differences between Northern and Southern regions: while in Calabria 65.9% of young people were unemployed in 2015 (the region worst off, but all Southern regions had an unemployment rate around 50%), in Bolzano only 11.9% of youngsters were without work. The number of NEETs has also increased in recent years: 26% in 2013 (Istat). The percentage of NEETs differs from North to South. While in the North, the percentage is about 21%, in the South, the percentage is about 36% (Istat). Thus, Italian youth policies have been oriented towards two main directions: on the one hand, towards addressing youth unemployment young people involved in the labour market and, on the other hand, towards prevention of crime, delinquency and drug abuse (Formal and Non-Formal Education of Youth Workers, 2014).

In November 2011, the government adopted a package of measures entitled Diritto al futuro (Right to the Future) aiming at tackling “the precarious conditions faced by young people”. It focuses on three key areas affecting young people's development and well-being:

- employment, i.e. measures to favour the employment of young people;
- housing and family, i.e. measures to facilitate the access to young people with a typical job contracts to mortgages for the first house and build their own family and family.
- study funds, i.e. credit funds for university students

Another important issue in Italy have become young migrant people: the number of migrants has increased significantly in the last years: from 1.5 million in 2003 to 5 million in 2014; 35% of the migrants are between 15 and 34 years old. Many young migrants have difficulties with the integration into the labour market, especially with finding qualified work – 29% of foreigners work as unskilled workers in Italy (against 7% of Italians. Particularly at risk of being exploited are the minors arriving alone, without parents or accompaniment of other adults, in Italy. Around 10,000 minors currently live in Italian reception centres; however, more than 5,000 have left the centres and are not detectable anymore. To these numbers, one must add an unknown number of minors registered falsely as adults. Foreign minors are often under a lot of pressure to earn money, as they have to support their families at home and have to pay back the money spent for their travel to Europe, which can amount to 3,000 Euro. This is why many of them start working as illegal employees (Caritas Roma, 2015).
In Turkey; the needs analysis study titled “Turkey’s Youth Profile” conducted by SETA (Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research) in March 2012 was held with the participation of 10,174 young people between the ages 15-29 in order to promote the youth policies in Turkey. The headings that are especially distinguished are: (1) youth unemployment, (2) harmful habits (smoking, alcohol, substance abuse), (3) lack of foreign language skills, (4) lack of international experience, (5) lack of role model, (6) being unable to manage leisure-time activities (Turkey’s Youth Profile, 2012). Following the work carried out SETA in March 2012, a Youth Council was held by the Ministry of Youth and Sports in May, 2012. 8000 people, of whom 21% were relevant stakeholders, 25% were from universities, 30% were from NGOs organizing activities related to youth, 18% were from City Council Youth Assemblies and 6% were young people who participated in workshops held abroad, attended to the 2nd Youth Council. Thus, the National Youth and Sports Policy Document was formed as a consequence of the Council. The fundamental policy fields in the National Youth and Sports Policy Document which has been projected in parallel with the difficulties young people face are as follows:

- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Family
- Ethics and Humanitarian Values
- Employment, Entrepreneurship and Vocational Training
- Disadvantaged Young People and Social Inclusion
- Health and Environment
- Democratic Participation and Civic Consciousness
- Culture and Art
- Science and Technology
- Youth In The International Arena and Intercultural Dialogue
- Utilizing Free Time
- Informing Young People
- Voluntary Work and Mobility

In addition to this, non-governmental organizations such as Educational Volunteers Foundation of Turkey (TEGV), Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG), units affiliated with Turkish National Agency and The Ministry of National Education as well as youth organizations, local authorities and youth assemblies carry out training programs, projects, courses and activities in order to fight against the problems that young people face. Some of the problems that youth workers and young people face are as follows; gender equality,
health problems, geographic position, regional differences, transportation difficulty, cultural differences, physical disability, and time management.

According to the “Youth Unemployment in Turkey: Contributing Factors and Policy Proposals 17” written by Yentürk and Başlevent, the youth population in Turkey confronts critical problems and ensuring jobs will not easily eliminate these problems. The authors of this study argue that the unemployed young people constitute an important part of the problem, although it is not the sole key to the solution. Yurtagüler (2007) underlines the correlation between youth and social exclusion, referring to the sources in “Social Exclusion and Youth”. While providing a brief explanation related to the policies of the Council of Europe and European Commission regarding social inclusion, the article argues that young people, especially those in Turkey, can be given advantages aimed at fighting against poverty and social exclusion. In the article by Uyan (2008), “Childhood to Adulthood: The Non-Youth” the conditions of young people are questioned by laying an emphasis on the poverty young people face today. According to Uyan (2008), young people does not have a chance to actually live their childhood which renders them depressed about the future, all of which are due to problems such as poverty, inequality and discrimination.

**Underlying the gender factor**

Due to the prejudged perception of the social visibility of male and female, it can be stated that policies related to young people have one-sided viewpoints against males. However, these policies should be formed taking into consideration a wide range of resemblances and distinctions between the needs of young men and women. It should be the main concern of the youth policies to interrelate differences and similarities for the mutual benefit of both parties.

**Differences are not a threat but a source of diversity**

Since Turkey lacks the necessary environments where youth can prepare themselves for social life, it is hard to acquire the culture of living together/community. The potential adverse effects are possibly seen in terms of violence, narrow-mindedness and excessive intolerance. Therefore, creating environments where young people can get together plays a crucial role in developing youth policies/society.

**In Croatia;** the National Youth Programme (2014) usually refers to strategies which aims to implement actions tackling main issues affecting young people. Regarding the specific socio-economic situation in Croatia, the focus is on a few contemporary challenges, such as massive youth unemployment and extended period of dependence on parents. Result of
those challenges is a growing number of young people who are at risk of social exclusion in accordance with the categories of education, housing, employment and health care. According to the "Eurostat", with 32.3% unemployed young people in 2014, Croatia is considered to be third worse country when it comes to youth unemployment in the EU (after Greece and Spain). Also, there was 21.8% of young people that were in NEET status, which puts Croatia in fourth worse spot in EU. The high level of youth unemployment in Croatia leads to the trend of emigration of highly educated young workers in recent years. Croatian Employment Service is trying to solve this problem with "package of measures" for active employment. There are five packages, one of which is exclusively created for young people: "Package of measures for youth – Young and creative".

Special attention in National Youth Programme is paid to the particularly vulnerable young people who are usually facing discrimination based on different origins such as gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and disability. Those young people are young people with disabilities, young people from the system of alternative care, young people who are members of ethnic minorities (Serbs), young people who are members of the LGBT communities, young asylum seekers and refugees and young Roma people. Also, groups of young people who need additional support are: (ex-)offenders, (ex-)drug addicts, young people who are single parents, young people without adequate family support and young people placed in public institutions.

All those previously named groups of young people are in high risk of facing economic obstacles such as low standard of living, low income, long term unemployment, precarious living situations and dependence on social welfare system. Furthermore, lot of them have educational problems as well, such as low educational achievement or they leave school early which means that they are in quite serious risk for social exclusion.

In the Croatian context, young people who are living in rural or insular areas are facing geographical obstacles because of lack of infrastructure or transportation connections (Bužinkić et al., 2015).

Disabilities such as mental (intellectual, cognitive, learning), physical or other disabilities are also recognized obstacles for social inclusion. In addition, young people with chronic health problems, severe illnesses or psychiatric conditions often face social exclusion because they are institutionalized and they need a lot of time and help to resettled back into society.

In Slovakia; there is a tendency toward enforcement of inclusion into practice in the last years, but also in other countries, it can be also seen that enforcement of inclusion is
preferentially connected with formal education, i.e. educational process. Many statements of Slovak influential specialists points to the fact that the need of enforcement of inclusion into non-formal education or within the frame of free time of children and youth in the school or outside of school, in various youth organizations, is very often forgotten.

N. Bizová (2012) pointed to this problem in a long term; she mentioned that the issue of inclusion is elaborated within the frame of educational process. Its application within free time in Slovakia is backward. Slovak specialized and academic journals pay almost no attention to this topic. There exists no publication written by Slovak author that is explicitly focused on inclusion of children and youth within their free time. M. Sabolíková (2011, pg. 192) also calls attention to it “the analysis of non-formal education from the point of view of inclusion of disabled, mentally disturbed or threatened pupils is not in the centre of interests.” P. Lenčo (2011, pg.182, 186) asserts: “in regard to non-existing data monitoring this issue and absent empiric research in this field... the current condition of inclusion in children’s and youth organizations (as well as in other institutions for free-time education) is not elaborated yet in Slovakia.” the author mentions following observations which flow from his longtime experiences in a field of work with children’s and youth organizations:

(1) in the practice, there exists mostly non-governmental organizations for intact children (children without disability, but needy children) and youth, non-governmental organizations for disabled or disadvantaged children and youth, but also these organizations are focused on a special kind of exclusion (e.g. Roma children and youth, urban children and youth) or disability (organizations for physically disabled children and youth, blind, deaf) – in this case it cannot be talked about realization of inclusion within a free time of children and youth. (2) Non-governmental sector is tightly connected to local community in which it exists and tries to react on its needs. This means collecting statistics and facts can be problematic when children’s and youth organizations work with disabled or disadvantaged people because they are considered to be a natural part of community.

In spite of the fact mentioned above, there has been some research of non-formal inclusive education of children and youth in Slovakia. Factors which influence the exclusion or impede inclusion within freetime activities include disability, long-term health problems, special educational needs or social, ethnic, economic, geographic, or cultural disadvantages etc., then it can be point to following research findings that are connected to Slovakia:

Kováčová, B. (2008) researched an offer of interest groups and she calls attention to the fact, that there exists a parallel offer to interest groups for intact pupils and for disabled, mentally disturbed or threatened pupils. This case cannot be considered as inclusion within
free time, because the non-formal education is practiced separately for intact pupils and separately for disabled, mentally disturbed or threatened pupils. So the pupils do not come into contact with each other? During the outside school activities. It is bewildering that for disabled, mentally disturbed or threatened pupils that they are not offered typical free-time activities, but they are focused on school performance, re-education or they stimulate special educational care. According to statistic findings, which the author mentioned, every fourth interest group, which is established for disabled, mentally disturbed and threatened pupils, has re-educative features, so it does not fulfil the content and function of free-time activities for children and youth. Last but not least, the author points to a serious problem that is the misuse of discriminatory nomenclature in interest groups aimed for children or young adults with disability, mental disruption or threat (e.g. better reading group, group for children with specific learning disabilities, group for integrated pupil etc.) – that contents are mostly build up on re-education, or more precisely, on substitution of special educational care. So the author suggests: a) to define the boundaries of free-time activities for all providers of interest groups to be clear, what it should be considered as free-time activity and what it should not; b) to eliminate interest groups that have re-educative character

Lenčo, P. (2007) – in his research he found out that in youth organizations there is not much attention paid to unemployed youth. Economic position of young adults has significant role in the possibilities of spending their free time.

Fulková (2008) – in her research, apart from other issues, she was focused on the detection of obstacles of young adults in the possibilities of spending their free time. As the biggest obstacles she considered (a) the lack of financial resources (40% of respondents) – so it can be talked about in relation to an economic factor; (b) lack of suitable offers – in this case to talk about obstacles that are various disabilities and disruptions, but as well geographical obstacles, or more precisely, lack of possibilities for young people living in the villages; (c) inconvenient technical and spatial conditions of organizations providing possibilities for spending free time for young adults – also in this case are especially those obstacles, which relate to the individuals with disability or long-term health problems; (d) a ban on the part of parents (25% of respondents) – the concrete reasons in this case are economic but also social obstacles in the families of young people.

Šuhajdová, I. (2014) – in her research she focused on daylong education, i.e. non-formal education. She found out that the daylong education system is primarily aimed for pupils from socially disadvantaged environment, especially for Roma pupils. Researched schools
permit to participate to all pupils without any distinction of age, sex, health condition, and special educational issues, social or ethnic origin. All things considered, schools within the frame of non-formal education of their pupils managed to fulfil the principle of inclusion, i.e. equal possibilities for all, without any distinction. As the author adds, daylong educational system in Slovakia is primarily realized only for pupils at primary schools. Secondary schools students do not have opportunity like this.

Kováčová, B. (2007) – when assessing interest groups for children and young adults she found out these weaknesses: (a) lack of awareness of current suggestions – this problem is primarily related to young people living in villages or in more outlying areas. They are not expected to be interested in free-time activities realized in towns, because the geographical disadvantage is taken into consideration, which is also tightly connected to the need of traveling and the economic obstacle; (b) the space and environment are discriminating to minor groups – it is especially a problem related to young people with disability; (c) – internal rules of institutions, which provide free-time activities mostly for intact population, they do not take into consideration any disadvantage.

Kratochvílová, E. (2010) – points to the fact, that children and young people are usually not appropriately addressed by providers of free-time activities, they do not know the offer or the offers are not clear to them. This is the basic problem especially for people living in villages, because the institutions providing free-time activities are not equally accessible in the villages and in towns, so it can be again talked about geographical obstacles.

Drzníková, E. (2000) – she also points to the problem of equal accessibility of free-time activities for all young people without any distinction, especially she points to the problem from the point of view of geographical accessibility.

In conclusion, it can be said that in Slovakia, there is a lack of any reference to research of equal opportunities within the frame of spending free time of orphaned children, children from orphanages, immigrants, national minorities, different religious confession or children and youth, who had problems with addictions or delinquency in the past. On the other hand, the most attention (but still not enough) is paid to possibilities of inclusion, i.e. equal opportunities for children and young people with disability.
2. Methodology

2.1 United Kingdom

There were 6 Chief Executive Officers who took part plus one senior youth workers responsible for a significant youth centre/project.

5 of these people were from organisations based in the county of Gloucestershire, 1 organisation was based in the city of Bristol and the other in the county of Somerset. All of these counties are part of the South West region of the UK.

Moreover there were 11 youth workers who were questioned, 10 were based in Gloucestershire and 1 was based in Bristol. 4 out of the 11 worked for a targeted service offering high support for vulnerable young people and 7 worked for different youth organisations in the voluntary sector either as employees or as volunteers e.g. youth work students.

Also there were 16 young people who were questioned from 3 different projects;

- One project was a local youth forum (x4)
- One project was a young parents group (x4)
- One project was a church run open youth club (x8)

These projects were those run by the voluntary sector in Gloucestershire.

The RIDE partners had decided on the questions to be asked beforehand and had agreed on a questionnaire to be used. This questionnaire was used to collect the data.

The heads of organisations and youth workers were interviewed individually and their answers recorded. Some of these interviews were undertaken either face to face or via phone calls, which ever was the most convenient or the interviewee.

The interviewers consisted of

- A University of Gloucestershire lecturer (x1)
- A University of Gloucestershire associate member of staff (x1)
- University of Gloucestershire youth work students (x5)

The results were then fed into a central database to be stored and analysed.

All those who undertook the interviews were trained and undertook the interviews following the agreed University of Gloucestershire research ethics process.
2.2. Italy

Italy organised two focus groups with youth workers in Palermo: the first focus group was composed of four youth workers working for different organisations, mainly with the target group of migrant youth (coming from diverse countries, but mainly from sub-Saharan African countries). The participants were between 25 and 31 years old and have between 1.5 and 5 years of professional experience in the field of youth work. The second focus group was organised at a social centre in the city centre of Palermo with three experienced youth workers – their age being between 36 and 51 years, and with between 15 and 32 years of work experience in the field of youth work, mainly with local youngsters from different quarters in Palermo, which can be characterised as socially and economically disadvantaged zones. With this diverse composition of focus groups, they aimed to get as many diverse views as possible. The first focus group with young people was done with four youngsters from Ballarò quarter; all of them have been participating at a variety of activities of the Centro SanSaverio. The second first group involved a group of eight youngsters between 18 and 25 years, some of them with migration background. In all focus groups they used the questionnaire template provided by the lead partner of the Output 1. Focus groups started with a short introduction to the aims of the project and of the discussion group; they also asked participants to shortly introduce themselves at the beginning of the discussion.

2.3. Turkey

In order to investigate youth workers’, youth work trainers’ and young people’s view in the field of inclusion, diversity and equality a qualitative research was conducted. Semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews were used in the study. The sample was 24 people who were selected as key people in the field of youth work. Data was collected from individual interviews with 6 people, 2 focus group interviews with 7 adults, 2 focus group interviews with 11 young people. Participants’ profiles are shown in the following table.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Educational Background</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
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</table>
2.4. Croatia

Qualitative research was conducted on a sample of 26 participants: 5 key people, 10 youth workers, 10 young people and 1 professor in the field of philosophy. The sample consisted of 15 females and 11 males. The age range of the sample was from 33 to 39 for key persons, from 26 to 33 for youth workers and from 16 to 23 years for young people.

All adult participants have a university degree, wherein one of the participants is enrolled in the post-graduate study and the other completed doctoral studies. As regards young people, some are still in high school and some are in the higher education system.

Key people and youth workers have been working with young people for many years. The person with the least experience has been in youth work practice for 2 years, and most experienced person from sample has 10 years of working experience.

Most of the respondents live in Zagreb, while a smaller proportion of respondents live in Rijeka, Pula, Zaprešić and Karlovac.

Participants of this survey are working in a variety of associations and organizations. They deal with different populations of young people – from the general population, which includes all young people aged 15-30 years, over young people with behavioural problems and young people from alternative care to the young students from humanistic fields.

The young people are volunteers and/or beneficiaries of various associations and organizations as well - from the association that promotes activism and environmental protection, through the debating society, to associations dealing with the protection of people with disabilities.

For the purpose of this qualitative research, we used a questionnaire created especially for this study. To collect the data from key people and academics, we used a method of structured interview while the youth workers and young people were questioned through a method of focus group. There was a total of 6 interviews and 4 focus groups conducted.

2.5. Slovakia

Qualitative research was conducted on a sample of 54 participants: 3 academics (Dr. Andrej Rajsky, Assoc. Prof. in Philosophy of Education at Trnava University; Prof. Ivan Lukšík, Prof. in Sociology at Slovak Academy of Sciences; Prof. Viktor Lechta, Prof. in Special Education at Trnava University); 16 youth workers divided into two focus groups; 34 young people divided into two focus groups, based on the level of study: one group consisted of
secondary school students (age between 16 – 19 years old, n = 17), in the other one university students and others were included (age between 19 to 25 years old, n = 17).

For the group of youth workers purposive judgmental sampling procedure was used based on adequate experiences in youth work practice (including those of special education specialization) and on purpose to cover wider geographical focus (western Slovakia).
3. Results

3.1. Understanding the Terms and Practice of Youth Work

United Kingdom

The managers and youth workers who were interviewed linked their answers in line with a professional understanding of youth work, whereas young people spoke about their experience of a youth worker. From a young person’s point of view they recognised the importance a youth worker could give in terms of advice and support, opportunities for learning and to run/organise activities which are key dimensions of the role of a youth worker.

Italy

In one of the focus groups there was a discussion about the definition of “young people” and until which age one could still be considered a “youngster” – some said the limit was 18 years, others set the limit to 30 because of the definition of programmes of the European Commission targeting young people, and still another youth worker said with 35 years one could still be regarded as “young”, as nowadays people between 30-35 years are often in poor economic situations: “the condition of living in precarity renders people this age ‘young’, as they are still dependent from their parents.” All youth work practitioners agreed on the definition of youth work as an “accompaniment” of youth, i.e. as a way to stay close to youngsters, support them in life, in their personal growth, in defining their personal aims and objectives and the best way to reach them, without imposing own ideas and views on them. As one youth worker put it: “young people are a container of dreams and adults should not burn them, but stay next to them, using a lot of sensitivity, supporting them with our knowledge of how life works in practice.” It was also mentioned that youth work is based on non-formal education – in contrast to formal education at school, which follows a pre-established scheme and objectives, while youth work is open to the local context and to the personality and needs of young people. Another youth worker said that in quarters with youngsters at risk, the first objective of a youth worker should be to provide an anchor to young people (by building a relationship based on trust and respect), and in a second step to act as a mediator between youngsters and institutions, so that young people are encouraged and enabled to make use of the services offered by state institutions, such as help desks and other social services. Youngsters confirmed this view, saying that a good youth worker should be first and foremost a person they could talk with about their
problems, and who organizes both fun activities (such as eating out in a restaurant) and provides support with different issues such as job search and preparation of school exams.

**Turkey**

Youth work, the target audience of which is young people, includes work that can be carried out by any volunteers aimed at helping young people to become more active individuals in society in accordance with their needs and problems they face. These are works which contribute to the personal, social and cultural developments of children and young people.

According to young people, youth work is based on voluntarism to which the young people attend actively and which also enhance communication and interaction between young people, contribute to their personal development, help them utilize their leisure time more efficiently and which reinforce the equality of disadvantaged groups.

**Croatia**

Participants had problems in defining youth work because youth work in Croatia is not standardized nor formalized. They verbalized unclear distinction between different professions in which some participants are not sure where one profession (for example social work) ends and youth work begins and vice versa. The thing that is missing in field of youth work in Croatia is institutionalization, formal education and standardization of youth work practice.

Regardless of relatively vague field of youth work, participants gave good and important guidelines for youth work practice, which means that there is a certain theoretical and value foundation, and that they need to empower specific skills and working methods in order to work better in practice. Some of the most important guidelines is seeing youth work as a non-formal, voluntary, continuous structured and empowering work with young people which aims to stimulate complete development of young people. Also, they said that youth work has to be participatory, collaborative, emancipatory and that has to be undone in friendly environment in order to create safe atmosphere among young people.

In youth work, it is very important that activities are harmonized with needs of young people, that they follow their interests and that there are clear objectives that wants to be achieved.

Young people see youth work as non-formal approach, without rigid authority and empty phrases; as interdisciplinary work on developing potential of young people; as tool for
creating safe environment where young people can freely express their opinion and get recognition for their achievements.

Slovakia

As indicated the respondents' answers, understanding of youth work and its targets are relatively broad. This may be due to the fact that youth work is implemented in practice in different areas and meet different goals in real. It follows also from the exposure of respondents, who visited within youth group for example Christian community, choirs, scouting organizations or organization working with migrants, folks group and others. It is this diversity of organizations and associations providing youth work determined various performance of targets which they conduct their research, identified the targets at the level of: self-realization and meaningful use of leisure time, formation of personalities, their values, attitudes, opinions, socialization within the group, preventing in the area of the prevention and solution of socio-pathological phenomena. However, as indicated the answers of respondents, the action of youth groups beyond the traditional definition of the functions of leisure time and provides the "clients" space for their self-acceptance, which is in terms of the characteristics of this developmental period, a very important phenomenon, which is very important in terms of a healthy mental and physical development.

With elements of self-acceptance is related another identified plane of targets, the level of help - psychological, emotional but also financial. In terms of the particularities of the developmental period of adolescence they can be as one of the typical characteristics indicate the significance of peer groups. They think that this may be why groups working with youth can also operate on youngsters in a psychological, emotional as well as financial assistance.

Similarly, a youth group provides space for gathering of practical experience. As also mentioned the respondents themselves, often a member of the youth organization "educate" their own executives or their influence in the choice of their future profession.

3.2. The Characteristics of a Good Youth Worker

United Kingdom

There were many different answers given to this question but the characteristics of being trustworthy and not judgemental came out on top, with a good listener and approachable being the next important. These characteristics are ones which should be evident in the role, especially linked into the support side which is appreciated by the young people. The
other characteristics mentioned interestingly also tie into the educative and activity side of the role.

**Italy**

Youth work practitioners in both focus groups underlined the importance of knowing well the local context as a basis for inclusive services and in order to be able to address the specific, the real needs of youngsters in an adequate way. Youth workers emphasised the need to be open for learning, open to listen to youngsters, have the ability to observe (paying attention also to smaller behavioural changes) and, particularly, the importance of being empathetic with young people. A good youth worker should have very good relationship abilities, so that she or he is able to establish a good and strong personal relation to young people, as otherwise the advisory work of the youth worker remains on a more superficial basis, not allowing to address a variety of issues, including very personal ones, with the youngsters.

**Turkey**

Even though there have been many different answers when the qualities of a youth worker were asked, both young people and adults have also provided common answers. For instance, being a good role model for young people and adults, possessing high level of communication skills and problem-solving skills, having ability of empathy, being tolerant, devoted, determined, creative, fair and responsible, etc.

**Croatia**

In youth work it is important to establish equal, trusting, friendly, respecting and participatory relationship which will also be a place for learning, not just for young person but for youth worker as well. Good youth worker has to be open minded, accessible, supportive, empathic, resourceful, funny, assertive, a good listener, patient, motivated to work with young people and be aware of the trends among young people. Also, youth worker has to be aware how responsible job it is to work with young people and be prepared to accept young people as they are.

Young people have repeatedly pointed out that youth worker must be patient and has to have a sense of humour because positive mood creates a good and stimulating atmosphere. They said that youth worker has to be enthusiastic and motivated to work with young people, open, accessible, communicative and empathic.
Slovakia

Respondents situate requirements for a youth worker into three basic areas. In the area of personal capacities, respondents considered an important feature of self-discipline, friendliness, responsibility, empathy and responsiveness to the needs of the group as well as tolerance. Just tolerance was of great importance to young people. This was evidenced by the negative experience of one respondent, who pointed out that intolerance and disregard for the needs and requirements of the group may also lead to its disablement.

In terms of qualifications, respondents considered these were especially important for the expertise and professionalism of a youth worker but practical experience was also important. Another important role for the youth worker, found by the research, was one of role modelling with those they work with.

Another area that youth workers needed to demonstrate was managerial skills in terms of leadership qualities within a group. For example having a clear vision of the targets and procedures to achieve the aim, promoting giftedness and talent of the group members, but also sensitivity to their needs and requirements, creating space for the realization of the group members, the ability to listen, flexibility. Special attention to equal opportunities and tolerance. As emerged from the interviews, young people are very receptive and sensitive to the creation of equal opportunities for both self-development as well as the whole group. Similarly, in the tolerance of the respondents considered it very important that the group leader

From the above article it shows that respondents of young people realize the importance of creating equal opportunity and tolerance within the informal education of young people. However, inclusion seemed to be an area for further clarification.

3.3. Understandings and Importance of The Terms Inclusion, Diversity And Equality

United Kingdom

Not everyone understood these terms. Inclusion seemed to be the most understood with some good answers for diversity and equality but there is a sense that diversity and equality were harder terms to understand and define. The organisations represented and the work that the youth workers undertook all could demonstrate an inclusive culture. Such a culture appeared to be as a result of organisational aims and policies responding to legislation, the hands on approach of senior managers in practice and youth workers implementing such policies into practice in their youth work sessions, informed often by
their internal professional outlook. However, it was noted that such a culture needs to be continually assessed and monitored. There was a mix of answers but in the sample taken inclusion seemed to be the most important characteristic that was worked towards followed by equality. This result does link into question 2.1 where inclusion was most widely understood.

**Italy**

Youth workers had some difficulties expressing in own words their understanding of inclusion, diversity and equality. Still, inclusion was the term best understood. Youth workers discussed about the fact that inclusion implies that someone is at the margin, and needs to be included into society, and about the importance of not exaggerating inclusion in the sense of not trying to equalize all differences. Also, it was remarked that inclusion needs to look to the future: it should seek to let young people stay well, not only at the moment, but also, and particularly, in the future. It was also discussed that a first step of inclusion may be showing the opportunities to a youngster, e.g. showing a migrant the importance of learning Italian in order to benefit from more opportunities outside the reception centre. Inclusion was also seen as stimulation of ambition and development in young people, e.g. of continuing school education.

When asked about their understanding of diversity, youth workers said that they could perfectly cite the definition of the Erasmus+ Strategy, as most of them work with EU funds and thus frequently make reference to the definition when writing new project applications. Further, it was discussed that “diversity” means the recognition of differences between people and that the translation of the term (diversità) in Italian can have a negative connotation implying that someone is “diverse from normal”. Instead, it would be preferable to recognise that everyone is different from others in different aspects.

Equality was related by youth workers to equal rights and it was discussed that ensuring equal opportunities means also paying attention to diverse personal needs and abilities: youth workers said that it is not enough providing equal activities and opportunities to all, but that youth workers need to be careful in providing individual support, depending on individual need in order to make sure that all young people are able to equally benefit from their offers.

**Turkey**

The participants stated that there is no clear distinction among the concepts of inclusion, diversity and equality and that the definitions of all these notions complement each other.
Although the institutional legislations emphasize the concept of equality, it has been observed that these institutions place more importance on inclusion in practice. However, the fact that they support inclusion because they believe equal opportunity is important has shown that they cannot distinguish between these two terms.

While there are institutions that cannot make comparison among the concepts of inclusion, diversity and equality, some participants stated that their institutions attach more importance to the equality notion in their practices and activities.

**Croatia**

It has been shown that participants understand the most the term of inclusion, but it was difficult for them to make distinction between terms equality and diversity.

Participants usually link term inclusion with people with disabilities and members of minorities; and they understand it as equal opportunities for all and as adjustment of services that exist in the community in order to remove obstacles.

Participants understand diversity as respect between people regardless their differences and they link it with term interculturalism. Young people noted that everyone should be seen as an individual and that diversity means acceptance of others for what they are.

Participants link equality with equalization of starting positions of all people, in other words, equality means ensuring opportunities that every person can reach their full potential. They see it as basic human right and something that everyone should have.

They all offered principal examples from which it was evident that they are missing deeper understanding of these principles. Their perception was subjective and socially desirable, but the question is how these principles are implemented in practice, in the context of Croatian society that is not sufficiently sensitized and that often does not support the implementation of these principles.

Participants agreed that all three principles are equally important. But in several organizations, inclusion was mentioned as the most important principle. In addition to the three principles mentioned before, one participant point up a new principle – equity. In her opinion, declaratively promoted equal opportunities means nothing to those who cannot reach them.

**Slovakia**

Analysing the statements of the respondents to the concept of inclusion in Slovakia, there was considerable surprise that in either case, we have not seen the perception of inclusion
in the true sense (corresponding to some theoretically based concepts). Neither of the respondents stated understanding of inclusion in the context of integration based on the physical, medical, psychological and even disability. We can assume that those who are in practice didn’t meet with such a form of inclusion or they don’t realize the special needs of marginalized people, or, on the contrary, in few cases inclusion in practice was so successful that it was a natural for respondents did not perceive these individuals as inclusion bodies. Most of the comments of the respondents went to the area of social inclusion, which we saw as a difference for applying an inclusive approach to poverty (social environment), age, gender, culture, nationality and religious affiliation and linguistic diversity.

In terms of equality, young youth workers working in informal leisure organizations perceived notion of equality especially in the plane of equal opportunities. The availability of provided activities for all who expressed an interest in them was the main line of respondents association with the notion of equality. Within the interviews, however, we saw the application of the principle of equality of youngsters from different social backgrounds - social and gender equality.

Another term, which was the subject of our research was the concept of multiplicity, diversity. This was meant to mean:

A concept similar to inclusion associated with racial, cultural, linguistic, religious or other differences but they are not recorded as would be expected. This condition can be caused by the fact that Slovakia has few people of different race, culture or language. Similarly, the religious affiliation of the majority of Slovaks could still include the traditional (usually Christian) communities in which they occur specifics not be a principal differences. They believe that this could be one of the reasons why respondents did not identify diversity in religion. Identified diversity they could include in psychological personality area.

3.4. Specific Issues Young People Face

United Kingdom

There was a real mix of answers. The ones which were mentioned the most were socioeconomic and geographical obstacles followed by disability, educational and health issues. Social issues were also mentioned.

Italy

It is to be kept in mind that there are big social and economic differences between Northern and Southern Italy (as mentioned before) and that results from our focus group discussions
cannot be generalised for all Italian regions; if at all, other Southern Italian regions present similar issues as those they have found in Palermo.

In our focus group research, they have organized discussions with youth workers and youngsters from Palermo. The following issues for young people were mentioned in the focus groups: educational difficulties, i.e. young people who left school without diploma. Although some of the youth they discussed with, had successfully completed secondary school, they were facing economic, social and geographic obstacles hindering them to integrate themselves into the labour market and to participate in further education (university studies) or in general in society at large. Many young people, our interviewed youth workers are engaged with, come from economically disadvantaged families. Most of these youngsters live in the centre of Palermo, which can be characterized as one of the most disadvantaged urban zones of the city, with a number of social problems such as lack of employment opportunities, presence of organized crime organisation (the Sicilian Mafia), drug trafficking, drug abuse, parents with low educational level.

For the youngsters with migration background, cultural differences were stated as reason for exclusion – because of language difficulties, or because of reservations by local employers to employ them / hesitation of local population to interact with them. Gender differences were also mentioned: especially in economically disadvantaged areas, girls become mothers at very young age, which in turn prevents them from continuing school education and/or obtaining an employment. Further, some youth workers referred to disabilities and health problems (especially mental illnesses) as reasons for social exclusion.

Turkey

The young people, on one hand, complained about time management problems arising from the education system; on the other, mentioned that impediments such as socio-economic and geographical obstacles, lack of knowledge of English, physical disability, health problems, substance abuse, etc. have negative effects on their daily lives.

Croatia

Participants critically reflected on Croatian society and identified some of the problems that young people face. Judging by the comments, young people are seen as a vulnerable population that is at high risk of social exclusion.
They named a lot of different obstacles that can prevent young people from reaching their potentials. We can reduce them to personal and social obstacles. Personal can be poor self-image, passivity, lack of information, lack of motivation, while under the social obstacles they indicated lack of financial resources, poverty, risk family situation, demotivating environment, lack of independence, geographical isolation, lack of free activities for young people etc. They also mentioned difficulties in the education process because they see formal education system as a system of regimentation and imposition. Also, they emphasized problem of centralization because most activities for youth are happening in major cities which means that young people from distant cities cannot participate in variety of activities.

Young people mentioned following issues: social expectations, economic crisis, insufficient support of parents/educators/teachers, fear of authority, lack of information, lack of awareness about the possibilities of activating in the community, lack of resources in the community, lack of motivation and financial difficulties.

**Slovakia**

There were various different needs and barriers which were identified by youths organized in informal leisure educational activities. Some of these barriers were not identified by the institution and so it was not ready to overcome them. Young people mentioned issues like:

- the differences in religious beliefs,
- the social-economical obstacles ("I did not go to camp because we did not have enough money and I was from a divorced family."),
- the disabilities ("Young people with disabilities were ‘naturally’ excluded from dance groups activities because they wouldn’t even try to get in"),
- the subjective personal psychology obstacles ("low self-esteem may prevent young boy or girl to communicate with others or to speak in public"),
- the barriers related to specific values of the organization ("My parents did not want me to let go, being afraid that my brain will be washed out by organization..."),
- cultural prejudices and egocentrism ("Maybe people are simply lazy to help or to change their attitudes to refugees").
3.5. Evaluation of Interventions

United Kingdom

There were a variety of mechanisms used using both quantitative and qualitative data in order to demonstrate what is being done is effective. However, such tools are dependent on the organisation, their size, their funders and their priorities. Whilst there are common methods used, there is not a uniformed approach taken.

Italy

Most of the youth workers they talked with work on a project basis, applying for funds that are made available by local, regional and national authorities or by the European Commission. In the application for these funds, usually evaluation criteria with qualitative and quantitative indicators for project success have to be developed. Evaluation in these projects differ, however, widely: in some projects, continuous supervision and feedback conversations are put in place, where participating youth workers come together once a week to exchange their experiences and receive support from the other participants and/or from a supervising psychologist. In other projects there are no specific monitoring mechanisms foreseen.

For some target groups, such as disabled children and youth frequenting the social centres, regular staff meetings are foreseen, where the development of youngsters is reviewed based on established evaluation criteria. Youth workers also remarked that success cannot always seen at first glance: to understand in how far a project has contributed to the inclusion of youngsters, it is necessary to observe attentively changes in behaviour and evaluate carefully the progress youngsters have made, e.g. in integrating into a group. Youth workers also said that quantitative indicators (e.g. the number of beneficiaries reached) should not be decisive in evaluating the success of a project – more important than numbers are the relationships established and the quality of these relationships (obtaining the trust of a youngster), which may also include cooperation relations with parents of youngsters. Very often, the feedback youth workers receive is informal, and difficult to measure, as already facilitating a discussion, letting youngsters reflect on topics such as inclusion, diversity, equality, is a step forward, and can have an impact. Such an impact may become visible only sometime after the intervention, for example, when youngsters express interest in participating again in similar projects. In general, it was remarked critically that the project-based work allows only a limited time frame. In such projects different methods
can be explored and evaluated, but they do not create permanent structures, which would be necessary to have an enduring impact on the local context.

Turkey

It has been observed that there is no single approach in evaluating projects and applications and that every institution, moreover every project implemented a different method. The feedbacks mainly received from the project stakeholders have been useful for these evaluation processes. It can be said that, projects are usually evaluated taking into consideration the feedbacks received from the project stakeholders and in conjunction with the evaluation experts.

Croatia

According to the responses of participants, we can conclude that they all have standardized forms of evaluating the work (before/after test, written/oral evaluation), but for some of them, the most important feedback is the one from users of their services which cannot always be measurable.

Slovakia

Evaluating process follow from concrete achievements of field-work, according to workers the success is dependent on the satisfaction of clients. Respondents stated as another element of evaluating the success the supervisions and sharing the experiences with other organizations According to many respondents, the evaluating of projects takes a place in informal meetings.

3.6. Specific Resources Used and Required

United Kingdom

Lots of resources were used including practical activities, craft, case studies, stories and discussions. The youth workers tended to find resources on line and then adapt them. There were specific topics that were mentioned from the heads of organisations and the youth workers such as immigration, refugees, asylum seekers, different cultures in communities, equality to do with inclusivity, diversity and equality

In terms of format different types were mentioned such as an online resource library, a book/leaflets, and regular programmes of updates. In whatever format developed it appeared that the adaptability was very important, plus their use with those with various characteristics also needed to be considered.
The young people had a mix of approaches would be useful but which included many tools which they could access online with their phones/technology which was anonymous.

**Italy**

Many practical resources for youth workers can be found online, for example;

- Training kits for youth workers (including training essentials, social inclusion and intercultural learning), developed by experienced youth workers and published by the Council of Europe
- The Compass Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People by the Council of Europe
- Salto-Youth toolbox and resources on cultural diversity and inclusion
- Public Reports on International Training Courses and their methods organized by CESIE

**Turkey**

It has been seen that youth leaders, volunteers and youth workers utilize different sources. While youth leaders take into consideration the guidelines and documents sent by the Ministry, the NGOs have stated that they use the sources they prepare for their own activities as a guide, and youth workers who claim to do this job as professionals have indicated that they use sources of the Council of Europe, EURODESK, SALTO and those of Turkish National Agency.

It has been noticed that in Turkey, there is an insufficiency in the literature as well as a significant lack of sources. Since the current sources are mainly adaptations or translations of international studies, producing sources such as case studies in compliance with our own culture and guidelines for disadvantaged groups would be more useful. In terms of national culture, Turkey occupies substantially a vast geographic area and is deemed to be divided into seven regions. When considering the cultural differences of people living in these regions, it is indeed very difficult to use a single source/guideline/tool. Due to the fact that every region may have its own obstacles and advantages, the current sources require being revised taking into consideration the regional differences rather than standardizing the country needs. Owing to the recent technological developments, young people can easily access information via mobile phones and internet. Therefore, it would be useful to prepare sources as online leaflets or case study videos and audio records for availability and
practicality. Moreover, since youth works have not been adopted in the academic literature for the present, it may be hard to address a source for which the scientific research process has been completed. Thus, this project can be considered a good toolbox option.

**Croatia**

It has been shown that participants aren’t using very often resources related to the IDE principles. They usually rely on internal documents and knowledge of a core team in organization because there are usually interdisciplinary team in non govermental organization. Only useful resources written in Croatian language are national strategies that provides specific guidelines for working with young people and publications produced by civil society organizations. Also, some of the participants said that they found useful different professional papers on national and European level, as well as various brochures from the civil sector.

**Slovakia**

Utterances of workers were focused on manuals, methods to specific work they provided, and they were not bound to IDE in spite of repeated questions focused on IDE. Youth workers consider the manuals to IDE as useless, these recommendations they would more appreciate as a part of preparation for work with specific groups of young people.

### 3.7. Education/Training for Inclusion, Diversity and Equality

**United Kingdom**

From the head of the organisation/youth worker’s point of view training budgets were very tight and it was interesting to learn that much training is being done in house using the experience of the workforce and occasionally getting outside bodies to do training courses. Online training/resources were also being used.

From the young person’s point of view they appreciated people sharing their experiences, whether that was online or not.

**Italy**

There is no specific education/training programme for youth workers in Italy. In one focus group, Educational Sciences were mentioned as a starting point for youth workers, although it was criticized that the study course provides only a theoretical basis for the work, and is not enough oriented towards the practice. It thus does not prepare very well for the
practical work as youth worker. Other study courses mentioned were: Psychology and Social Work.

Youth work practitioners agreed that the only way of learning/being educated is working in practice, gaining experience through practice; in fact, many practitioners started with voluntary work in the field. Youth workers can participate at international training courses co-funded by the Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Programme – Mobility of Youth Workers; these training courses usually focus on topics of inclusion, diversity, multiculturalism.

**Turkey**

Aside from the training provided by the Turkish National Agency and Council of Europe, there is also training given by the institutions themselves for informing and developing the volunteers.

**Croatia**

In Croatia, education on IDE principles are almost non-existent. It has been mentioned that there is no ongoing financial and competent investment in this type of education. Regarding this, it was stated that there is a need for more education where people could discuss methods and techniques in youth work and where they could gain informal practical guidelines for working with young people.

Although not necessarily linked to IDE principles, participants mentioned several training and education opportunities for people from Croatia. Some of them are: international trainings (Erasmus, Salto Youth, Y-Peer, Eryica); national training (Youth Studies-Croatian Youth Network), different conferences and round tables.

**Slovakia**

Workers perceive the methods and training in the area of inclusion as less needful. Usually, they do not realize it. The more important are priorities. They do not consider as needful to train in IDE the members when it is not a big organization. Many times they initiate the educational training because of the needs of practice.

They consider very important in IDE the learning in their natural environment of organization based on the personal sharing of experiences between the workers of organization.

Some youth workers stated, in regard to diversity of work with youth and the range of this area, it would be very difficult to create general method and training applicable in practice.
As the way out of the current situation they intended to create a tool, which the worker can adapt to his practice. These tools should be more generally applicable, not to be focused on specific issues.

Workers provided some arguments why they could not improve the situation in IDE. They provided examples from practice they consider as insolvable.

3.8. Further Developments in Training/Education

United Kingdom

Free quality resources were requested around the issues of inclusion, diversity and equality for various sized audiences, together with free refresher courses as training opportunities are not as many as there may have been in the past. Again it was noted that those young people with behavioural/educational differences would need to be thought about or targeted specifically.

Italy

Youth workers said that in general the problem of education and training in Italy is that it is too theoretical, so that any practical training for youth workers would be useful. As specific topic for a training course it was mentioned that it would be useful to learn about basic competences for a successful youth project: observation and research techniques and analysis of the local context, creation of a local network and team work.

Turkey

While volunteers, youth workers, youth leaders or young people engaging in the field of youth work are only responsible for training of the institutions they are associated to, they can also participate in training of other organizations or institutions. However, it has been observed from the answers given that people working for youth work wish to specialize in this field and request from the universities to open graduate studies or certificate programs in this sphere of activity. In fact, one of the youth leaders does a master’s degree in Macedonia, since there is not a master’s degree program in youth work in Turkey.

In addition to these, due to the fact that the educational activities organized by the Turkish National Agency and the Ministry of Youth and Sports are usually conducted as projects, some difficulties arise in terms of both publicity and announcements and number of participants. If the financial resource problem can be resolved in the projects while
enabling more regional participation, it would be possible to reach more youth workers and to create awareness through knowledge in the youth work field.

**Croatia**

Youth workers and key people said that they are missing practical materials where they can find more specific tools for working in non-formal education, more topical and innovative methods for working with young people and more training of trainers and facilitators for conducting activities for young people. Also, they are missing examples of good practice, guidelines that are needed for working with young refugees and immigrants and other specific vulnerable groups of young people. Likewise, they are missing materials that would help to standardize practice of youth work (delimitation of professions) in Croatia.
4. **Conclusion**

In the light of all the facts mentioned above, it can be said that there are some similarities and differences between five countries which are United Kingdom, Italy, Turkey, Croatia, and Slovakia.

First of all, it is important to define the terms and practice of youth work. At this point, the managers and youth workers touch on their experiences of a youth worker who could give advice and support, opportunities for learning and to run/organise activities in the United Kingdom. On the other hand, there is a difference in views regarding the definition of a young person – some said the limit was 18 years, others set the limit to 30 because of the definition of programmes of the European Commission targeting young people in Italy. However, all youth work practitioners agreed on the definition of youth work as an “accompaniment” of youth that can be carried out by any volunteers aimed at helping young people to become more active individuals in society in accordance with their needs and problems. In Croatia, participants had problems in defining youth work because it is not standardized or formalized. Some of the most important guidelines identify youth work as a non-formal, continuous, empowering work with young people which aims to stimulate complete development of young people e.g. Croatia and Italy. In addition to these results, participants indicated that youth work provides space for the development of practical experience. According to young people in Turkey, youth work projects are voluntary to which the young people attend actively and which enhance communication and interaction between young people, contribute to their personal development, help them utilize their leisure time more efficiently and which reinforce the equality of disadvantaged groups.

The characteristics of a good youth worker were explored. In the United Kingdom, there were many different answers given to this question but the characteristics of being trustworthy and non-judgemental came out on top, with a good listener and approachable being the next important. On the other hand, youth workers in Italy, emphasised the need to be open for learning, open to listen to youngsters, have the ability to observe (paying attention also to smaller behavioural changes) and, particularly, the importance of being empathetic with young people. Other characteristics included being a good role model for young people and adults, possessing high level of communication skills and problem-solving skills, being empathetic, being tolerant, devoted, determined, creative, fair and responsible, etc. Slovakia found that self-discipline, friendliness, responsibility, empathy and responsiveness to the needs of the group as well as tolerance as important elements..
Understanding the importance of the terms inclusion, diversity and equality is important for youth work. It has been shown that participants understand inclusion the most but it was difficult for them to make a distinction between terms equality and diversity in all countries. In the United Kingdom for example inclusion seemed to be the most understood with some good answers for diversity and equality but there is a sense that diversity and equality were harder terms to understand. In Turkey participants stated that there is no clear distinction between the concepts of inclusion, diversity and equality and that the definitions of all these notions complement each other. Although organisations emphasize the concept of equality, it has been observed that these institutions place more importance on inclusion in practice. However, the fact that they support inclusion because they believe equal opportunity is important has shown that they cannot distinguish between these two terms. For example, in Croatia, participants all offered examples from which it was evident that they lack understanding of these terms, whilst, in Italy, youth workers had some difficulties expressing in own words their understanding of inclusion, diversity and equality. There are some misconceptions about these terms in Slovakia too with participants demonstrating that a clearer understanding of the terms inclusion, diversity and equality was required.

There are similar issues young people face like socioeconomic and geographical obstacles, disability, educational and health issues in these five countries. There are also expected differences between the countries. For example, in Croatia, the issues can be reduced to personal and environmental obstacles. Personal can be poor self-image, passivity, lack of information, lack of motivation, while under the environmental obstacles they indicated lack of financial resources, risk family situation, demotivating environment, lack of independence etc. In Italy, for the youngsters with migration background, cultural differences were stated as reason for exclusion – because of language difficulties, or because of reservations by local employers to employ them / hesitation of local population to interact with them. Gender differences were also mentioned: especially in economically disadvantaged areas, girls become mothers at very young age, which in turn prevents them from continuing school education and/or obtaining an employment.

The research found that there are a variety of ways that evaluation is undertaken which use both quantitative and qualitative data in order to demonstrate what is being done is effective. Specific practices highlighted included taking into consideration the feedback received from project stakeholders (Turkey, Italy and Croatia) and measuring the satisfaction of clients (e.g. Slovakia).
Various resources and approaches were used by the different countries. In the United Kingdom, lots of resources were used including practical activities, craft, case studies, stories and discussions. Various preferred formats were also mentioned such as an online resource library, a book/leaflets, and regular programmes of updates. Different resources were used by the workers in Turkey given the guidelines and documents sent by the Ministry. The NGOs have stated that they use the resources they prepare for their own activities but also rely on sources of the Council of Europe, EURODESK, SALTO and those of Turkish National Agency. Similar sources were used by workers in Italy but also Public Reports on International Training Courses and their methods organized by CESIE etc. In Croatia it was noted that various resources and national strategies that provide specific guidelines for working with young people and publications produced by civil society organizations in Croatia were used the most. In Slovakia, it was found that there was a real need for resources around IDE as current materials were thought to be inadequate.

There is a wide experience of training across the countries represented in elements of inclusion, diversity and equality. In the United Kingdom whilst there is training available it was noted that training budgets were very tight, as in Croatia and so it was noted that there were was move for training to be done in house using the experience of the workforce and occasionally getting outside bodies to do some. In Italy, youth work practitioners put the importance on learning in and through practice, whilst Slovakia agreed that learning for their workers took place most in the work place where the personal sharing of experiences between the workers was of great benefit.

In terms of developments in training/education, the United Kingdom, participants indicated that quality training resources would be most welcome but should take account of behavioural/educational differences of the participants. Both the workers in Italy and Croatia felt that education and training was often too theoretical, so that any practical training for youth workers would be useful.

For Turkey education and training in youth work was an area for Universities to provide through various undergraduate or post graduate degree programs. Another important issue was the financial opportunities to enable more regional participation, to reach more youth workers and to create awareness through knowledge in the youth work field in Turkey. Lastly, participants in Croatia indicated that there was a need for specific resources and guidelines for those working with young refugees, immigrants and other specific vulnerable groups of young people.
Consequently, the following suggestions could help develop youth work quality in these countries according to the results:

- Help clarify the definition and meaning of youth work,
- Help clarify the understanding and importance of the terms inclusion, diversity and equality,
- Further develop a variety of training options in various locations, organisations and institutions.
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