

# YOUTH AND THE CITY



A practical booklet for youth workers about setting up international youth projects in disadvantaged (sub)urban areas

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**SALTO-YOUTH**  
INCLUSION  
RESOURCE CENTRE



# YOUTH AND THE CITY



## **SALTO-YOUTH STANDS FOR...**

...‘Support and Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities within the Youth in Action programme’. The European Commission created a network of eight SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres to enhance the implementation of the European Youth in Action programme, which provides young people with valuable non-formal learning experiences.

SALTO’s aim is to **support European Youth in Action projects** in priority areas such as Cultural Diversity, Participation and Inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities, in regions such as EuroMed, South-East Europe or Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, with Training and Cooperation activities and with Information tools for National Agencies.


In these European priority areas, SALTO-YOUTH provides **resources, information and training** for National Agencies and European youth workers. Several resources in the above areas are available at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net). Find online the European Training Calendar, the Toolbox for Training and Youth Work, the OTLAS partner-finding database, Trainers Online for Youth and much more...

SALTO-YOUTH actively **co-operates** with other actors in European youth work such as the National Agencies of the Youth in Action programme, the Council of Europe, the European Youth Forum, European youth workers, trainers and training organisers.

## **THE SALTO-YOUTH INCLUSION RESOURCE CENTRE** **[WWW.SALTO-YOUTH.NET/INCLUSION/](http://WWW.SALTO-YOUTH.NET/INCLUSION/)**

The SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre (in Belgium-Flanders) works together with the European Commission to **include young people with fewer opportunities** in the Youth in Action programme. SALTO-Inclusion also supports the National Agencies and youth workers in their inclusion work by providing the following resources:

- training courses on inclusion topics and for specific target groups at risk of social exclusion
- training and youth work methods and tools to support inclusion projects
- practical and inspiring publications for international inclusion projects
- up-to-date information on inclusion issues and opportunities via the Inclusion Newsletter
- support for policy and strategy development regarding inclusion topics
- an overview of trainers and resource people in the field of inclusion and youth
- bringing together stakeholders to make the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities more effective and easier

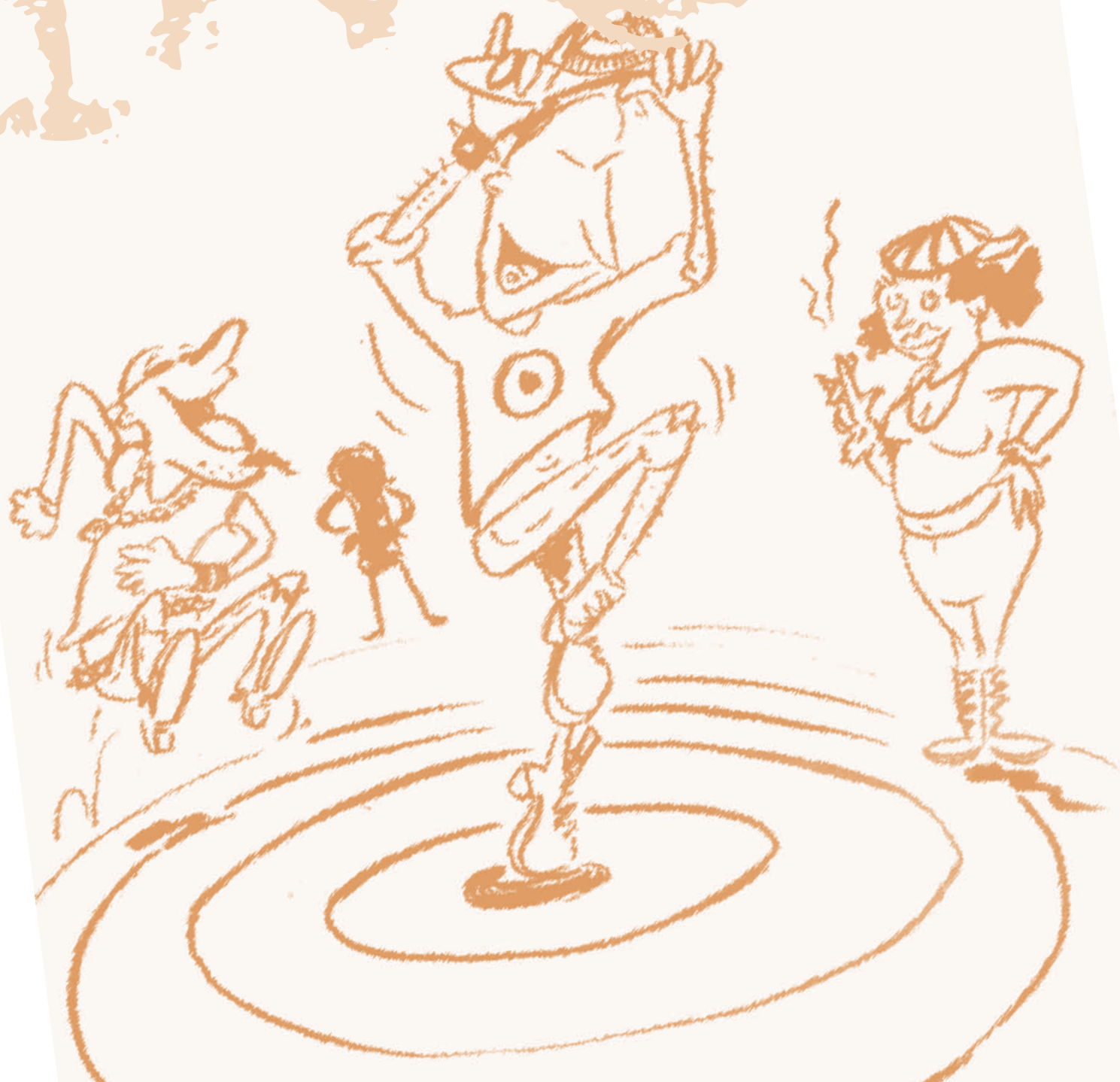
 For more information and resources, have a look at the Inclusion pages at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/)

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# INTRO

# JUMPING URBAN YOUTH



# INTO PROJECTS

Youth gangs are killing each other in London, teenagers are burning cars in Paris, youth protestors are battered by police in Warsaw, shops are looted in Birmingham, young people take to the streets in Spain, a local war develops between police and some rough kids,...

Something seems to be going wrong in the cities of Europe. Is it because too many people live together in areas that are too small? Is it because people are struggling for their rights in a system that is too big? Is it impossible for society to take care of ‘everybody’?

Fact is that most of our cities have areas where life is not all that wonderful. “**Youth and the City**” is a practical booklet that supports youth workers in those disadvantaged (sub)urban areas to develop youth projects for change. This booklet is about giving young people **positive opportunities**, despite the desolate situation of their city area.

**International projects are very beneficial** for young people, and certainly for those young people living in difficult city areas. But it’s not only young people who will benefit from your projects; the local community and you & your organisation will too (see chapter “Why go international with urban youth?”, page 12).

Once you are convinced that international youth projects are a method you would like to use for the urban youth work you are doing, you will probably ask yourself where to start. This booklet guides you through the different steps of “**Setting up international youth projects**” (page 28).

- You could try participating in someone else’s project first (page 30)
- before you find your own project partners (page 32)

“And who will pay for all of this?” I hear you say. There are quite a number of **funding sources** around for urban youth projects (page 38), and we would specifically like to highlight the **European Youth in Action programme**, which has Inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities as one of its priorities (page 41).

Getting the partners and the money is one thing, running the project with ‘city kids’ is another. Therefore, a large part of this booklet focuses on the **challenges** you might face as a youth worker setting up and implementing an international project, and **solutions** to counter those challenges (page 44).

- How to motivate the young people to get involved? (page 46)
- How to overcome language barriers? (page 55)
- How to involve the local community? (page 61)
- How to ensure that nothing goes wrong? (page 64)

An international youth project on its own will not change the world (of the young people) but when it is **embedded in a whole process**, you can make a difference for those kids. Therefore we also give you lots of tips and tricks for making the effects of the project last longer (page 72).

### Happy reading!

- ☞ If you find this booklet useful, share it with other urban youth workers. You can download it for free at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionForALL/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionForALL/)
- ☞ Also find inspiration in the “**Urban Solutions**” booklet, the fruit of a research project about successful urban youth projects. [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UrbanSolutions/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UrbanSolutions/)



### SALTO INCLUSION - FOCUSING ON DIFFERENT INCLUSION GROUPS

The SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre's mission is to encourage the **inclusion of ALL young people** within the European Commission's Youth in Action programme. Various categories of young people are missing from international youth projects for a variety of reasons, for example those that come from a disadvantaged (sub)urban area.



*“Helping young people to swim, instead of carrying them”*

The European Commission's **Inclusion Strategy** for the Youth in Action programme lists a number of obstacles that young people can face, which prevent them from taking part in international YiA projects. These can include:

- **Social obstacles:** discrimination, limited social skills, anti-social behaviour, (ex-)offenders, young single parents, broken homes, etc.
- **Economic obstacles:** low standard of living, low income, dependent on social welfare, long-term unemployed, homeless, in debt, etc.
- **Disability:** mental, physical, sensory or other.
- **Educational challenges:** learning difficulties, early school-leavers, school dropouts, no qualifications, different cultural/linguistic background, etc.
- **Cultural differences:** young immigrants, refugees, national or ethnic minorities, linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion problems, etc.
- **Health problems:** chronic health problems, severe illnesses, psychiatric conditions, mental health problems, etc.
- *And last but not least:*
- **Geographical obstacles:** remote or rural areas, but also urban problem zones: decaying city centres, suburban mass-housing estates, areas of social misery, districts with a high crime rate or lack of social networks etc.



👉 Find the **European Commission's YiA Inclusion Strategy** at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionStrategy/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionStrategy/)

The Youth in Action National Agencies and the SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre should take action to pave the way for more of these young people with fewer opportunities to become involved in the Youth in Action programme. In 2003, SALTO Inclusion started its **target group approach**, bringing together youth workers who work with groups of young people with specific disadvantages:

- young people with disabilities (2003),
- gay-lesbian-bisexual youth (2005),
- young ex-offenders (2006),
- young people from rural and geographically isolated areas (2007)
- young women from ethnic minorities (2008)
- unemployed young people (2009 & 2011)
- and youth in disadvantaged (sub)urban areas (2007 & 2012)

👉 Find a complete overview of the **SALTO Inclusion courses** at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionCourses/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionCourses/)

Back in December 2007, the French National Agency, in cooperation with SALTO Inclusion, already organised an international seminar for youth workers on how to use international projects to work with young people in disadvantaged (sub)urban areas.

Because of recent events, protests and riots, SALTO Inclusion decided to focus in 2012-2013 on solutions to challenges for young people in urban areas. This led to a variety of activities to support youth work interventions in (sub)urban areas.

- A long-term training course on Urban Youth, in cooperation with the Hungarian and French National Agencies, reviewing urban youth work practices and inspiring new urban projects.
- Peer support for the inclusion officers of the Youth in Action National Agencies regarding outreach and work with organisations active in disadvantaged urban areas.
- A stakeholder seminar in Birmingham, bringing together urban youth workers, young people, social workers, policy, community workers and researchers.
- These activities fed into a research on the success criteria for urban youth work interventions, which you can find in the “Urban Solutions” publication.

☞ More about SALTO Inclusion’s **Urban Youth strategy** at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UrbanStrategy/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UrbanStrategy/)

This “**Youth and the City**” booklet draws largely upon the good practices presented by participants at these various urban youth activities. This basis was enriched by the input of experts, by contributions from the trainers’ team and by SALTO Inclusion expertise. This booklet aims to **disseminate** the ideas, practices and methods to a wider audience. This way, everybody can benefit from the SALTO investment and we hope that this booklet will help make international urban youth projects easier and better.

☞ Youth and the City is part of the **SALTO Inclusion for ALL** series of publications. Find the complete collection at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionForALL/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionForALL/)



SALTO Urban Youth Seminar

## URBAN YOUTH IDENTIKIT PICTURE – OUR TARGET GROUP

There is **no clear picture of “urban youth”**. Like an identikit picture, we can only put together different traits that young people from urban areas often seem to have. We prefer to focus, however, on the young person’s situation, rather than their personal characteristics. We want to avoid the impression that the young people themselves are at fault, rather than the disadvantaged urban situation they are in.

👉 The element in common in our target group is that they live in a **disadvantaged urban or suburban area**.

Many different people are crammed together in small spaces, often without any sense of community or common identity. There is **little social contact** with the neighbours and mutual social control or respect is lacking. Buildings suffer under intensive use and abuse and nobody feels responsible for them.

There are too few jobs for too many people, and unemployment leads to social vulnerability. Young people from disadvantaged (sub)urban areas, often come from **socio-economically poor families**, facing the risk of continuing the vicious circle of limited opportunities. The parents don’t have the money or ambition to give their children a good education and the school system is not able to offer the same opportunities for everybody. This leads to poor qualifications, which leads to poor economic prospects, etc.

Young people are **looking for ways out** of this miserable situation and are easily tempted by drugs and alcohol to escape day-to-day life. Besides the fact that drugs and (under-age) alcohol negatively influence people’s behaviour, they also cost money, especially when the young people are frequent users or are addicted. This means that they need to find money elsewhere, such as by trafficking or stealing.

Social control and the rule of law are lacking in the anonymity of the city. A high crime rate is leading to a **feeling of insecurity**. The police are often not able to control the situation and increasingly use ‘stop-and-search’ tactics on the streets, resulting in the stigmatisation of mostly migrant young men in disadvantaged urban areas.

There is **little sense of belonging** in high-rise social blocks where people are put together without any social facilities. Thus, young people might start to create their own sense of belonging to certain groups. This can be musical styles (e.g. hip hop, gangster rap, punk,...) or strong identity groups (gangs, religious groups,...).

Last but not least, we want to stress that of course **the situation in different cities is very different**. In some cities, the disadvantaged areas are indeed the high-rise social blocks, whereas in other countries, it is mainly the old, dilapidated city centres that house the disadvantaged urban youth that we are talking about. Some cities have gangs, whereas others have fundamentalist religious groups.

We hope, however, that this chapter gives you an idea of the young people that we are talking about and the situations in which they live.

☞ More about urban youth and their issues in Axel Pohl's background text on youth work in (sub)urban areas. (page 86).



*SALTO Urban Youth Seminar*

☞ The “Urban Solutions” research also gives an overview of the issues and the possible youth work interventions in (sub)urban areas: [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UrbanSolutions/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UrbanSolutions/)

# WHY GO INTERNATIONAL WITH URBAN YOUTH? BENEFITS



Urban youth organisations run many **interesting, creative and fun activities** through which young people develop many skills and competencies. They give young people interesting and alternative ways of spending their free time and play an important role in the **personal development** of young people. Local youth work is vital, so why go international with urban youth?

International projects can provide some additional benefits to your urban youth work. A number of these benefits are identical for all young people but some are particularly valid for (sub)urban youth and urban youth organisations.

### AN EYE-OPENER FOR URBAN YOUNG PEOPLE

#### Intercultural learning and widening horizons

- Through participation in international youth projects, young people **discover new social and cultural realities**, new people, new places, etc. An international youth activity can be a ‘window on the world’ where young people have new experiences outside their own cities or suburbs. They learn that their way of doing things is just one of many.
- Knowing that things can be done differently (e.g. in different countries) can stimulate young people’s **creativity**, encouraging them to find new solutions to old challenges. It can also increase their **empathy**, helping them to try and look at things from different perspectives. This is certainly also valid for **urban youngsters**. An international youth activity will make them reflect on ‘their own place’ and may help them to generate **new ideas**.
- Through interaction with ‘future friends’ from different cultures, young people build on their **intercultural competencies**. They also learn to **react positively to differences**. Even though many (sub)urban areas are culturally very mixed, the young people often only interact with others who have similar cultural and social backgrounds. An experience abroad helps the young people to reflect on their own cultural identity, to better understand the social and cultural background of others and to be more open-minded. International youth projects widen horizons and confront young people with their **prejudices and stereotyped ideas** and help them to overcome these. Young people learn to be respectful, **tolerant** and **open to diversity**.
- Part of ‘widening horizons’ is, furthermore, the awareness of how important **foreign language learning** is. In addition, many young people become **curious about other countries and cultures** and want to explore more of them.
- ...

### Empowerment and self-confidence

- Participation in an international project and the creation of **new friendships** with other urban young people in a similar situation as their own can be an **eye-opening experience** for a young person. To discuss issues of importance to their everyday life and find out that in other (sub)urban areas many young people are facing the **same challenges**, can be truly inspiring and can motivate people to take on new challenges to improve their situation.
- Young people **exchange life stories** which make them reflect on their own reality, their own values and ideas. This is a great source of **personal development** and of inspiration for their personal lives. Young people learn to reflect and understand their cities and societies better. Participation in an international youth project creates a **space to discuss** urban youth issues, exchange ideas on disadvantages/advantages and challenges, as well as the strengths and opportunities of (sub)urban areas and their young people.
- Active participation in an international project helps to build **self-confidence**. The young people take over new and challenging tasks, they experience new activities and contribute to the success of the project. They know that they can do things successfully and **feel valued**. This can be a welcome change from overwhelmed school teachers or controlling police officers.
- An international experience also can be an opportunity to discover the advantages of **mobility**, which can motivate the young people to widen their field of activity on a local level, e.g. to look for a job or training outside their own district or city or to participate in the youth activities of other youth organisations.
- And perhaps a European project – funded by the EU Youth in Action programme – also represents **prestige** and **recognition** for urban young people and their issues as well as **official acceptance** of their need for inclusion.
- ...

### Developing new competencies

- Participants and youth workers on international projects gain a lot of **intercultural skills**, as we have already described above.
- Young people prove that they can be independent, but also **work in group**; at the same time they discover and develop **social skills**. International youth projects offer very intense group experiences, where the young people learn to respect each other, to express themselves, to listen to others and to take on responsibilities.
- In addition, when the young people are actively involved in the project, they learn about project management, conflict resolution etc. which can also be useful for their **professional lives**. It inspires young people to start **new projects, local initiatives or businesses**, which can be of great benefit to both themselves and their urban communities, as well as to their youth organisation.
- In many cases, after an international youth project, young people feel inspired to achieve **further development** and take on more tasks and responsibilities within their youth NGOs, developing non-formal educational activities for others and making use of their newly-acquired international network. The international project is a valuable practical experience for their future career.
- Young people learn and acquire **'language by doing'**. They have the opportunity to apply and expand their foreign language skills and feel (more) motivated to study languages, which will also give them better chances on the jobs market.
- ...

Of course, international projects are also about **having fun!** 😊 Urban youngsters have a fun time abroad and make new friends. A youth exchange, training course or voluntary service abroad is an **enjoyable and rewarding alternative** to regular holidays abroad and gives you a good insight into the lives and lifestyles of young people in other countries.

- 👉 More about using international projects to raise young people's employment chances in SALTO's Working on Work publication available from [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/WorkingOnWork/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/WorkingOnWork/).



## WINDOW ON THE WORLD FOR THE URBAN COMMUNITY

- **Young urban people** taking part in international activities or organising a youth exchange in their (sub)urban area, for example, always **‘educate’ their urban community** too. They help to **break stereotypes and prejudices** in their neighbourhood and make their fellow inhabitants curious about other countries.
  - The (sub)urban community benefits from the new initiatives. They can help to redynamise public life in the neighbourhood by **developing an urban culture** with the participation of the young people and involving inhabitants from different age groups and social and cultural backgrounds. You can involve the local community as a working method in international youth projects right from the beginning, for example through **cooperation** with other local NGOs, **host families, visits** to local projects, **joint activities**, etc.
  - You will establish many **new contacts** with people surrounding your project. This leads to **positive image-building** of urban youth and youth activities, which are often only seen as disturbing. This way you can change the “bad image” people may have of your youngsters and **break people’s stereotyped views**.
- 👉 More about positive image-building in SALTO’s Images in Action booklet which is available from [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/ImagesInAction/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/ImagesInAction/).
- You can also show that there are **many other opportunities, including international ones**, for urban youth, such as international youth exchanges, seminars, training courses, internships and volunteer programmes.
  - ...



## INCREASED IMPACT FOR URBAN YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

### Profiling your organisation

- By being active on a European level, by receiving European funding (for your international projects) or by co-operating with organisations abroad, you raise your organisation's **profile and visibility**. Cooperation with the local authorities can also lead to their **financial support**.
  - When urban youth organisations co-operate (on an international as well as on a national level) they benefit from a **synergy effect** which is crucial for their **lobbying and advocacy work**. United, you are always stronger and can get your message across more easily e.g. to city councils, local politicians, MEPs,...
  - International urban youth projects are great for encouraging organisations to increase their commitment to **bigger issues in a wider context**. For example, to develop common strategies to prevent violence or to redynamise social and cultural life in your (sub)urban area. In many cases, **urban development strategies** are exchanged and expanded, and local initiatives benefit from international exchanges and support.
  - ...
- 👉 More about increasing the impact of your youth projects in SALTO's Making Waves booklet available at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/MakingWaves/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/MakingWaves/).

### Developing the organisation

- **Contacts** with different organisations and youth workers (abroad), through international youth activities, stimulate **new ideas**: for new projects, to inspire new working methods, to take fresh initiatives, to do things differently (or more efficiently). There is great potential to **learn from one another**.
- Organising an international youth project is a great opportunity for the youth workers involved to develop **organisational and project management skills** e.g. intercultural competence, international co-operation, etc. which can also be beneficial for other activities.
- Participation in projects with international partner organisations allows you to **compare** and to find out how good a job you are doing. The exchange of **good practices** and the design of **common projects** may lead your youth organisation to rethink its youth work practices to better meet the needs of urban youth.
- The experience of going abroad, organising and putting into practice an international youth project together with your young people can create great links between you, the youth worker, and the group. The **gained trust** can be very useful for future local work.
- Participation in an international project can be a **welcome change** from the type of work youth workers are doing. This 'international variation' can **motivate** youth workers in their work and be a **new challenge** for them as well.
- ...

## SOME PROJECT EXAMPLES FOR INSPIRATION

These examples are summaries of project presentations collected from participants at different Urban Youth Seminars.

### COMMUNITY PLACES - WHICH COLOUR FOR YOUR CITY?

- a youth exchange (Action 1.1 of the Youth in Action programme) between a German and Hungarian group organised by the Komlóstetői Kerékpáros Sport Klub (Hungary)

The project focussed on the issue: What can we do with old derelict industrial spaces? In many countries, modernisation or economic downturn has left many big factories and industrial areas abandoned. Together with employment, also dynamism disappeared from these city areas. This project aimed to bring back some life to these neighbourhoods.

#### Alternative use of industrial estates

Young people participated in different creative activities such as photography, film making or drawing. They had to imagine what the future could look like in old industrial cities, as we can find them everywhere in Europe. They came up with a variety of reconversion ideas: use big industrial containers for diving, organise cultural performances in old factories and so on. At the same time as re-inventing industrial neighbourhoods, the participants also exchanged ideas and gained different skills and knowledge (languages, art and creativity, computer skills, European project management,...).

In cooperation with the city of Miskolc, where the activity took place, the project organisers held lectures, small performances and exhibitions during the week of the exchange. The participants had the chance to show their work at the Gyárfesztivál that took place in an abandoned factory area, as well as in other places in the city. This stimulated quite some thinking about new ways to make use of old industrial buildings and areas.

## STREET OLYMPICS

- a youth exchange (Action 1.1 of the Youth in Action programme) between young people from Slovenia, Austria, Czech Republic and Poland organised by the Youth Centre in Celje (Slovenia)

The aim of the youth exchange was to organise ‘street Olympics’ (different, alternative sports activities) and a festival in the city of Celje, also including the restoration of a public playground and musical activities, involving local youth.

### Challenges and solutions

As the Polish group didn’t speak English at all, the intercultural communication was quite difficult at the beginning of the exchange. This problem could more or less be overcome by group-building, sports activities and non-verbal communication. The other big challenge was getting local youngsters involved in the project, which was initially not easy to do, but after a while we were able to get them interested and people joined in.

### Benefits

For the young people, it was a great opportunity to get to know youngsters from other countries, since people from this town hardly have the chance to travel. It was also very interesting and inspiring for them to discover “exotic” sports activities. This exchange motivated them to set up future initiatives.

For the local community, the festival was a big event that brought together different ages. It wasn’t just young people who attended, but ‘older’ people were also able to discover break-dancing shows and hip-hop, for instance.

## EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE

- European Voluntary Service (EVS) – (Action 2 of the Youth in Action programme)

Volunteering abroad for a long period of time is not that easy for young people with fewer opportunities. Thus, EVS Short-Term projects were created to make voluntary service abroad more accessible to young people with special needs. When the placement is adapted to the volunteers' needs, EVS can be a lever for change for many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- 👉 More about adapting EVS to young people's needs in the SALTO Inclusion booklet 'Use your Hands to Move Ahead' – download it from [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UseYourHands/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UseYourHands/)

Some examples from "Use your Hands to Move Ahead":

- **GetBasic** (Belgium) helps citizens to express their concerns about society in the media and on the web. Through different workshops they train citizen journalists. The European volunteer was part of the GetBasic video team and helped prepare workshops and media camps. The citizen journalists report about issues like citizenship, climate change and cultural diversity. The volunteer zoomed in on the yearly Zinneke parade in Brussels, an artistic and social experiment that celebrates cultural diversity in the city.
- **'Sustainable urban lifestyles'** was a Hungarian project about responsible consumer behaviour. The volunteers helped implement awareness campaigns about a variety of topics such as environmental problems and solutions, community gardens, sustainable city living,... More specifically, the volunteers took to Summer Festivals with flyers, they wrote blogs and articles, they developed a green map of Budapest (with all eco-friendly shops and services) and they organised practical workshops about soap-making and recycling.

## TIME FOR A BRUSSELS SPRING

- A youth initiative project (Action 1.2 of the Youth in Action programme), organised by Comac in Brussels (Belgium).

Inspired by the Arab revolutions and the Spanish protests, Comac wanted to create a space for youth expression in the popular neighbourhoods in Brussels. The idea is that young people have the potential to intervene in their own urban areas if they get the chance to discuss burning issues and train themselves to make a difference. The project is about giving young people the responsibility for their neighbourhoods.

### Power to the young people

Young people are not interested in the traditional youth centres anymore. They only try to keep young people off the street with their activities. Maybe it helps to make the streets calmer, but it doesn't change the streets. Comac trains young people to become activists and take up responsibility for their own neighbourhoods and for their own lives. This training comprises practical information (about rights, public services, violence,...) but also skills to organise different events (festivals, workshops, etc.)

### Challenges

The challenge is to find spaces for our activities. Each time we want to propose a workshop, we have to look for a venue that we can use to carry out this activity. We have approached different municipalities to use their spaces, but they are reluctant to cooperate because of our alternative approach to neighbourhood intervention. A regular place would make our work more easily accessible (only one reference place) and better recognised (people identify the activity more with Comac if there is one reference place).

## US, ART AND THE COMMUNITY

- A youth initiative project (Action 1.2 of the Youth in Action programme) from a group of young people (between 15 and 17 year old) from the Mayfield area of Cork city, Ireland.

This group of young people had already been involved in some short-term art projects at the arts centre, but they wanted a more structural space to be listened to and to express themselves. The group wanted to explore the theme of rights because of problems they had previously had with the police and with health issues.

That's why they proposed this project. They worked towards an exhibition that allowed the opinions of the young people to be heard, exploring the themes of social inclusion, participation and identity. They used various media, such as screen printing, pyrography, stencilling and painting. Their work was exhibited in Cork City centre as part of GLOBALFEST youth arts festival and they showed their art in the Mayfield Community Arts Centre. So they definitely managed to get their voice heard, in an artistic way.

### Successes

The project gave the young people involved the chance to be active in their communities. They could share their visions for change with the public in a creative way. The project allowed them to develop new skills such as team work, creative skills, communication and their self-confidence increased significantly in presenting their ideas and opinions.



*SALTO Urban Youth Seminar*

### DOT.NET – RAISE YOUR GAME

- A youth initiative networking project (Action 1.2 of the Youth in Action programme) organised by Soundstudio, a youth music project in the UK.

DOT.NET is a youth initiative networking project between Belgium and the UK. The young people decided it would be great to have a website where young musicians could create a profile, include their tracks and videos, network, exchange and set up projects. After a successful group initiative, this was the next step towards further international projects, linking young people who had common interests and goals. For example, our project linked the UK's Urban Music Collective with the 7-piece Belgium Jazz Orchestra.

“Raise your game” was an initiative for vocalists and musicians to create a CD on common issues facing young people today. Forming a collective and seeing how the music business worked in the UK and other countries was a way of engaging young people who had not experienced international youth projects and getting them to consider future developments.

Soundstudio works primarily with young people, aged 8-25, from all backgrounds, but most commonly our work is directed towards those in pockets of deprivation, ethnic minorities and those failing within the education system.

### Challenges and solutions

It is hard to work with young people in areas they are not sure of or comfortable with. We have used their interest in music to involve them in Youth in Action projects. Through this, we have been able to get others on board. The main barriers for us have been getting initial interest and gradually securing the youngsters' commitment over their other leisure interests.

Music is an ideal way to engage with young people because it is a large part of their everyday lives. We use all genres and elements of music and music technology, allowing us to work closely with the participants and to address a range of other issues, from self-esteem to behavioural problems or emotional traumas. In this way, working with music offers opportunities for personal development. It then becomes an ideal way for us to link into international projects with a common theme, based on their interests and pursuits.



### Benefits

Young people get the opportunity to experience international relations, to build links with other young people from other countries -in similar and dissimilar situations-, to widen their horizons and to increase understanding and tolerance. It also helps them as individuals to have such opportunities to develop personally. As a youth worker, it builds great links between you and the group. After the hard work of getting the young people involved, the benefits are really worthwhile and something they will never forget.

### PROJECTOMAYONAISE

- A training course (Action 4.3 of the Youth in Action programme) organised by ProMayo, Kortrijk (Belgium)

The project set out to disseminate good practice and ideas on streetwork, and took a closer look at how to encourage informal street-life through creative actions. Youth workers from Hungary, Portugal, Austria, Slovenia, Belgium and Slovakia attended the course. The course actively involved the local community, as the participants took to the streets to try out some of the good practices. “It was a big success, because we activated youngsters that were ‘known to be difficult to reach’. We believe that creativity can break barriers between people and helps to overcome difficulties and problems.”

### Benefits

This training course was the first activity of the organisation. Because of its success, the course and the informal style of the organisation’s management, ProMayo quickly developed into a broad collective of creative street-workers and now reaches a very diverse group of youngsters, more than before.

The young people involved in the project had the opportunity to offer solutions to problems in their urban area themselves and to get active. The youthworkers discovered a way of empowering young people ‘known to be difficult to reach’ and together, they re-dynamised social life in the streets, also involving the local community.

Now ProMayo is starting a small project in a very intercultural and disadvantaged neighbourhood in Kortrijk. They aim to secure European funding to activate local youngsters and create a stimulating, creative space, open for everyone. They want to further redynamise public life in the neighbourhood and change the negative reputation of young people there.

## CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT

- A training course with neighbouring regions (Action 3.1 of the Youth in Action programme) organised in Belgrade (Serbia) about using the city as a tool for action.

This activity trained youth workers from 10 different countries in the techniques of ‘art engaged activism’. This type of urban interventions and street theatre try to bring young people’s enthusiasm onto the streets and interact with the wider population. Youth projects should move from behind closed doors into the city streets. The creative actions use art, installations, street performances or graffiti to engage people from the streets, young people from the neighbourhood and so on.

### Taking to the streets

The participants first exchanged their concepts of a city and where they would see potential for intervention. Several project groups formed and used the workshops and lectures for the benefit of their interventions. Together they created different kinds of actions to interact with the public and bring a bit of life in disadvantaged parts of the city.

That way, they could try out all the things they had learned. You can see pictures of the different interventions at [www.facebook.com/bit.org/photos](http://www.facebook.com/bit.org/photos).

One of the successes of the project was the fruitful mix between artists and youth workers. The artists and cultural managers maybe knew a lot about art and creativity, but could use a little help in bringing it across to young people. On the other hand, youth workers could learn a lot about art intervention as a tool for youth work.

### LONG-TERM TRAINING COURSE FOR URBAN YOUTH WORKERS

- The Hungarian and the French National Agencies, together with SALTO Inclusion organised a training course over a period of 1.5 year to stimulate more inclusive youth projects in disadvantaged (sub)urban settings.

The course gave the participants the chance to reflect on their own urban youth work practices and analyse the values and principles underlying their approaches. They could exchange their experiences and learn from each other. The trainer team presented Youth in Action as one of the tools that they could be used for future youth projects or for their own professional development.

### A Copernican revolution

One of the challenges was to address the ‘prevention/security’ agenda. A lot of youth work tries to do problem-solving, whereas truly engaging youth activities are based on young people’s needs. It is the difficult task of the (urban) youth worker, to combine the drive for institutional results (e.g. get young people off the streets, into a job, back to school,...) and young people’s empowerment (focus on what the young people are longing for). We should consider young people not as a target group, but as partners in our work.

The youth workers at the course had an incredible hunger for ‘methods’: how do we do it? However, there is no recipe for a successful intervention. The most effective youth work is the one that is analytical and highly responsive to the context. It is process driven instead of result driven. Or as one of the trainers pointed out: “beware of the tyranny of best practice”.

### URBAN SOLUTIONS SEMINAR

SALTO Inclusion, together with the UK & Polish National Agencies and SALTO Cultural Diversity, brought together a group of stakeholders from urban settings to reflect on the social challenges in disadvantaged city neighbourhoods and how youth work could address these issues. The people attending the seminar were very diverse: there were youth workers and young people, but also local authorities, police officers, researchers, national agencies and teachers. The different points of view enriched the discussions enormously.

### Concrete results

The seminar was held online as well as face-to-face. All ideas from the live discussion were fed into a seminar blog, with live tweets, pictures, provocative questions, videos and audio-clips. This allowed people from outside to join in and benefit from the discussions.

This <http://urbansolutions.posterous.com> seminar page now serves as an online documentation of the activity and a resource for further action.

The Urban Solutions research also heavily drew on the outcomes of the different working groups at the seminar. The good practices shared at the stakeholder event clearly rooted the research in different European realities and made the publication come to life.

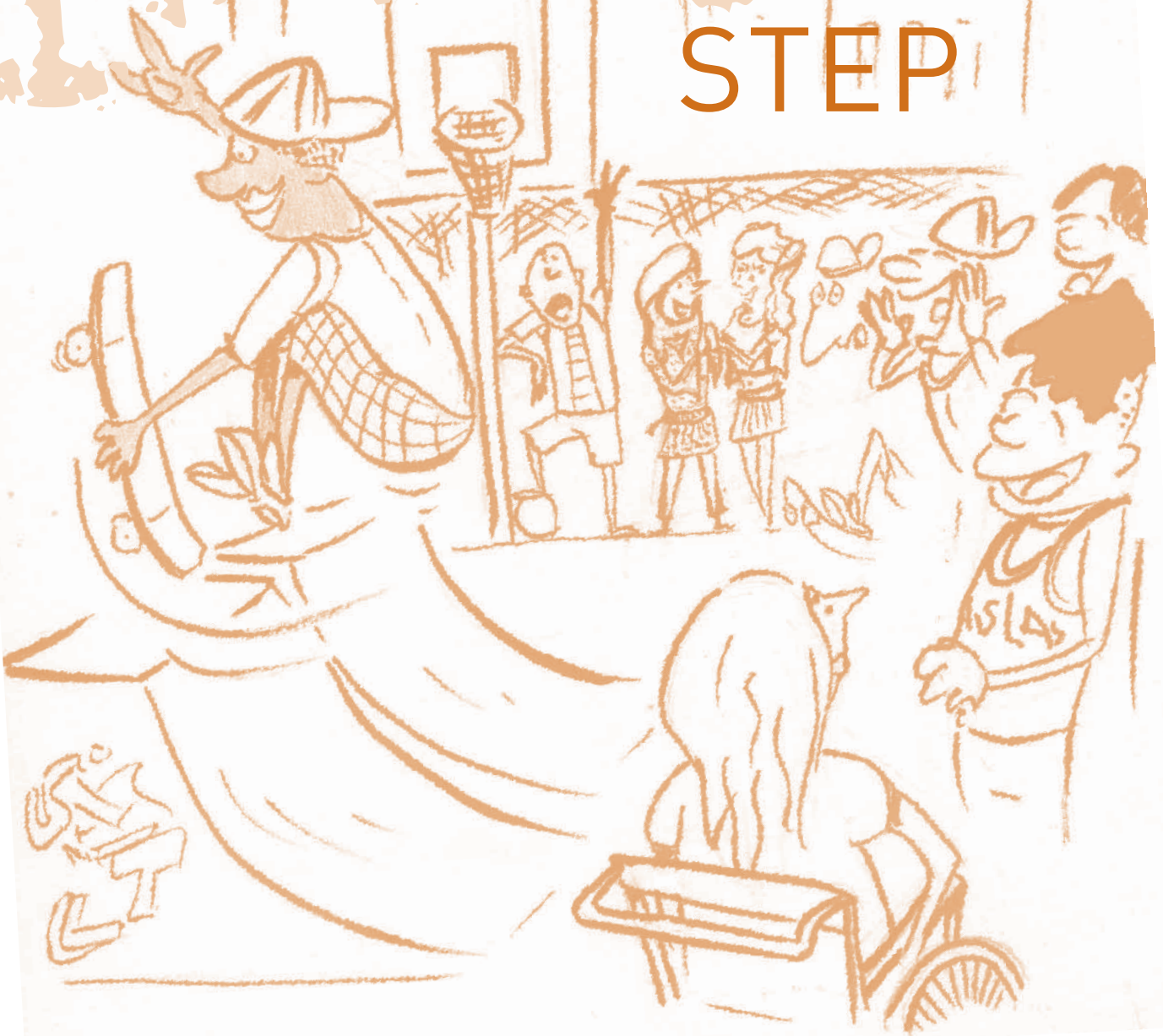
- 👉 Download this 'Urban Solutions' research booklet from [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UrbanSolutions/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UrbanSolutions/).

Some of the less tangible, but therefore not less important results were the connections made between different stakeholders across institutional divides. It dawned to participants that more can be reached when they partner up to address urban challenges, rather than to continue doing things in their corner. It gave them a boost to improve their practice and set up new projects for, but especially WITH young people.

### MORE GOOD PRACTICE INSPIRATION

- 👉 Find more project examples about different inclusion topics in the SALTO Good Practice database at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/GoodPractices/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/GoodPractices/).

# SETTING UP STEP-BY- STEP



# INTERNATIONAL YOUTH PROJECTS

All beginnings are difficult, so in this chapter, we suggest some steps you can take to go international bit-by-bit.

- Cooperate with an experienced organisation (near you, in the same field,...)
- Participate in existing projects instead of organising one yourself (page 30)
- Find an international project partner (page 32)
- And also build up a solid partnership together (page 35)
- Raise funds for your international project (page 38)
- Have a look at what the Youth in Action programme has to offer, specifically for inclusion projects with urban youth (page 41)

And once you get your project going, do consider the **challenges** (and solutions) that you might meet **during** (page 44) and **after** your project (page 72). Did you think about:

- How to motivate the young people and keep them on board? (page 46)
- How to overcome language barriers? (page 55)
- How to involve the local community for more impact? (page 61)
- How to avoid things going wrong and what to do in case of conflict? (page 64)
- What to do after your project to continue the good work? (page 72)

## FIRST STEPS ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE

If you think it is a bit daunting to carry out your own international youth activity, no worries: you don't have to do it alone. There are many **experienced organisations in international youth work**, who you can cooperate with or who you can ask for some advice.

Find out who is **active internationally**:

- ask your national agency of the “Youth in Action” programme (find all addresses at <http://ec.europa.eu/youth/>)
- check with your local authorities responsible for youth work or with the National Youth Council in your country (find a list at [www.youthforum.org](http://www.youthforum.org) > members)
- Search the SALTO good practices database at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/GoodPractices/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/GoodPractices/)

There is also the possibility of **first experiencing someone else's project** before doing one yourself. Plenty of international activities for (urban) young people already exist; you just need to check if they are suitable for the young people you are working with:

- Does the profile of participants match your group?
- Are there enough experienced youth workers in the project?
- Does the programme correspond to your young people's needs and interests?

Don't hesitate to **ask the organisation responsible** about everything that seems to be important for the success of the project for your young people and inform the organisers about their special needs. In any case, good preparation by your participants is essential.

- 👉 More information about **international opportunities for young people** at the **European Youth Portal**: [www.europa.eu/youth/](http://www.europa.eu/youth/)
- 👉 Or contact networks specialised in inclusion and the participation of young people with fewer opportunities:  
**Youth Express Network**: [www.y-e-n.net](http://www.y-e-n.net)  
**Youth and European Social Work forum**: [www.yes-forum.eu](http://www.yes-forum.eu)  
**Dynamo International** (network of social street workers): [www.street-work.net](http://www.street-work.net)

There are many **requests for partner groups** going around. In this way, you can join as a partner organisation in a cooperation project. Have a look in the SALTO “OTLAS” partner-finding database: [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/otlas/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/otlas/). Or register for the **European Youth Exchanges mailing list**: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/european-youth-exchanges/> or via [www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=20589071544](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=20589071544).

An easy-access, international activity for young people who are keen to have an international experience is **voluntary work camps** (international groups do some voluntary work in a non-profit organisation abroad) - or you can host a work camp:

- Service Civil International > [www.sciint.org](http://www.sciint.org)
- Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations > [www.alliance-network.eu](http://www.alliance-network.eu)
- Youth Action for Peace > [www.yap-cfd.de](http://www.yap-cfd.de)
- GLEN Network (Global Education Network of Young Europeans) > [www.glen-europe.org](http://www.glen-europe.org)
- VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas) - long term volunteering > [www.vso.org.uk](http://www.vso.org.uk)

Maybe you need **more training first**, before you feel comfortable enough to set up your own urban youth project. You can find a wide variety of youth work training offers in the **European Training Calendar**: [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Training/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Training/)

If you decide to organise an international project yourself, you can find some help concerning the **project management** of international youth activities in the following booklets:

- ☞ SALTO Over the Rainbow booklet > [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/OverTheRainbow/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/OverTheRainbow/)
- ☞ SALTO Handbook on Project Management > [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/find-a-tool/86.html](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/find-a-tool/86.html)
- ☞ T-Kit on Project-management > <http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int> or [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/find-a-tool/68.html](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/find-a-tool/68.html)



## FINDING PROJECT PARTNERS & BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

### FINDING PROJECT PARTNERS

Once you've caught the international bug, one of the biggest challenges when setting up an international youth project is: **how to find the perfect partner?** There are many options and opportunities to identify and get in touch with a potential partner organisation. Different people prefer **different partner-finding techniques**, just like finding a partner in your own personal life.

Often, international activities start off with **personal contacts** between youth workers or board members from similar youth structures abroad. You might not have these personal experiences with foreign organisations (yet), but maybe if you **ask your members or colleagues**, they might know of an organisation or youth worker abroad who would be interested in organising a project together with your organisation. Recommended contacts are also a good way of getting in touch with potential partner organisations.

If this doesn't work, you can **take part in international events and activities** where there are other potential partner organisations present (e.g. conferences, seminars, meetings, etc.). This way, you can get to know representatives and their organisations and find out how far they **match** your organisation and your target group. As in inter-personal relationships, be aware that you don't often find the perfect match, so compromises and flexibility are necessary.

There are a number of '**Partnership Building Seminars**' in the Youth in Action Programme where organisations are looking for potential partners. Alternatively, try to participate in international **training courses and seminars** on a topic that your organisation is also interested in. You might not find an urban partner organisation with exactly the same background, but one that has a common interest, which could be the basis for an international project.

- 👉 Find information about different European training opportunities in the **SALTO European Training Calendar** [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Training/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Training/) or from your Youth in Action National Agency <http://ec.europa.eu/youth/>.

Within the European Union's Youth in Action programme (see also page 41), there are a variety of **tools to help you find a partner group or international project**:

- The SALTO Information resource centre has developed an easy-to-use **partner-finding database called OTLAS** (Organisational Atlas). You can either promote your project ideas there and find partners, or join other organisation's projects. List your organisation now at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/otlas/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/otlas/).
- Most National Agencies (NAs) of the Youth in Action programme have some kind of **partner request form** - usually in electronic format on their homepage. The NAs can forward your completed form to one or more of the other NAs located across Europe. These NAs use different ways to circulate partner requests to potential partners (e.g. *e-mail lists, website, newsletters,...*). Find a list of NAs at <http://ec.europa.eu/youth/>
- If you are looking for a host organisation for a **European Voluntary Service (EVS)** project, you will find a list of approved hosting projects in the **host organisation database** at [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/evs/aod/hei\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/evs/aod/hei_en.cfm)
- You can also contact 'EVS Youth Networks' which is a network of EVS organisations, if you are interested in sending or hosting a volunteer: [www.youthnetworks.eu](http://www.youthnetworks.eu)
- Some centres for Regional Co-operation have **addresses of youth organisations and contact points** in so-called 'partner countries' with which Youth in Action projects are possible. e.g. SALTO Eastern Europe & Caucasus: [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/eeca/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/eeca/), SALTO South East Europe: [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/see/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/see/), SALTO EuroMed: [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/EuroMed/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/EuroMed/) or the EuroMed platform for co-operation with EuroMed countries: [www.euromedp.org](http://www.euromedp.org)
- The Yahoo group and Facebook group of **European Youth Exchanges** might also be helpful for finding partners and for getting answers to technical and practical questions. You can register via <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/european-youth-exchanges/>, [www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=20589071544](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=20589071544) and [www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=5852498865](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=5852498865)
- ...

There are a number of other **Europe-wide networks and umbrella organisations** that can provide you with names and contacts of organisations in different countries. Have a look at the **European Youth Forum** website ([www.youthforum.org](http://www.youthforum.org)) for a list of international youth NGOs and National Youth Councils active in Europe. Think of organisations that could be active in the country of your choice OR in the topic you want to organise an international project on, e.g. Red Cross, Scouts, Young Chamber of Commerce, etc.

**Most likely, the choosing will be more difficult than the finding.** The following questions can help you to find out if your organisations are compatible:

- Do your organisations share common aims? Or are they at least compatible?
- Do the organisations work with a similar target group (age, mix, gender, educational background, geographical situation...)? And if not how will you deal with the differences?
- Do the organisations deal with the same or similar challenges on a local level?
- Do your organisations have similar activities? Would you be able to find a programme in common that both organisations are happy with?
- Do you have similar organisational capacities (size of the organisation, budgets, available networks)? Or would you find ways to work together on an equal footing?
- Do you have similar organisational cultures and ways of working? Or at least the openness to adapt to different ways of working? Are the differences in approach reconcilable?
- Do you have efficient channels of communication? A common working language? Or if not, will you be able to get support for communication?
- Do you have similar legal requirements (health & safety, necessary qualifications, alcohol & drugs policies, etc.)?

Of course no two organisations are completely the same and share all the above elements. It is important to **be flexible**, but also to be conscious of how you will deal with the differences. The more similar your organisations are, the easier the co-operation, but perhaps there is less to be learnt from each other.



## BUILDING A GOOD PARTNERSHIP - WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

After choosing the partner organisation, the most important task begins: building a good partnership. This is not necessarily very difficult, but it needs some time and effort and will be crucial for the success of your project.

It is essential to create a partnership where everybody involved feels they can **trust each other, learn from each other, work together and exchange ideas freely**. A healthy partnership is a partnership in which all those involved grow, learn from and appreciate this co-operation. It does not prevent you from having discussions, disagreements and misunderstandings, but it creates a space in which they can take place in a safe and empowering environment. As is the case with any healthy relationship, the issue is not about avoiding disagreement, but rather about being able to overcome it together.

The key to a successful partnership lies in one essential aspect: **personal relationships**. It is important that the initiators of the partnership (*e.g. a group of volunteers, board members, youth workers that met on a training course*) like each other and get along. This is a solid base for a partnership to continue to build on. However, if a partnership is solely based on personal relationships, it will only take a small disagreement or career change to completely ruin the cooperation. It involves more than just finding a partner organisation and getting along with a youth worker abroad: the main issue is how to **retain** and **cooperate** with this partner.

In order to set up a solid partnership you can start with a **feasibility visit** in the frame of the Youth in Action Programme (Action 4.3.). This is a first cooperation meeting between all organisations involved in a partnership. During this meeting, you should take some time to discuss your reasons for wanting the partnership, the expected benefits as well as the concrete needs and resources of each organisation.

- 👉 Find a list of elements that you may have to reflect on in your partnership in: Over the rainbow [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/OverTheRainbow/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/OverTheRainbow/)

If you already know your partner quite well and you want to start directly with the implementation of a youth project, you can apply for an **international preparation meeting**, which allows you to prepare your project jointly. Either way, it is highly recommended that you meet your partner before you start your first youth project together.

A feasibility visit or preparation meeting allows you to **get to know** the partners personally and to get to know their organisations, the target groups as well as the social, cultural and political context of the different organisations and their (sub)urban regions. A preparation meeting also offers the opportunity to develop a **common vision** and to agree on all important aspects of the project management with your partners, including:

- aims and objectives of your project
- methodology
- rules concerning the work with the young people
- evaluation criteria and monitoring
- timetable for partnerwork and activities
- budget and resources
- distribution of tasks
- communication and coordination

It is especially important to talk about the **young people** you are working with: do they face specific obstacles? What is the urban situation they come from? (see the Identikit chapter page 10). Do they have special needs? What are their interests and expectations? To what extent should they participate in the implementation of the project?

- 👉 Find a method of working on different concepts and practices of **motivation and participation** on page 46.

If you want to **involve your young people directly from the beginning**, you can carry out the preparation meeting with one youth leader and one young person from each country. This would give the young people the chance to participate actively in all steps of the project's development.

Once you return home from your international meeting, don't forget to stay in **contact** with the other partner organisations and **keep everybody informed** about the progress of the project.

- 👉 **Communication is the basis for any partnership.**

### What did you think of the composition of the international youth leaders' team?

When you are developing your project, you might need to consider the following aspects concerning the team members responsible for the participants:

- Young people – youth worker ratio. Adapt the number of team members to the type of group and their needs.
- Get experience on board. Include youth workers with experience in international youth work, in working with specific groups and with the topic of the activity.
- Gender balance. Make sure to have two genders in the leaders' team in case gender specific issues pop up.
- Mirror the group. Include youth workers or trainers with the same background as your target group (e.g. ethnic background, living in the same neighbourhood, with a similar social background,...).
- Working language. Does everybody in the team speak the common working language? Take measures to ensure that all team members can follow and understand (e.g. visual aids, ask questions, translation).
- Do you need translators for your international youth project? It can be important not to leave space for misunderstandings, especially at the beginning of an international project and also during the free time. Translating is a demanding job, and it is impossible for a participant or team member to be translator at the same time. Don't mix roles.

 More about “Overcoming foreign language barriers” on page 55.

## MONEY FOR (INTERNATIONAL) URBAN YOUTH PROJECTS

International (and other) projects do cost money. The good news is that there are many foundations or institutions which fund projects. The bad news is that you have to apply for funding to get the money – and this will take some of your time.

We would like to highlight the **Youth in Action programme** as a funding scheme specifically for international youth projects, because one of its priorities is Inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities – such as youth projects in disadvantaged urban contexts.

☞ More about the Youth in Action programme in the next chapter on page 41.

Besides this user-friendly Youth in Action programme, **other funding opportunities** for youth and urban projects exist. However, a funder never funds a project 100%, so you will always need to rely on more than once source of funding. Or you could organise your own creative fund-raising activities.

☞ More about **fund-raising ideas and activities** at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/find-a-tool/346.html](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/find-a-tool/346.html) or [www.fund-raising.com](http://www.fund-raising.com)

The **European Union** has some other funding programmes that fund urban projects – not specifically youth projects (but mostly these are bigger scale projects involving more partners and money).

- **URBAN:** projects in partnerships between **cities** with high unemployment, delinquency, poverty,... [www.urbact.eu](http://www.urbact.eu)
  - **Culture:** for **cultural projects** and cooperation (*e.g. about urban culture*) <http://ec.europa.eu/culture/>
  - Daphne: for **prevention of crime and violence** [http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/daphnetoolkit](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/daphnetoolkit)
  - **Anna Lindh** Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for **Dialogue between Cultures** [www.euromedalex.org](http://www.euromedalex.org)
  - **Lifelong Learning programme** - If you are working with **schools and 'formal' education** (as opposed to non-formal education, as done in youth work) <http://ec.europa.eu/education/>
  - ...
- If you are looking for **more information about European funding**, you can contact the Eurodesk agency in your country [www.eurodesk.org](http://www.eurodesk.org)



SALTO Urban Youth Seminar

Besides the European Union, there are also other players around that give money for different types of projects. It is important to read their guidelines and adapt your project application to their approach.

- **European Youth Foundation** (Council of Europe): [www.coe.int/youth/](http://www.coe.int/youth/). The EYF funds international youth projects (minimum 4 European partner countries).
- **Solidarity Fund for Youth Mobility** (Council of Europe): [www.coe.int/youth/](http://www.coe.int/youth/). The Mobility Fund pays rail travel for disadvantaged groups participating in international youth projects.
- **World Bank Social Development Civil Society Fund**: [www.worldbank.org/smallgrants](http://www.worldbank.org/smallgrants). This Fund aims to reduce poverty and inequity for people in low and middle income countries.
- The **Soros Foundation** is particularly active in Eastern and Central Europe and has specific grants for children & youth: [www.soros.org](http://www.soros.org)
- There are funds for **bilateral or multilateral youth projects** between specific countries: French-German [www.ofaj.org](http://www.ofaj.org), Visegrad [www.visegradfund.org](http://www.visegradfund.org), German-Czech [www.tandem-org.de](http://www.tandem-org.de), German-Polish [www.dpjw.org](http://www.dpjw.org), Nordic countries [www.norden.org](http://www.norden.org),...
- Check with **Embassies and Cultural Institutes from other countries**: British Council, Alliance Francaise, Goethe Institut,...



There is also private money available from foundations and companies. You can contact them for grants or to sponsor your project, if it fits their criteria.

- ☞ Find an overview of foundations in different European countries at [www.dafne-online.eu](http://www.dafne-online.eu) (Donors and Foundation Networks in Europe) or [www.efc.be](http://www.efc.be) (European Foundation Centre)
- **Banks** sometimes have foundations that fund projects e.g. la Caixa in Spain, Mott Foundation for Civil Society: [www.mott.org](http://www.mott.org),...
- **Rotary, Kiwanis & Lyons Clubs** [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org), [www.kiwanis.org](http://www.kiwanis.org) & [www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org). These are associations of professionals that sometimes give money to projects that answer the needs that challenge communities around the world.
- **Corporate social responsibility** [www.csreurope.org](http://www.csreurope.org). Companies support social projects or civic society. CSR Europe regroups over 60 multinational corporations.

Or check out local authorities, philanthropists (rich and famous people that give money for good causes), or companies near you.

- ☞ If you are looking for more on getting and managing money for youth projects, have a look at the **T-Kit on Funding & Financial Management** at <http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int> or [www.salto-youth.net/find-a-tool/371.html](http://www.salto-youth.net/find-a-tool/371.html)

## THE YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME & INCLUSION STRATEGY



The Youth in Action programme is the European Commission's **mobility and non-formal education programme** for young people and those working with them, in a leisure-time context (outside school). The YiA programme promotes active European citizenship, youth participation, cultural diversity and the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities.

The Youth in Action programme offers various opportunities for young people to set up projects with an **international dimension**: e.g. group exchanges, voluntary service, democracy projects and group initiatives. It also provides funding for support activities for youth workers to increase the quality of their youth projects.

The Youth in Action Programme is open to young people and youth workers in the so-called '**Programme Countries**'. These are (currently) the EU members, the EFTA countries (Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein) and the pre-accession countries (Turkey & Croatia for the moment, more could join). There are some (limited) opportunities to set up projects with neighbouring partner countries (South-East Europe, Eastern Europe & Caucasus and the EuroMed countries around the Mediterranean Sea) and beyond.

There are **several types of projects** that can receive funding. The funding rules of the Youth in Action programme are largely based on a simple system of flat rates and fixed amounts, depending on the number of participants, the activity, its duration, etc.

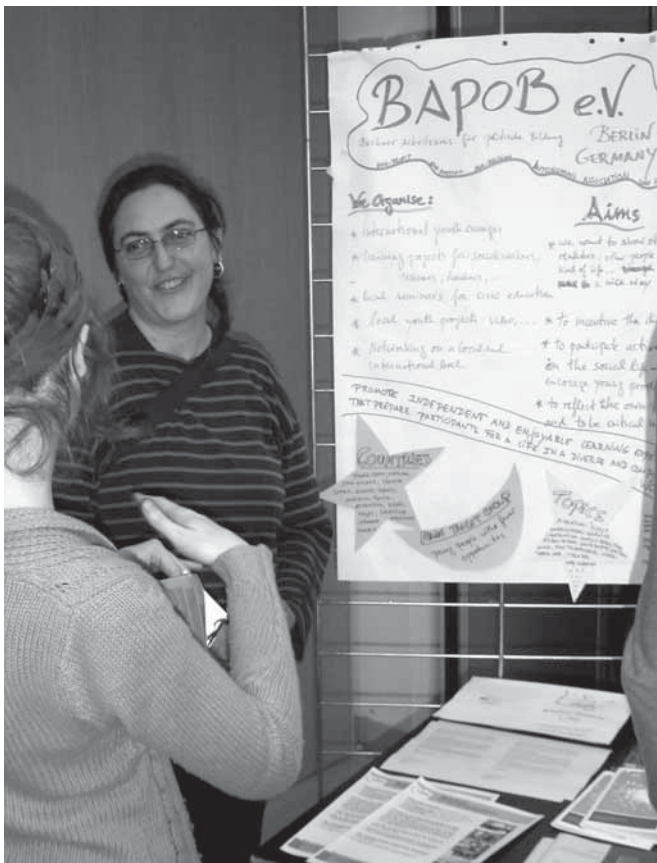
- Youth Exchanges (*where groups of young people come together*)
  - Youth Initiatives (*local projects originating from youth groups*)
  - Democracy Projects (*encouraging young people to take part in the democratic process*)
  - European Voluntary Service (*young people volunteer in another country*)
  - Training & Networking for youth workers (*training, seminars, job-shadowing, feasibility visits, partnership building, evaluation meetings, etc.*)
- ☞ Find out more about the Youth in Action programme in the **Programme Guide**, which you can download from <http://ec.europa.eu/youth/> or contact the YiA National Agency in your country – contacts are online on the same website)l
  - ☞ The European Commission has also posted a YiA promo-film online at Youtube [www.youtube.com/watch?v=VE0mRmTRbfY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VE0mRmTRbfY)

## THE YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME & URBAN YOUTH

The Youth in Action programme should be **open for 'ALL' young people**. And if certain groups of young people with fewer opportunities are not reached, special efforts should be made to create easier access for them to the opportunities offered by Youth in Action.

Young people from **disadvantaged (sub)urban** areas are often at a disadvantage compared to their peers, due to their socio-economic situation, low level of qualifications and high unemployment, limited youth work opportunities and youth information (as described in the Identikit chapter on page 8). In many European countries, the Youth in Action programme is not used by young people and youth groups from disadvantaged urban areas. In this sense, 'urban' youth from these city areas is one of the **'inclusion groups'**.

👉 Find some Youth in Action project examples for inspiration on page 18



**Inclusion** of 'young people with fewer opportunities' is one of the **priorities** of the Youth in Action programme. This means in practice that between two equally good projects, the selection committee would give priority to the project that includes 'disadvantaged' youth (provided that you explain well why your participants are at a disadvantage). Besides this 'extra focus', there are also a number of **extra measures** that make it easier for 'inclusion groups' to carry out a Youth in Action project.

Of course the **same general rules** apply for you as for any Youth in Action project, but you can get some **extra support** for an Inclusion project, if justified.

- **Exceptional costs:** if you have extra costs because you are working with disadvantaged urban groups, you can claim these expenses in your application e.g. extra costs for security (in unsafe areas), for renting equipment that wouldn't otherwise be available, for specialised youth workers or translators... It's up to you to ask – within reason.
  - In **Youth Exchanges**, bilateral exchanges (between only 2 countries) are mainly reserved for new organisations or inclusion groups. This allows you to do 'simpler' projects (fewer countries) because you have other complications due to the urban situation you work in.
  - You can apply for an **Advanced Planning Visit** to prepare the inclusion project with your different partner organisations, to organise the exchange in the best possible way, have a look at the infrastructure in the host city and find solutions to potential problems.
  - **Youth initiatives** run by urban young people themselves (projects for them, by them) are allowed to have a youth worker **coaching** them when needed (and extra money for this).
  - The regular duration of a **European Voluntary Service** project is between 2 and 12 months. However, for inclusion projects, this can be for periods of **2 weeks onwards**, up to a maximum of 12 months, if there are valid reasons for it.
  - There is the possibility of making an **Advanced Planning Visit**, together with the urban volunteer, to get acquainted with the EVS hosting organisation and project.
  - If the EVS volunteer needs extra attention, **reinforced mentorship** can be funded, if requested and justified in the application form. Also the volunteer can be younger than 18 (16 or 17) if there are reasons for it.
- 👉 Every country in Europe is different. Therefore your Youth in Action National Agency will have to judge if your **requests are reasonable**, considering your 'urban disadvantage' in your context. It's up to you to explain why.
- 👉 More about specific measures for inclusion in the European Commission's '**Inclusion Strategy for the Youth in Action programme**' at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionStrategy/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionStrategy/)

# CHALLENGES IN URBAN



# YOUTH PROJECTS & SOLUTIONS

International youth projects are quite challenging, especially when you want to gain the **maximum benefit** for your young people on a long-term basis. In this chapter, you will find a selection of **recommendations** concerning some of the main topics of the project's development from the planning phase up to the outcome of your project.

The first and very basic recommendation is to **embed the international project** (youth exchange, Voluntary Service or other) in a **long-term process** with the young people you are working with. This process starts with motivating the youngsters, continues with involving them in the planning and implementation of the project, the carrying out of educational, social or cultural activities and ends with the follow-up and the dissemination of the project results.

☞ See the chapter about 'After the project – It isn't finished!' on page 72.

Projects with young people in disadvantaged situations should adhere to the **principles of inclusive youth work**:

- Voluntary participation of the young people
- Respect for confidentiality and anonymity
- Critical partiality (challenge the young people, but stay on their side)
- Accepting attitude (understand your own values and value other people's values)
- Low threshold activity (allow step-by-step involvement)
- Transparency in what you do and why you do it
- Focus on the young people's contexts (understand their realities)
- Mouthpiece role (explain and defend young people's case towards others)
- Focus on resources, not on limitations
- Flexibility and mobility (embrace the unforeseen)
- Accessibility (be available, open for contact)
- Continuity of interventions (don't let people fall into black holes)
- Mixed where possible, gender-specific where need be

The whole process should be **well-planned, assessed and coherent** so that everyone can participate equally, reflecting the diverse needs, linked to the interests and real world of young people.

### **What are the specificities of youth in disadvantaged (sub)urban areas in this process?**

This depends a lot on your specific target group.

- Maybe you will need a lot of time and energy for the preparation, to motivate the young people and to encourage their active participation (see page 46).
- If you will be dealing with poorly educated young people, you could give potential foreign language barriers some extra attention (see page 55).
- An especially important task for you as a youth worker could be to establish good relations between the young people involved, the local community, the families and the local authorities (page 61).
- As a project coordinator, you should also be prepared for things that might go wrong. You should have a basic understanding of risk assessment and conflict transformation (see p 64).

The bottom line is to be ready for an adventure that could bring you, your group and your local community a lot of benefits (see page 12).

## **STIMULATING YOUNG PEOPLE'S MOTIVATION & PARTICIPATION**

Do the motivation levels of your youngsters fluctuate? One day they are very interested, the next day not anymore – according to their day-to-day priorities? Or is it difficult to motivate them to do any activity that needs some commitment or perseverance?

Many disadvantaged young people have more difficulties projecting themselves into the future: they often don't have a clue what their life will look like in a year's time, or even next week. This makes it difficult to organise a long-term project with them, to motivate and actively involve them for a longer period of time.

However, this chapter gives you some advice on how to get urban young people on board (see below) and also how to keep them committed (see page 49) to your project. We have discovered that the best way to motivate them is to give them ownership over the project – to make it a real participation project (see page 50).

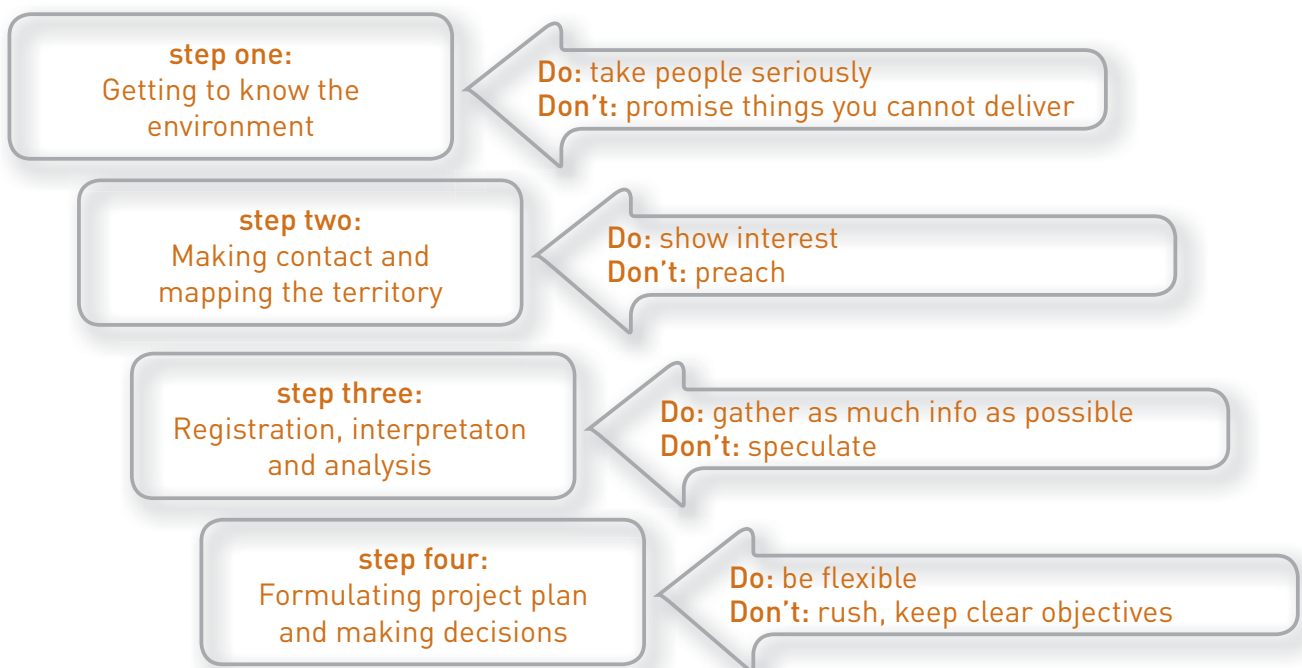
### **1. OUTREACH – GETTING URBAN YOUNG PEOPLE ON BOARD**

If you already have a group of urban young people who are interested in an international project, you are lucky and you can skip to the next section. However, maybe you want to **get some** (more) **young, urban people on board** (those that could use it most?) and offer them the opportunity to go abroad and gain all the eye-opening benefits listed on page 12.

In that case, one of the first challenges in your urban youth project might be to **reach out** to the young people with fewer opportunities and interest them in your activities.

The scheme below shows how you can systematically reach out to young people in their environment.

#### A systematic approach to reach out to the young people



(from the T-Kit on Social Inclusion)

- 1. Step one: Immersion.** If the young people are not already coming to your organisation (or project), go out to meet them at wherever they spend their time. Get to know their environment and life situation. Spend time with them. See who they hang out with and what they do.
- 2. Step two: Relation.** Build trust and create links between the young people and yourself. Show interest in what they are doing, have done and plan to do. Ask open questions. Find out what they want to achieve in their lives. Who are their role models?
- 3. Step three: Get the Picture.** Analyse the information you gather from your contacts with the target group. Check what challenges they face in daily life, what obstacles they are facing which keep them from taking part in youth activities, what they like and dislike, what they are looking for in life. What (and who) are their driving forces?



4. **Step four: Adaptation.** Once you know what your target group's aspirations in life are, you can then adapt your project (as far as possible) to their tastes and present your project in a way that looks appealing to the young people. Develop a plan of what you can do to motivate the young people to actively take part in your project.

*“The real challenge lies not in getting the people to fit the method, but in getting the methods to fit the people” (Feuerstein)*

#### Create curiosity, spark interest

The bottom line is to find out what the young people are **interested** in and then to offer them something that sounds **appealing** to them. This could help your young people to overcome the fear of new environments and meeting different people.

Below are some ideas from the urban youth seminar on **creating curiosity** and **sparking interest in international activities**:

- Show the young people **examples of successful previous projects** (e.g. pictures, videos, testimonies). Focus on the parts of the project that will be of interest to them. At the same time, you can also show them how they can benefit from those youth projects. Having other young people talking about their experiences sounds more convincing than a youth worker....
- **Build up step by step.** Maybe a young person is not so hot on going abroad and leaving friends and family behind. You can whet their appetite step by step. Go to another nearby city first and do an exchange with like-minded youths (in their own language) before taking the international plunge.
- Put the youngsters in contact with **young people, activities or products from the other countries** to arouse some interest. Show the nice side of the partner country you had in mind for your project. Invite them to an intercultural evening and involve them in the preparation as far as possible.
- Use **role-models** and involve people they respect or look up to e.g. a project with a popular hip hop choreographer, rap-singer, religious person, football player etc. If there are people that might have a negative influence on their possible participation (e.g. parents, peers,...) also try to counter this influence.
- **Adapt your language** to the target group. High flying educational aims might not be interesting, but ‘hanging out’ or ‘jamming’ with other ‘mates’ sounds more appealing. If words don’t get the message across, maybe images or movies do.

- **Personal contact** works best to convince or involve young people. Posters or leaflets alone won't do it. Have regular chats with the young people in question and warm them up to the idea gradually. Be available for questions. Avoid anything that resembles pressure or pushiness. This only has the opposite effect.

Once you have your group together, you actually need to start working with them and also **make them into a group** that works together on a common project. When you build the group it is very important to create a safe space, where everybody feels respected and free to express themselves. Spend time on this phase, because a good group atmosphere is the best basis for a participative common project .

- ☞ There are many **team building activities and exercises** to develop trust and respect in a group – many are listed in the SALTO Toolbox for Training & Youth Work  
[www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/)

Did you think of gender issues?

- Does your project address the interests of both young men and women? (unless you specifically work with one gender only, of course)
- What measures do you have in place to prevent sexual harassment? *E.g. a male and female 'trust person', single gender rooms,...*
- Do you actively challenge stereotypes? *E.g. use non-stereotypical examples, make sure sessions concerning teenage pregnancy or woodwork are promoted both to the boys and girls*
- How do you ensure the balanced involvement of male and female participants?
- ...

- ☞ More about gender related work in the SALTO EMpower booklet – about empowering Ethnic Minority young women [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/EMpowerBooklet/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/EMpowerBooklet/)

## 2 RETAINMENT - KEEPING THE YOUNG PEOPLE ON BOARD

So you have a group of young people who are initially interested in your international project. The next question is how to keep them on board. In order to **motivate the young people** to actively participate in your urban project, you need to make sure the project really **addresses their needs**.

Nothing comes for free. Young people also want to know what is in the project for them. What are the **benefits** they can gain? Think about the following benefits young people are looking for:

- **Social benefits:** young people are looking for fun, social status, recognition, sense of belonging to a group.
- **Pragmatic benefits:** young people want to see what the point is in the things they are doing, whether this is access to a sports hall during the project, new skills to put on their CV or going abroad as part of the project.
- **Psychological benefits:** young people are constantly looking for themselves and need to find their own way in life. Wanting to distinguish themselves, they need self-esteem.
- **Material benefits:** young people are sometimes very interested in small material benefits, like a T-shirt, a free drink or a small present. This should not be seen as a bribe, but it could be a way to get them on board initially and, once actively participating in the project, they will hopefully see other benefits.

Of course the project should also be **attractive** and meet the interests of the young people. Would your target group be more attracted by musical activities, sports or outdoor education, theatre, street art or multimedia?

There are the so-called **three Cs for successful participation**: Challenge, Capacity and Connection (Jans & Debacker). This means that the ideal activity to keep young people on board, should be Challenging for them, something that gives them a feeling of achievement, a feeling of “yes, we did it!”. At the same time, the activity should not be too easy (no challenge) or too difficult (discouraging). Therefore the activity should correspond to their Capacities – they need to be able to do it. Last but not least, activities need to be Connected and relevant to the young people’s real life in order to keep them interested.

👉 Based on the T-Kit on Social Inclusion - available from <http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int> and [WWW.SALTO-YOUTH.NET/TkitInclusion/](http://WWW.SALTO-YOUTH.NET/TkitInclusion/)

### 3 MOTIVATION THROUGH PARTICIPATION – ACTIVELY INVOLVE THE YOUNG PEOPLE

An important element to motivate young people is to offer them a real opportunity to **participate**, to give them a sense of **ownership**. The more the young people are involved, the more they feel that it is their project, the more motivated they will be.

The “**ladder of youth participation**” from Roger Hart (1992) can help you and your young people to analyse the level of participation of your youth projects. What level of participation seems to be useful and possible with a certain group in a specific situation?

The bottom three rungs describe youth involvement that is not true participation, whereas the top five rungs describe true participation.

### Hart's ladder of participation

#### 8 *Young Person Led, Shared Decisions With Adults*

Young people initiate projects and decision-making is shared between young people and adults.

These projects empower young people while at the same time enable them to access and learn from the life experience and expertise of adults.

#### 7 *Young Person Led And Directed*

This step is when young people initiate and direct a project. Adult role is motivator/mentor.

#### 6 *Adult Led, Decisions Are Shared With Young People*

Adults initiate projects but the decision-making is shared with young people.

#### 5 *Consulted And Informed*

Young people are consulted on adult initiated projects. The young people are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by adults.

#### 4 *Assigned But Informed*

Young people are given a specific role and informed about how and why they are being involved.

#### 3 *Tokenism*

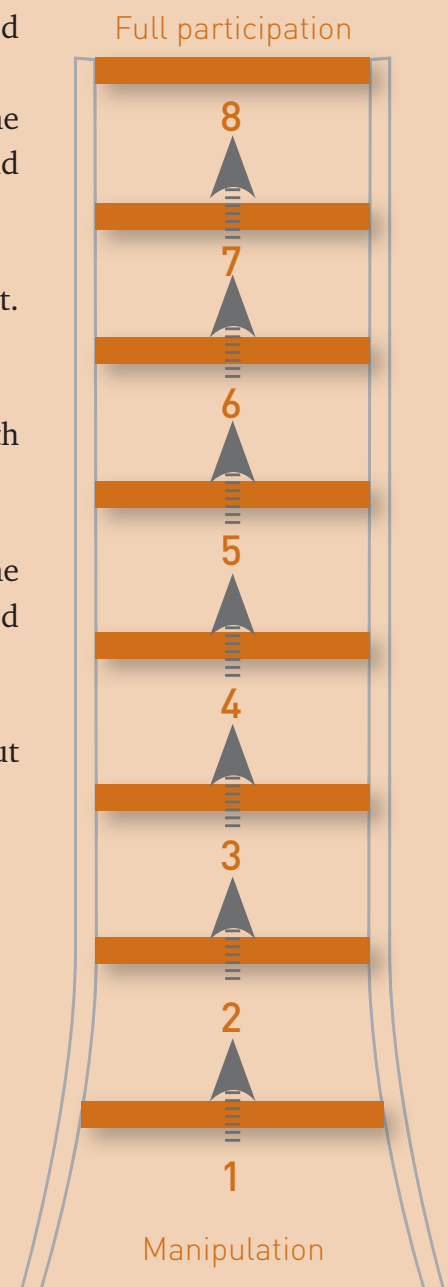
Young people appear to be given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.

#### 2 *Decoration*

Young people are used to strengthen a cause, although adults do not pretend that the cause is young person led.

#### 1 *Manipulation*

Adults use young people to strengthen a cause and pretend that the cause is young person led.



### Exercise

The Ladder of Participation is a good way of getting the young people to focus on their role in the project. To find out how important they think participation is, young people are given two different colours of “sticky dots”.

- Red: What they think their current level of participation in the project is
- Green: Where they would like their level of participation to be in the future

Ask the young people to discuss their thoughts with other members of their group then stick their dots onto the ladder in the appropriate places. It is good to return to this exercise throughout the project, as this will enable you to identify how inclusive the group feels that the process has been.

### Variation

You can also use this exercise to discuss concepts of participation with the other youth workers in your (international) project team.

### How can you increase the participation of your young people?

During the urban youth seminar, youth workers were discussing how to **increase the participation** of their young people in (international) urban youth projects. Here are the results:

- Often young people don't feel motivated because they think they can't change anything. Give them the **feeling that they can change something**. If they come up with suggestions, implement them. Give them responsibility.

#### ☀ Example: New Graffiti Age

The young people in Torino and Collegno didn't like their suburb. It was a “place without identity”. The youth worker and some of the young people were thinking about how they could take possession of the place, how they could make it theirs, to make it part of their identity. They were looking for something that was typical for them and chose Hip Hop and breakdancing as a common element. Together with two youngsters, the youth workers went to the town hall to ask for some space for graffiti art and were successful. Thus, the idea for an international project based around Hip Hop was born.

They found a good international partner, painted the walls together, wrote rap songs in different languages, recorded them and had a final show in the centre of Torino.

- Make young people active in changing things. If they can't project themselves into long term projects, use stages to break big projects up so they have a sense of achievement. Make **small steps over a long period of time**.
- **Competition** is also a factor in motivating people, bringing instant reward, e.g. to be the best, to show off, to achieve visibility. You can use prizes and you can transform a competition into something more, e.g. if you put the competition under a topic like "resistance" and everybody contributes a piece, like in a puzzle. Make something common.
- **Give them a carrot, a trigger:** a concert at the end of their project, an event, a TV programme or an article in a newspaper. But be careful: different groups are motivated by different things. Some young people just want to have an opportunity to do their own thing, others want to be famous together, others want to change their life situation (e.g. to get out of the ghetto with the help of Hip Hop Art). It is important to be clear about their reasons and the real possibility of reaching their goals.
- Don't let the final product become too important. When you look at the **product - process balance**, don't forget that the process is fundamental, as it concerns the educational objectives of an international youth project.
- **Insert the project into a bigger framework**, e.g. integrate it into town activities and public communications and cooperate with other youth organisations, schools etc. (see chapter on Involvement of local community, page 61)
- **Be honest and careful with promises:** NO blackmailing, NO pushing, NO meeting just to keep up appearances. Give the young people real power to decide = sincerity, authentic participation. Be honest and open about constraints, risks and possibilities, explain to them clearly, e.g. tell them about the possibility that the project will not be approved, involve them in the alternative.
- Work with the young people to identify common needs and interests and develop common objectives and activities. **Find a common view and a space in the project for everybody**, e.g. some do the rapping, others do the mixing...
- **Give everybody responsibilities** for the organisational part. Give them responsibilities e.g. in the preparation, the buying of the material or games, organising the welcome evening and painting big welcome posters.
- **Explain to them the aims of the YiA programme** (if you want to be supported by them) and make them understand why the European Union might give money. Show that it needs to fit within a framework and that you need to keep to that framework – otherwise there is no funding and no activity. Link objectives of the Youth in Action programme to what the young people want to do and make the link between the money you can get and what their ideas will cost.

- Inform participants of process details of your international project and **let them really be part of the process**. They can make suggestions. Listen to them and do what they suggest, if possible.
- Give youngsters **autonomy** and increase their **self-responsibility**. Make them confident.
- Last but not least, you need to live by some **basic participatory values** yourself. Don't patronise the young people and be aware of the power you have as a youth worker. Try to "give away your own power" as far as possible!

👉 More about working in a participative way with groups in the **SALTO Coaching Guide**  
[www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/CoachingGuide/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/CoachingGuide/)

**Peer education** is a very good way of reaching young people with fewer opportunities. Young people are more likely to accept information from other young people than from adults. In addition, it is very instructive for the peer educators themselves to pass on their experiences and knowledge to others.

More about using **peer education** or peer training:

- 👉 **PiPo - PEERing in PEERing out**: Peer education approach in cultural diversity projects (SALTO Cultural Diversity) [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/PublicationsCulturalDiversity/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/PublicationsCulturalDiversity/)
- 👉 **Telling it like it is**: An introduction to peer education (Article 12, Scotland)  
[www.salto-youth.net/find-a-tool/269.html](http://www.salto-youth.net/find-a-tool/269.html)



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## OVERCOMING FOREIGN LANGUAGE BARRIERS

Cities can be a melting pot of many different cultures and languages. However, this does not mean that all people are fluent or comfortable **speaking foreign languages**, for example English (the working language of most international youth activities). Depending of the level of qualification and the quality of the school, urban youngsters might not have a great proficiency in foreign languages.

- ☞ So what can you do as a youth worker to overcome their fear of, or unease about, speaking foreign languages?

One way would be to **avoid the foreign language altogether**. You can organise an exchange with countries where they speak the same language e.g. Spain & Latin America, Flanders & Holland, etc. Another option would be to find partner organisations in a country where the language is similar e.g. Czech & Slovak, Danish & Norwegian, etc. If you have the ‘bad luck’ to have a mother tongue that is very different and which isn’t spoken anywhere else, then this solution doesn’t work (e.g. Hungarian).



If the group of young people that you are working with is from an immigrant background, and they still speak their **parents’ language**, there could be another solution to the communication problem with groups abroad: You could do a project with project partners who also speak the same ‘immigrant’ language.

- ☞ However, you should ask yourself whether the **‘intercultural exchange’** will be as intense and fruitful if emigrants of the same country meet. Precisely for this reason, some funders might prefer not to fund your project.



## CREATING THE CONFIDENCE TO SPEAK

Often many basic words in the foreign language are known (something must have stayed in people's heads from the classes in school). What people lack is the **courage to speak**. Therefore, it is important to create an atmosphere where people feel secure enough to speak.

- Set a good example and don't worry if you **make mistakes yourself**. This way, you set the tone and people feel more comfortable about not speaking the language perfectly either. Tell participants that language is only a tool and that it doesn't have to be perfect. Try and **prevent people laughing at others** because of language mistakes. Be patient with people who need more time to find their words.
  - Work a lot in **smaller groups**. It is easier to dare to make mistakes in front of a few people than in a big group. The more people get to know each other (use lots of group dynamic exercises), the more they will try to communicate with each other.
  - Give the young people some **(backup) tools** that they can use during the international project: a little dictionary with basic words and phrases. You could even develop this together with the young people (asking them what expressions they would be likely to need). Or you can (continue to) build this dictionary during the exchange.
  - Have a **back-up system** if someone really doesn't feel comfortable speaking the foreign language e.g. team up a participant with good language skills and one with poorer language skills, so that one can help the other and translate if needed. But remember that a participant cannot be a 'full' participant and interpreter at the same time.
  - Plan some time or activities during the exchange when they can **'take time off'** from having to speak and think in a foreign language. This can be some exercises or discussions in national groups (in their native language), or activities where no language is needed (mime, sport, music,...).
  - Have **regular evaluation meetings** with your participants to see how it is going, and keep an eye out for potential communication difficulties.
- 👉 Some National Agencies organise **courses** that focus on the confidence to speak English (e.g. French-speaking Belgian NA and French NA). More info in the European Training Calendar [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Training/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Training/)

## BRUSHING UP ON THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Maybe your aim is precisely to get your young people more interested in **learning and speaking a foreign language**. Start from what they know already.

- You can offer participants a **language course** prior to their participation in an international youth event. However, do not to scare people away by proposing tough language courses and focusing too much on their language skills. Start with refreshing what they know already (often more than they think).
  - Organise activities where the young people are confronted with or **use the foreign language**: listen to music from that country, start writing letters to your partner groups, get a youth magazine from that country and see what you can understand...
  - If you know a native speaker (au-pair, EVS, exchange student) in the community, you can organise an **informal talk** for your youth group once a week at the local café; this way they can try out the language before they actually go on the exchange.
  - You can also learn English (or other languages) on the **internet** – there are many interactive courses, forums, simple chats, etc. around. Or you can **practise it online** (chats, emails, forums).
- ☞ International activities can really **motivate** people to start learning a foreign language; you can help your young people to find language courses or conversation classes after your activity.



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## COMMUNICATION GOES BOTH WAYS

- Start off with an exchange where there are **no native-speakers**, so that all young people are on the same level – everybody is speaking a foreign language.
- Groups in an international project who are lucky enough that the working language is their mother tongue, should also make an effort. Often they have difficulties communicating as well, because they speak the language too fast or they use too much dialect or use words which are too difficult. You should make the native speakers aware that they should also **make an effort to adapt their language** so that the non-native speakers can understand.

## LINGUISTIC ANIMATION

It is very important to **stimulate direct communication** between the young people from different countries during your project. There are many games and exercises which aim to reduce language barriers, and encourage an interest in other languages and cultures amongst participants. On top of that, people can learn some basic expressions in the different languages.

### Language animation: Hello, how are you?

#### Aim

The main aim is to give an impression of the diversity of languages represented in the group and to overcome language barriers. You can use the game also as an icebreaker and it helps to foster integration within the group.

#### Description of the activity

The group is sitting in a circle. First of all, the young people need to learn the following words in one of the mother-tongues of the participants:

Hello, how are you?

- Good
- So so
- Bad

Then the facilitator, who is standing in the middle of the circle, addresses one person and asks him/her: ‘Hello! How are you?’. When he/she answers “good”, everyone changes places; when he/she answers “so so” nothing happens and when he/she answers “bad” both neighbours change places.

The facilitator tries to jump into a seat, when people are changing places and the one who stays in the middle (still the facilitator or another person) goes on with the game.

After a while another language can be introduced and the exercise continues. You can use different languages represented in the group, and also the mother-tongues of participants from migrant backgrounds or with dialects. This shows the diversity within the group and makes it possible for the participants to bring in some special aspect of his/her daily life.

Make sure that the question and the answers are well understood by ALL participants in all languages. The activity should not take too long, around 20 minutes, but it should also be long enough to use more than one language.

👉 Adapted from: Tandem, German-Polish Youth Office [www.tandem-org.de](http://www.tandem-org.de)

👉 Practical examples of language animation at [www.ofaj.org/paed/langue/aniling.html](http://www.ofaj.org/paed/langue/aniling.html) (unfortunately only in German and French)

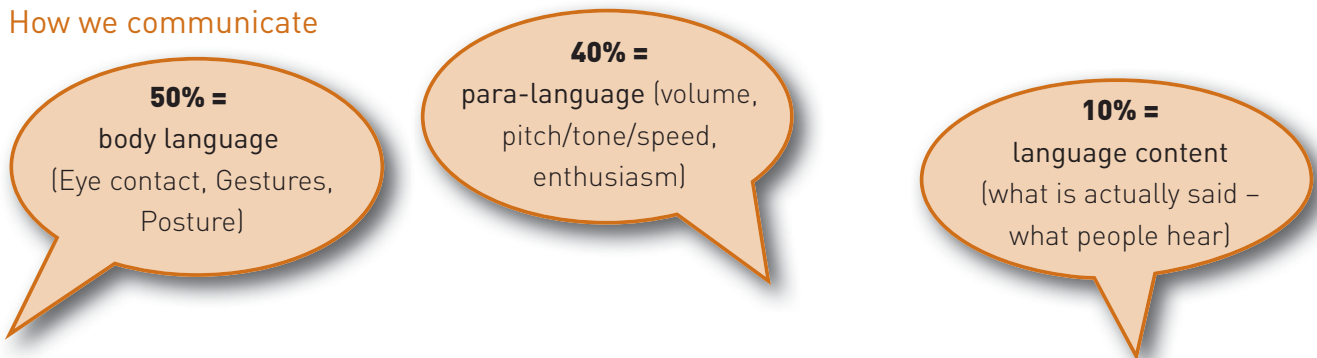
👉 Exercises on “**Simple ideas to overcome language barriers**”, Mark Taylor, available at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/)

## THE POWER OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Don't underestimate the power of **non-verbal communication**. You don't always have to 'talk': you can also use pictures, music, sport, drawing,... Theatre, outdoor experiential education or video workshops can be very useful in stimulating communication in an international group.

- In your international project you can choose methods which involve all senses (smelling, touching, listening, seeing) and not only talking.
- Give priority to interactive and creative methods e.g. collage, mime, games, music,...
- You can, for example, do a workshop on body language and encourage participants to use non-verbal communication.
- Non-verbal communication takes more time, so allow for this during your programme.

### How we communicate



So we should manage to communicate after all – also without proficiency in a foreign language - what do you think?

## WORKING WITH INTERPRETERS

When working through a foreign language, or non-verbal communication is an impossible option, even after all the language preparation, then you can also work with **interpreters**. Be realistic and consider the young people with the least linguistic abilities, because you want to give everybody an equal chance to participate.

When you are working with interpreters, it is important to choose those who speak the **language of the young people** and who **involve themselves** in the group. An interpreter is more than a language machine, it is a person who helps the participants to understand each other and the participants need to feel confidence in and respect for the interpreters.

- ☞ If you are interested in communication on international projects, have a look at ‘Going International – Opportunities for ALL’ (pages 44-47) [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/GoingInternational/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/GoingInternational/)
- ☞ Also have a look at the **T-Kit on Methodology in Language Learning** at <http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int> or [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/find-a-tool/67.html](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/find-a-tool/67.html)

### INVOLVING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The young people you are working with are not “living on an island”. It is very important to **connect your project** to different actors in their (sub)urban community, to involve the families, the schools or centres for vocational training, other youth organisations, local authorities etc. in order to achieve maximum impact on a local level and to increase the chances of positive change in the lives of the young people.

#### HOW CAN YOU ACHIEVE MAXIMUM INVOLVEMENT FROM YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

##### Proximity

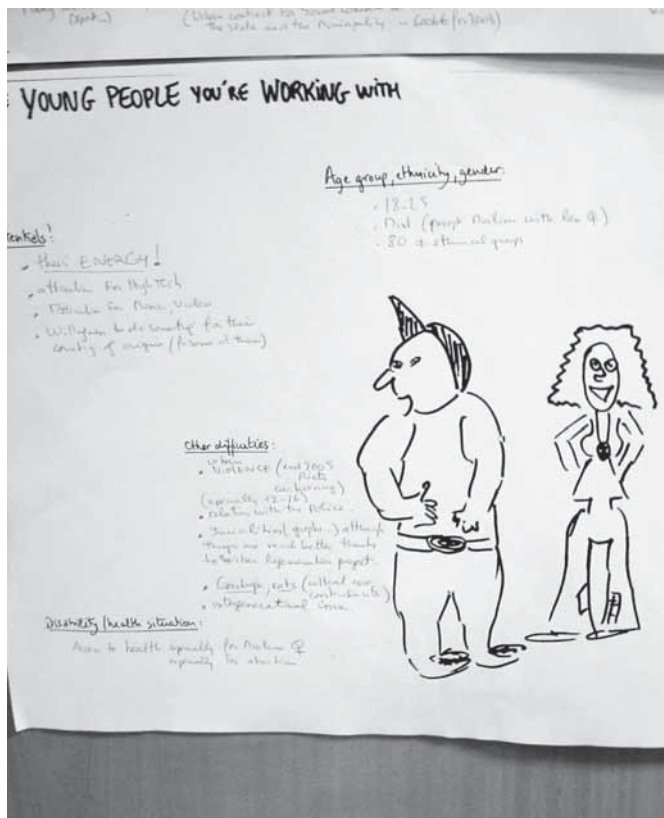
It is easier to be close to the people, and therefore to better **interact**, if your office and activities are situated in the local neighbourhood. A high proportion of your time should be spent with the local community, explaining to them the objectives of the project, the actors involved, each other’s roles, the impact on the area and the benefits they can expect to gain. This means, for instance, having a coffee at the local bar, going into the public park, sitting on a bench in the street... just wherever the people are, and take some time to listen to them before making any proposals.

##### Building trust

It is often felt that the community hardly trusts ‘outsiders’ from their area. Therefore, if you’re working in a place where you don’t live, instead of trying to impose your way of working and acting, it is essential to get closer to the inhabitants. Once some **exchange and communication** has started, interest should be gradually aroused and then trust will be gained one step at a time. For you, as a youth worker, it is important to show why you are doing the activities you are doing. Make them aware of how enriching this experience can be for their young people and for the local community. The benefits on page 12 can help you with this.

## Participative processes

So as to gain the trust of the local community, it is important not to impose, but to **build a project together**, based on their needs and interests - to leave the inhabitants, the parents, the opportunity to give their views, to suggest ideas or to interact. As for a Youth Exchange, for instance, the parents should be informed right from the beginning, at the preparation phase, about the programme, the partners... Young people should be involved as much as possible in the decision- making process. It can also be interesting to do something useful for the community which will benefit everyone (e.g. carry out maintenance work at a public park or ...) This way they will come to respect you more and also approve of the work you are doing. You can also try to involve the community in the implementation of the project (e.g. helping out with a fund-raising evening). This way, they can experience at first hand the way you work and the enthusiasm of the young people.



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## Gaining support

So as to get some support from the local community, it is often efficient to target **resource people**, community leaders who are respected and have a say in the neighbourhood. These are not necessarily official community leaders, politicians, but can also be more informal leaders who have a lot of influence on the population and youngsters. Similarly, in the framework of a cultural festival, it is not necessary to publicise or promote it widely, but rather to target key people, and to convince them that the project is aimed at them so that they don't feel rejected and feel, instead, like participating.

### WORKING ON STEREOTYPES AND CHANGING MENTALITIES

If people have stereotyped ideas and prejudices about the partner countries you are working with, you can **bring them into contact** so that they can get to know what the people are really like. This can be via articles, but also at parties, meetings or by hosting a group in people's homes. You also could do this via a 'Living Library' in your community. Invite some international young people or organisations –as books - to an important occasion (festive day/street party) in your (sub)urban area. People can use the 'living books' to talk to them and ask them questions about their lives and about certain topics that they have experience with. The unknown becomes known, and the stereotypes become less stereotypical.

- ☞ More about '**Living Libraries**' in the publication "Don't judge a book by its cover! The Living Library organiser's guide" (2005). This book can be ordered from <http://book.coe.int/>

#### The role of the media

The media are often more likely to promote the project if there is formal political support. On one hand, there is a risk of 'instrumentalisation' of the project and the youngsters that shouldn't be neglected. On the other hand, if the media **promote the project** and increase the positive image of the young people and of the local community, it will also allow greater involvement by the local community.

- ☞ More about improving young people's reputation in the media and society in the Images in Action booklet, available from [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/ImagesInAction/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/ImagesInAction/).

#### Promotion & dissemination of the project outcomes

The media have a role to play in promoting the project and **disseminating the outcomes** widely. Yet during the project, the connection with the local community should be as high as possible so as to have a wider impact on the participants themselves. For instance, during a Youth Exchange, local youth centres or community centres should take part in the exchange through field visits, presentations, workshops, leisure activities etc. And after the project, the outcomes should be disseminated with exhibitions, video screenings ... in different local centres, in the partners' organisation or other public spaces.

- ☞ More about the visibility of your project and the dissemination of your project results on p 71 and in **Making Waves** – a booklet about creating a greater impact with your youth project – [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/MakingWaves/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/MakingWaves/)
- ☞ More about working on stereotypes and prejudice in the All Different, All Equal education pack at [eycb.coe.int/edupack/](http://eycb.coe.int/edupack/) or [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/)



## RISK ASSESSMENT & CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

### RISK ASSESSMENT

In the preparation of your (international) urban youth project, you should think about possible risks connected to the different activities you want to carry out and figure out measures to reduce the risks. This is obvious, when you are planning sporting activities like skiing or climbing, but risk assessment concerns all phases of a project and all types of activities like fundraising events, travelling, accommodation arrangements and all programme and follow-up activities. First, risks should be assessed and then action should be taken to manage them.

### CARRYING OUT A RISK ASSESSMENT

The main steps of a risk assessment are:

1. **Identify the hazards** - All the hazards associated with the activity need to be identified. A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm. This can include the behaviour of individuals.
2. **Identify those at Risk** - That is, those who might be affected by the hazard. This may not only be the people directly involved in the activity.
3. **Estimate the likelihood of harm occurring, the severity and the number of people who might be affected** - Some risks will not be significant because the likelihood of harm is very low, the severity of potential injury is very low, or both.
4. **Decide if the level of risk is acceptable** – classify as high, medium or low, or give a score using the system below.
5. **Put safeguards in place or change the activity** - to reduce risk or remove the hazard



In order to give a risk a score, the following formula might be used:

<b>Risk = Hazard severity x Likelihood of occurrence</b>			
Hazard severity	Rating	Likelihood of occurrence	Rating
Fatality/permanent disability	5	Will invariably happen	5
Major injury/long term absence	4	Highly probable	4
3-day injury/temporary disability	3	Probable	3
First aid injury	2	Possible	2
Minor injury (bruising abrasion)	1	Remote possibility	1

- ☞ The hazard severity column refers to physical injury, but don't forget to consider the risk of emotional or psychological injury also.

The score should tell you whether or not action is required

16-25	Unacceptable Risk - immediate action
10-15	Risk Reduction Required - high priority
6-9	Medium Risk - action required
3-5	Low Priority - further risk reduction
1-2	Low Risk - no further action required

**Control Measures** - Following risk assessment, control measures must be considered to reduce risk. The risk should always be reduced where it is reasonable to do so. Activities should not proceed where the risk is at an unacceptable level.

**Recording** - Regulations in some countries require that the significant findings of risk assessments must be recorded. Even if not required to do so, it is recommended that details of the risk assessments should be recorded for use in reviewing safety, and in case litigation is started against the organisation.

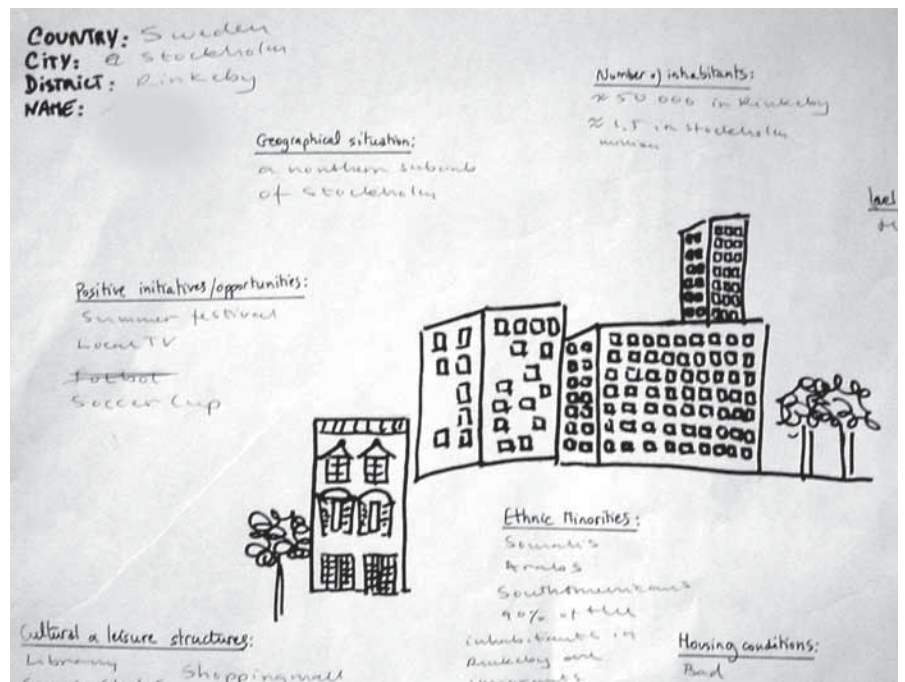
Risk Assessment Form	
Organisation name	
Venture	Overall dates
Activity to be assessed	
Assessor Role/Function Date	
What are the hazards? i.e. the potential to do harm	
To whom?	
What are the risks? i.e. the likelihood of it happening – High, medium or low	
How can they be eliminated, reduced, isolated or controlled?	

- More information on **risk assessment** in the SALTO Project Management handbook at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/find-a-tool/86.html](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/find-a-tool/86.html)

## CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Usually conflicts are seen as something negative to be avoided. Of course it is important to prevent conflicts, but they can also play a **positive role** in the development of social relations, if you are able to manage the conflict in a constructive way. Seen from this perspective, conflicts can be seen as a resource for change and growth.

When you notice open or hidden conflicts in your group, your role as a youth worker is to **facilitate communication** and conflict transformation. It is especially important to pick up on conflicts at an early stage and to open up communication in order to avoid conflict escalation.



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First of all, you should analyse the **level of conflict escalation**. Are the parties involved ready and willing to talk to each other? Or do you need to reduce tension first (separate the disputing parties, have a break, go for a walk...) and talk to the young people individually? If there are only few people involved in the conflict, it is advantageous to have enough youth leaders, so that you can go on with your group activity at the same time.

Some tips on how to **facilitate conflict transformation** between the young people:

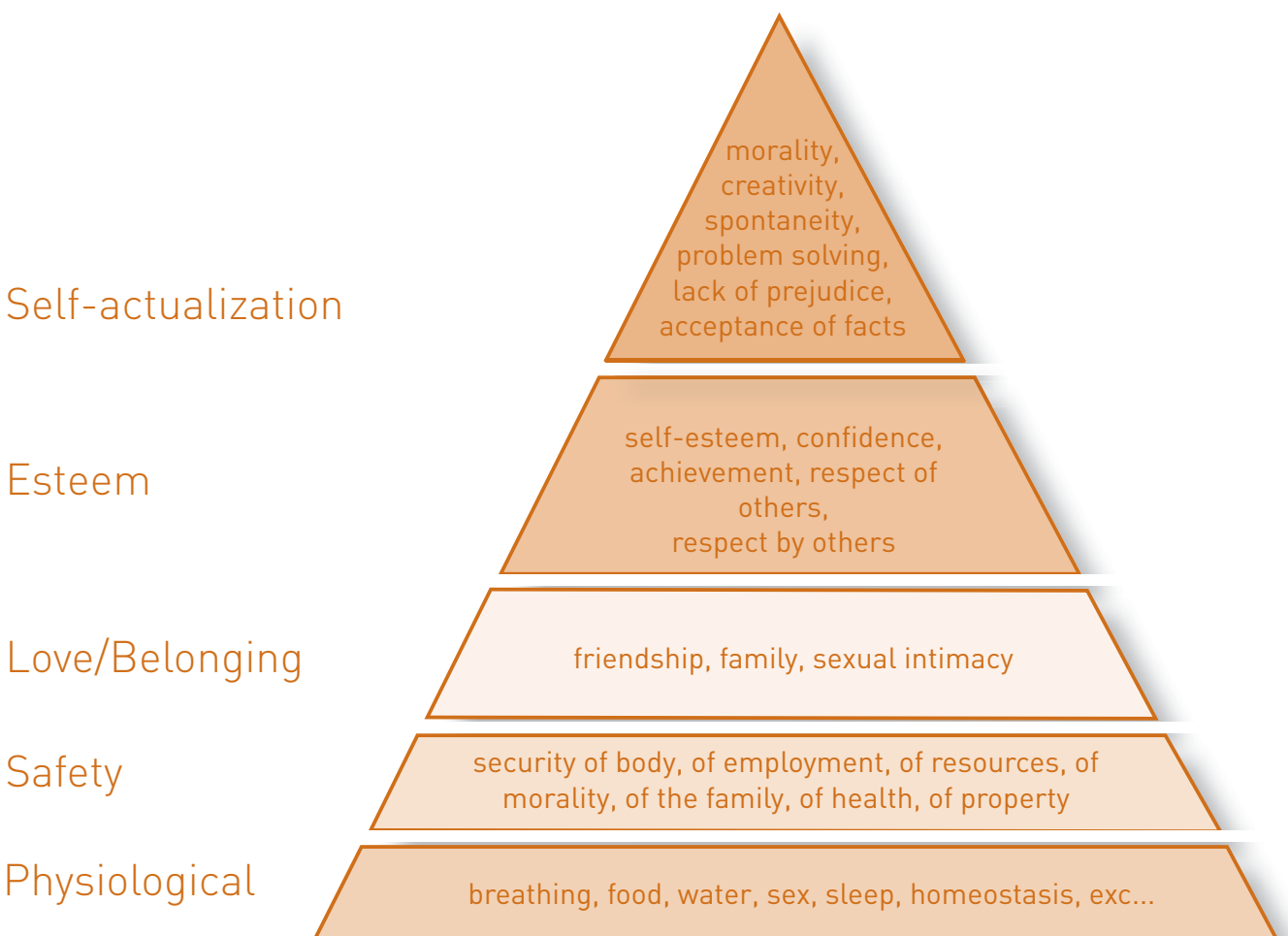
- Listen to the young people and don't take sides.
- Avoid judging.
- Try to understand how the young people feel and think.
- A positive vision of the conflict can help to keep the calm and enhance communication.
- Encourage the young people involved to talk to the other party in the conflict.
- Establish a fearless atmosphere where open communication is possible.
- Establish rules for communication together with the young people.
- Don't immediately start talking about solutions. First, the participants need to clarify the situation and try to understand the other side.
- Help both sides to express themselves.
- Ask the young people whether they have any ideas about how the opposite party might be feeling.
- Help them to explore where the roots of the conflict could be: ask them about their needs, wishes and fears.
- Help the young people to find out if the conflict is based on misunderstandings or different cultural norms, habits or values.
- When the young people understand the situation better and feel that there is a basis of mutual acceptance, they can start looking for creative solutions: encourage both parties to generate possible solutions to the problem, like in a brainstorm.
- Make sure that everybody really understands the different options. Which one can be accepted and offers maximum benefit to both sides?
- When both parties agree on one solution, it can be implemented.
- If tensions or frustrations remain, you should return to previous steps.

👉 From Training Course on the Management of Trans-National Voluntary Projects, 2000,  
<http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int>

## CONFLICT PREVENTION

When you are working with socio-economically disadvantaged young people, you should be aware that their **basic needs** may not always be met in their everyday life. Therefore, it can be of fundamental importance for their involvement in the project to cover these needs, e.g. to have enough food, private space, a safe environment, social recognition etc. If basic needs are not covered, the level of aggression rises and problem solving will be more difficult.

Maslow's **hierarchy of needs** can help us to analyse the needs of the young people we are working with. The pyramid illustrates the five levels of human needs. The most basic needs are physiological and safety, shown at the base of the pyramid. As one moves to higher levels, the needs become more complex.



In an international group activity this means, amongst other things:

Take into consideration different **eating** habits.

- Eating habits vary according to different cultural backgrounds and it is often difficult for the young people to adapt to unfamiliar food. Thus, it is recommended that you adjust the local eating habits a little bit for the young people involved in an international youth activity.
- It is highly recommended that you offer enough food and maybe some snacks between meals.

Try to satisfy basic needs concerning **safety, private space and meeting places**.

- The meeting and working places should offer many opportunities for movement and action, e.g. a sports field nearby. Games and other material (paper, pens...) should be accessible and it would be good to create a special corner, or if possible a separate room, for physical activities. (Pay attention to safety aspects.)
- Work spaces should be big enough and offer facilities for small group work. You can create a good atmosphere during the small group work by offering some drinks or a small snack, by decorating the group space with a group emblem or putting some pillows on the floor...

Be **flexible and transparent** concerning the programme.

- The work programme should be clearly organised and transparent. In a youth exchange, it is recommended, for example, to write the programme on a big poster and to add changes during the exchange, if necessary.
- Schedule enough time for games and exercises. In case the group doesn't feel comfortable with a specific method, it is a good idea to have a backup plan.
- Don't work with pressure. In most cases the process is more important than the result of a workshop.
- Disruption to the group work (distraction, aggression...) should be addressed as soon as possible. It is very important to find out the reasons for such behaviour: Is the topic not motivating enough? Are the methods not adapted? Do some of the young people not feel accepted? Are there hidden tensions or conflicts in the group? Finding out and talking about these (and other) questions can be a very important step towards the participation of your young people.

### Agree on **ground rules**.

- As an international team, you should have a common approach on how to deal with ground rules and the violation of these rules. During an international preparation meeting, you'll have an opportunity to exchange ideas on the social behaviour and the special needs of your young people and agree on (minimum) ground rules and possible sanctions.
  - One possibility is to establish contracts with the young people. Contracting is a method of involving young people in the setting of ground rules and creating a participative culture in a project.
- ☞ More about **contracting** with young people in the SALTO Project Management handbook...  
[www.salto-youth.net/find-a-tool/86.html](http://www.salto-youth.net/find-a-tool/86.html)



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# AFTER THE PROJECT



# IT ISN'T FINISHED!

## FOLLOW-UP – LET THE PROCESS CONTINUE

Follow-up by young people means making more out of your project, using the project as a resource in the **long-term development** of the young people towards a better life, to help them be aware of the outcomes of the project

and to apply their new skills, enthusiasm and interests in their local environment. The aim is to integrate the achievements from the project into the day-to-day lives of the young people.

It is very important to think about the follow-up activities of your project from the beginning. During the planning phase, you should **set up a follow-up plan** together with the young people.

- ☛ Follow-up activities for the young people go hand in hand with the '**exploitation and dissemination**' of your project results (page 75). We consider that 'follow-up' focusses more on the development of the young people, whereas 'dissemination and exploitation' encompass a wider variety of actions to make the most of your project and have the biggest impact possible.

### POSSIBLE STEPS IN THE FOLLOW-UP PROCESS ARE:

#### 1 Closure & recognition of the learning experience

- Sharing photos, remembering, celebrating...
- Handing out a certificate in order to recognise the learning experience and outcomes of the project. You can use the Youthpass and/or other national or self-made certificates.

- ☛ More in the chapter "Recognition of non-formal learning" on page 79

#### 2 Sharing the experience

- Creating opportunities for the young people to inform their peers, family, community members and others of the learning outcomes of the experience, for example with the help of diaries, video, theatre, written reports, personal record of achievement, newspaper and magazine articles, radio and television interviews.
- It is advisable to work with young people on creative ways to present their work and to support them in using similar methods and ways of expression as they those used during the project. A very formal presentation can be very boring.

### 3 Evaluation – what did I get out of it?

- Evaluation is a process that needs to start at the very beginning of a project and continue through to the end. In the follow-up phase, it could be especially interesting to focus on personal learning experiences, the outcomes of activities and how these outcomes relate to your original aims and objectives.

👉 More about Evaluation at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/evaluation/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/evaluation/) and in the **T-kit on Educational Evaluation in Youth Work** – downloadable from <http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int> and [www.salto-youth.net/find-a-tool/754.html](http://www.salto-youth.net/find-a-tool/754.html)

### 4 Pathway planning – jumping into the future

The pathway planning process takes into account an individual's past development, assesses their current situation, and then gives the project a place which relates directly to the young person's future aims and goals. You could, for example, work with individual development plans for your youngsters.

**Possible next steps** on the pathway and follow-up plan could be:

- participation in other activities of the Youth in Action programme, like a youth exchange, a European Volunteer Service (EVS) placement or a youth initiative
- more commitment and responsibilities in organising a second part of a youth exchange or another international project
- involvement in local urban youth projects, giving the young people the opportunity to develop their skills or to implement them in their local community
- opportunities to volunteer in the own community
- training or further education related to the (new) interests and skills of the young person e.g. languages, further training about the topic of the exchange or voluntary service,...

In the pathway planning process it is crucial to offer support for these future steps.

### 5 Keeping in contact – continue the good vibes

- At the end of your international urban youth project, you can help the groups to stay in touch. New project ideas often see the light because of the shared enthusiasm of former participants and they think about a common follow-up activity (e.g. hip hop production, concert...). Be sure to be realistic and honest concerning the chances of success and make sure you give support.
- Find a way for the different groups to stay in contact, e.g. the creation of a communication platform: Yahoogroups, Facebook, etc.
- Offer internet access and support on communicating in other languages.

### 6 Peer support for future activities

- Support informal social networks (e.g. regular meetings and contact between the participants of your urban youth project) – see also point 5 above.
- After a youth exchange or an EVS project, the young people can motivate other young people (within your organisation or city) to do similar projects and support them in their first steps. Returned volunteers and ex-participants of youth exchanges are an excellent resource to be used in future projects.

## DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF YOUR PROJECT

### What happens after an activity, has to be planned before the activity!

Already when applying for funding (e.g. in a Youth in Action application), you are asked what you are going to do in terms of follow-up and dissemination of results. The point is that you **do your project for a reason**, to make an impact. And this impact should not stop as soon as the activity is over. Therefore, time should be allocated in your project planning to think about follow-up and dissemination activities.

You can undertake different activities or develop different tools to do follow-up with the young people (see previous chapter, page 73) and to **'disseminate and exploit'** the results of your project. Sending out the results of your project (e.g. a report, the lessons learnt, a CD-ROM, new methods,...) is one thing, getting them USED is even better. You will need to have a look at your project's **potential to make an impact** at an early stage – before you actually start the project.

Here are some questions to **guide** you in your reflection:

≈ What do you want to achieve with your project? For whose benefit?	= Objectives & beneficiaries of your actions
≈ What do you think is worth showing (to others)? What are the likely results of your project?	= Products, outcomes, messages from your project
≈ Who should be impacted by the results of your project?	= Target group of your actions
≈ What kind of messages would be most effective for them?	= Adapt your message or actions to the target group
≈ What competences and resources do you have available in the organisation/group?	= Available resources & competences
≈ What do you need to do/collect during the project for your actions? And who does what?	= Planning & division of tasks
≈ What would all of this cost and where do you get the time and money from?	= Budget & funding of the planned actions

The chain shows that all these questions are **inter-related** and that you should make a coherent link between the ‘products and outcomes’ of your project. This will determine, more or less, the scope of what you are able to achieve with your project and for whose benefit (objectives & beneficiaries). Depending on the ‘Target Group’ you want to reach, you will need to ‘adapt your actions’, the timing of the message sent out and the medium and format used. Your ‘available resources and competencies’, but also your preferences, will determine what you are able to achieve. Last but not least, you have to be clear about ‘who’ will carry out the follow-up and ‘how’ you are going to ensure the follow-up, dissemination and exploitation actually take place, and have a look at what ‘budget’ you will need for this and where it should come from.

Here are **some suggestions** for follow-up and dissemination of your project results:

- Give recognition for the **learning and personal development** of the urban young people who took part in your activity. Give them a certificate or a letter of recommendation. Within the Youth in Action programme, participants are entitled to get a European **Youthpass** to document their learning and their experience (see [www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu)).
- **Document the outcomes** of your project: this can include both **visible** (e.g. theatre play, a CD-ROM, a report, a piece of art ,...) and **invisible** results (e.g. learning points, conclusions, recommendations, new methods used during the activity...).
- Think beforehand about **who would be able to use the outcomes** of your project, and adapt it to their needs, so that it will be very easy for them to start using what you have produced. **Involve this target group** in the development of your product.
- You could produce an '**urban youth work manual**', which can be used by other youth workers in the same situation as you. However, make sure not to reinvent the wheel and integrate already existing documents into your work.
- Develop a strategy to **show the 'outside' world** the great work you are doing. Who would you like to inform? How best can you inform them? What are the best channels to reach them? What is the best way of making an impact on them?
- Give **participants** the space within your activity to develop networking and **follow-up projects** themselves (through discussion, 'open space', action plans,...) – see previous chapter (page 72)



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- Offer **guidance and training** to young people who want to get more involved in your organisation.
- Share your methods, funding opportunities, best practices to make the life of ‘newcomers’ in the field easier. Add them to existing databases (e.g. [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/)) or circulate them via relevant networks.
- Use **networking and communication tools** for future contact and for the exchange of good practice e.g. via an online platform, blog, Yahoo or Facebook groups, newsletters,...
- Get the **local press** involved and make the headlines with your international project... so that people talk about it for a while. You can link up to that success with positive PR work and future projects.
- Think about **thanking people** (authorities, funders, families...) for their contributions and keep up the new contacts established.
- Make your work **sustainable** and **share your experiences** within your own organisation and with other organisations (each project is a huge learning experience and you can learn from positive and negative features).
- ...

👉 SALTO has developed a booklet on how to create the greatest possible impact with your youth project, called ‘**Making Waves**’. It contains lots of tips and tricks on how to increase the visibility, dissemination and exploitation of your project results.

Download it from

[www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/MakingWaves/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/MakingWaves/)



## RECOGNITION OF NON-FORMAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Recognition of competences is high on the policy agenda within the European Union, whether they are acquired in the formal education or in non-formal settings as youth work or international projects. **The Europe 2020 strategy**, promotes the concept of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. It includes specific targets aimed at young people, regarding their schooling and employment chances. Recognising all of the practical and intellectual baggage young people gained is a crucial element of this.

Within the youth sector this led to a political drive for **the recognition of non-formal learning in Youth Work**. Therefore one of the priorities of the Youth in Action programme (see page 37) is to increase the **educational dimension** of its activities and **recognise** it via a Youthpass. Youthpass is a new tool for the recognition of the outcomes of these non-formal learning activities. All participants of projects granted by the YiA programme can get a Youthpass.

👉 More about Youthpass at [www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu)

## WHAT IS NON-FORMAL LEARNING (NFL)?

**Non-formal learning** is the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes, outside school, in people's free time, but in the framework of a structured learning process, with fixed objectives and consciously chosen educational methods. NFL-activities are generally organised by teams of youth workers or trainers (volunteers or paid), within the framework of NGOs, youth organisations or local authorities aiming to pass on competences to the people participating in the activities.



**Non-formal learning** methods are mainly based on:

- Learning to learn
- Learning within, by and from the group
- Practicing acquired skills and knowledge
- Being able to participate in social life
- Being able to adapt him/herself
- Being able to take responsibilities, in an individual or collective way
- Knowing to give the learner objectives and achieve them
- Learning self-motivation

Non-formal learning, as practised in **youth work**, has certain specific characteristics:

- Volunteerism of participants and youth workers, leaders or trainers
- Active and conscious participation of learners, actors of their learning
- Active and participative methods: « learning by doing »
- Learning about participative democracy and active citizenship

### NON-FORMAL LEARNING AND INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES

Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly in the deprived (sub)urban areas, often do not achieve the **level of qualifications** needed to access the labour market or higher education easily. The lower the level of educational achievement, the higher the risk of unemployment.

**Diversifying forms of learning** contributes to young people's social inclusion. Formal learning often emphasises cognitive learning, whereas non-formal settings often complement cognitive aspects with emotional, social and practical competences. Better coordination of formal, non-formal and informal learning facilitates a smoother transition from school to work.

Non-formal learning in the Youth in Action programme **makes learning more attractive** and develops readiness for lifelong learning and promotes social inclusion. Projects in the framework of the Youth in Action programme have a participative and learner-centred approach. They are carried out on a voluntary basis and are closely linked to young people's needs, aspirations and interests. Key elements are peer learning, learning environments and inclusion of all young people.

- 👉 The non-formal learning opportunities provided and supported through the Youth in Action programme are an **important complementary** tool to social inclusion efforts at national, regional and local levels.

The main concern about using non-formal activities as a tool for inclusion, is recognising their **educational achievements** and showing the **learning outcomes**. SALTO and the European Commission have created a standardised European certificate which documents the learning of participants in Youth in Action projects called Youthpass. Young people with fewer opportunities can certainly benefit from Youthpass because it serves them as a tool to show their competences gained in non-formal youth projects and it makes up for a lack of formal qualifications.

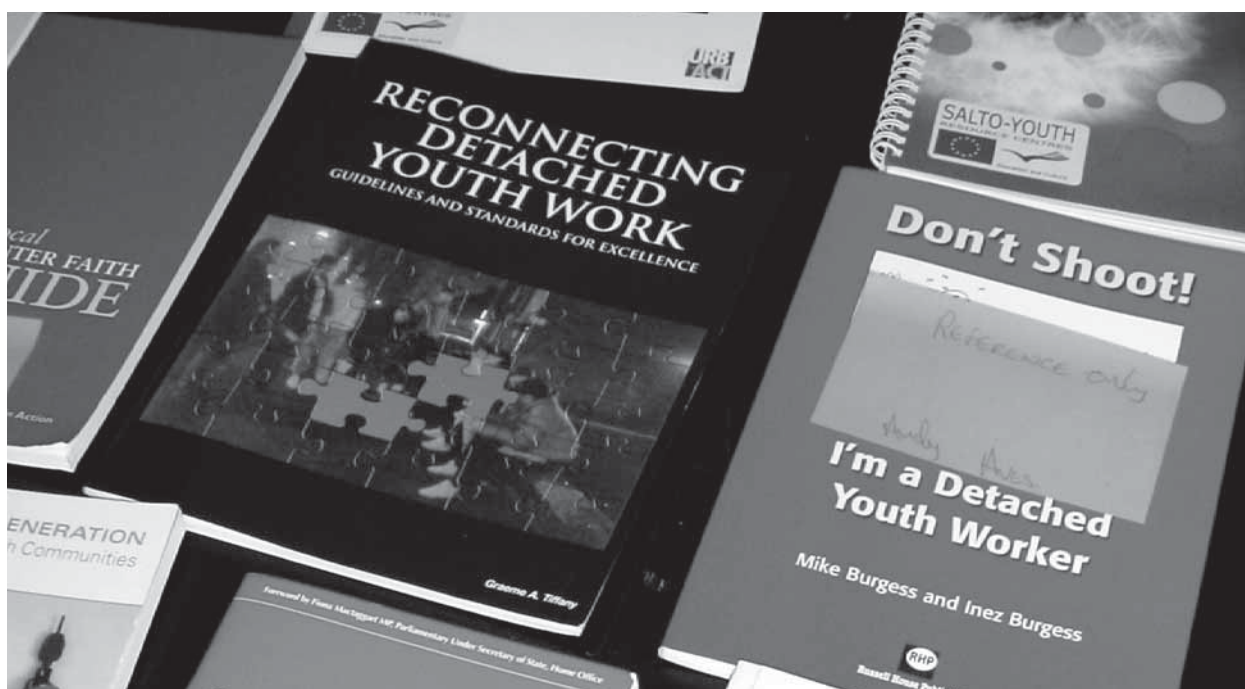


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## YOUTHPASS: TOWARDS THE RECOGNITION OF NON-FORMAL LEARNING IN YOUTH WORK

Youthpass has **4 main objectives**:

- fostering employment of young people and youth workers
- valuing methods of non-formal learning
- fostering recognition of youth work
- valuing specificities of youth work.



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### What is the Youthpass document?

- Youthpass is an individual certificate for Youth in Action projects (created by the hosting organisation of the project) and each participant is individually entitled to receive one
- Youthpass contains a brief description of the objectives of the project and the programme of activities
- Youthpass can also be used to monitor and (self)assessment the participants' learning process during an activity of the programme: individually, collectively and through dialogue with peers and youth workers, mentors, trainers...
- Youthpass can include an optional, brief self-assessment of the participant's competences gained during the project, using the framework of the « 8 Key competences » or a summary of learning outcomes

### WHAT ARE THE “KEY COMPETENCES”?

The “Key competences” were a joint recommendation of the European Parliament and the European Council, which proposed a common European reference framework for lifelong learning (LLL) and education. This document identifies 8 main fields of competences for the knowledge society.

#### **The 8 Key Competences**

- Communication in mother tongue
- Communication in foreign language(s)
- Mathematical competence and basic competence in science and technology
- Digital competence
- Learning to learn
- Social and civic competence
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Cultural awareness and expression

👉 More information about Youthpass and the Key Competences from [www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu) or SALTO developed two publications about using Youthpass with disadvantaged target groups: Youthpass for ALL ([www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/YouthpassForALL/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/YouthpassForALL/)) and Youthpass unfolded ([www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/YouthpassUnfolded/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/YouthpassUnfolded/)) with practical methods to implement Youthpass.

# HUNGER FOR MORE? – REFERENCES

## FURTHER READING & ONLINE RESOURCES

We want to particularly highlight the **SALTO “Urban Solutions”** research, that gives an insight into the social challenges young people face and the potential of youth work interventions in (sub)urban areas.

☞ Download it from [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UrbanSolutions/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UrbanSolutions/).

More SALTO ‘Inclusion for All’ publications:

- **Inclusion through Employability** (2011) – success criteria for youth projects addressing unemployment, research publication
- **Working on Work** (2011) – using international projects to improve the chances of young people on the labour market
- **Youthpass unfolded** (2012) – explaining the Youthpass process to make learning visible, including practical methods to do so
- **Youthpass for All!** (updated 2010) – recognition of non-formal learning through the Youth in Action programme for young people with fewer opportunities
- **Making Waves** (updated 2010) - greater impact with your youth projects through visibility, dissemination and exploitation of your project results
- **Images in Action** (2010) – running a positive image-building campaign for inclusion groups
- **Fit for Life** (2005) – using sports as an educational tool for the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in youth-work
- **No Offence** (updated 2010) – exploring opportunities and setting up youth projects with young ex-offenders and those at risk of offending
- **Village International** (updated 2010) – setting up international projects in rural and geographically isolated areas
- **Inclusion & Diversity** (updated 2008) – how to make your youth-work and youth projects more inclusive and reach more diverse target groups
- **No Barriers, No Borders** (updated 2008) – organising international mixed ability projects (including people with and without a disability)
- **Over the Rainbow** (updated 2008) – creating sensitive projects with young LesBiGays and young people questioning their sexual orientation
- **E.M. POWER** (2008) – empowering Ethnic Minority young women through international youth projects
- **Going International - Inclusion for All** (updated 2009) – practical methods and advice for youth workers organising their first international project for young people with fewer opportunities
- **Use your Hands to Move Ahead** (updated 2009) – using practical tasks to increase participation by young people with fewer opportunities in short-term European Voluntary Service projects
- **Inclusion by Design** (2009) – a manual for youth NGOs to approaching inclusion in a strategic way

☞ Find them all at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionForALL/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionForALL/)

## Looking for youth work and training methods on Inclusion and other topics?

Browse through the SALTO Toolbox for Training at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/)



T-Kit Series: *The training kits are thematic publications written by experienced youth trainers. They are easy-to-use handbooks for use in training and study sessions, published by the Youth-Partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission.*

- Social Inclusion
- Project Management
- Organisational Management
- Methodology in Language Learning
- Intercultural Learning
- International Voluntary Service
- Under Construction... Citizenship, Youth and Europe
- Training Essentials
- Funding and Financial Management
- Educational Evaluation in Youth Work
- Mosaic: for Euro-Mediterranean Youth Work
- Conflict Transformation

☞ Downloadable from <http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int> or [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/)

## OTHER RESOURCES

Some **organisations and institutions** have published educational material and handbooks for working on Inclusion and sometimes on urban youth in particular.

- **All Different All Equal education pack:** methods and activities to encourage cultural diversity and tolerance - <http://eycb.coe.int/edupack/>
- The **National Youth Agency** in the UK publishes many background texts, research studies and publications on different issues related to youth - [www.nya.org.uk](http://www.nya.org.uk)
- **Dynamo International** runs a **website full of resources for social street workers:** [www.street-work.net](http://www.street-work.net) (in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese).
- The (UK) **Federation of Detached Youth Work** has some articles and (UK) policy guidelines about 'detached Youth Work' (outside youth organisations and structures) - [www.detachedyouthwork.info](http://www.detachedyouthwork.info)
- ...

Some of the bigger funding programmes (e.g. Urban, Interreg, European Social Fund,...) have websites where you can get **inspiration from their previous projects**. These projects are more focused on structural and policy cooperation (between urban areas), but don't always have a specific focus on 'youth'.

- **Urbact**: the showcase for URBAN programme projects, focusing on cities with high unemployment, delinquency, poverty,... - some of them with a youth component - [www.urbact.eu](http://www.urbact.eu)
- **Interact**: idem, but for 'interregional' cooperation of the INTERREG programme. Some of these projects take place in cities - [www.interact-eu.net](http://www.interact-eu.net)
- **Daphne**: this European programme aims to prevent and combat all forms of violence against children, young people and women - [http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/daphnetoolkit/](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/daphnetoolkit/)

## A RESEARCHER'S VIEW ON DISADVANTAGED URBAN YOUTH AND YOUTH WORK

By Axel Pohl

When we are planning an international urban youth project, we need to **adapt our project** to the needs of all the young people involved. These needs are connected to the realities of life in different (sub)urban areas. Axel Pohl has compared the realities of disadvantaged youth in Europe and has identified some important differences and common new trends. As a result of his European field studies, he has come up with some factors for successful youth work.

*“Comparing life situations of young people in disadvantaged (sub)urban areas. Isn't it like comparing apples and pears? How can you grow pears and apples everywhere?”*

### PATTERNS OF DISADVANTAGE IN EUROPE – SOME IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES

Having a look at patterns of disadvantage in Europe, we can observe big differences in early school leaving figures, unemployment and precariousness.

- **Early school leaving** (without qualifications) varies between 5 and 30% in different European countries. Denmark, Finland and Sweden, for example, show low levels (<10%), and Bulgaria, Spain, Italy, Poland and Romania medium high rates (> 20%).
- **Unemployment rates** vary between less than 10% in Denmark and more than 40% in Italy and Poland, due to a mismatch between degrees and the labour market.

- Taking the number of **work contracts** per person per year as an indicator for precarious work situations, we can say that the work situation for young people in Spain, for example, is very insecure. The number of work contracts per person per year varies from 2.8 for young people aged 16 to 19, to 2.1 for the 20 to 24 age group.

In our urban youth projects, we should consider these **differences**. If we are working with school drop-outs in Spain and Sweden, for example, we need to know that their social situation is not the same at all, because failure in school is quite common in Spain, but very rare in Sweden.

### COMMONALITIES OF DISADVANTAGED YOUTH – SOME NEW TRENDS

Besides these differences, there are also some common new trends in the life situations of disadvantaged urban youth.

#### Yoyo transitions

Looking at the development of young people with fewer opportunities from a biographical perspective allows us to analyse the factors that lead to social inequality and social exclusion during the **transition from childhood to adult life**. On the one hand, there are structural resources and a lack of opportunities for young people in disadvantaged urban areas which frame the transition: a lack of support in education, no or few leisure time activities, a high rate of unemployment etc. On the other hand, there are also individual elements of disadvantage like a lack of competencies, wrong choices, lack of motivation or bad luck. In order to understand situations of disadvantage, we need to analyse both the individual and the structural elements which shape young people's development and may lead to school problems, lack of qualifications, no access to training, study or jobs.

In the past, the transition of young people to adulthood was seen as a linear and homogenous rite of passage at a particular age. Nowadays, it takes longer to get jobs or to have a family. That's why we talk about a **prolonged youth phase** with different trajectories into adulthood. Family, work, financial autonomy,... - these different elements of independence can take more or less time to be achieved.

*That's why the Youth in Action programme defines youth as an age group between 13/15 and 25, but may include young people up to the age of 30.*



There is also a new phenomenon that Axel Pohl calls “**Yoyo transitions**”: The step from childhood to adult life is not linear any more: you can make two steps forwards and one step back or one step into adulthood, with your family situation, and one back to childhood with your work situation, i.e. you can be a parent and still studying/training, or be a professional and still living with your parents. The transitions are reversible and fragmented, with an uncertain perspective, which entails a high level of insecurity. Institutions, schools and support systems like youth work have to acknowledge this new type of transition.

### Spatialisation

We all know what “banlieu” means. It has become a label for a huge variety of problems like integration problems, violence and unemployment in the French suburbs. This is an example of a new trend: social problems get “spatialised”, which means they get defined according to criteria of space or area. **Social spaces become labels**, which lead to a stigmatisation of the people living in these spaces. Nowadays, we can talk about a fragmentation of life worlds in the city. There is no common ground between different spaces.

- ☞ Do youth work spaces still fit into this variety of spaces? Axel Pohl talks about ‘**excluded inclusion**’, when youth work offers participation projects that stick to a physical area, instead of the social space that is relevant to young people.

### The new activation agenda

There is another new trend in Europe: the new strategy of youth policy concerning the integration of disadvantaged youth, the activation agenda. As opposed to youth work, which is aimed at the citizenship and empowerment of young people through non-formal learning, the aim of the new activation agenda is **employability and adaptation**, using pressure and control. This strategy focuses on an individual’s own resources and own power to solve the problems of social exclusion, thereby transforming resource problems into matters of social cohesion.

## HOW CAN YOUTH WORK PLACE ITSELF IN THE “NEW” WELFARE STATE?

### Factors for successful youth work

With the help of his field studies, Axel Pohl has identified five factors for successful youth work, taking these new life situations into account:

**1. Accessibility:**

Youth work needs to be accessible, which can be achieved through decentralisation, permeability and inter-connected systems.

*E.g.: Outreach work Stuttgart is coordinating its work with street work associations in nearly all urban areas.*

**2. Funding:**

Of course, the more you invest, the more likely you are to achieve broad coverage and high quality youth work.

**3. Integrated approaches:**

It is very beneficial to bridge different social spaces and to coordinate different policies in youth work.

*E.g.: Liverpool Youth Engagement Team combines the sectors of employment and participation with 2-year employment contracts for work in anti-discrimination, research and participation projects.*

**4. Institutional reflectiveness:**

Giving participants a voice in the evaluation process helps the institution / youth work organisation develop in the right direction.

*E.g.: In the Sunderland Youth Inspection Team, young people evaluate youth services after a training session, and can comment on evaluation criteria and techniques.*

**5. Participation:**

Youth work organisations should try to empower young people through motivation and citizenship rights. This means giving young people choices, the time and space to experiment, recognition and trust and involving them in the drawing up of hard policies.

*E.g.: In the Bristol South URBAN 2 project, young people were involved in the distribution of funds for young people. They represented 50 per cent of the decision-making body.*

**AXEL POHL**

*Axel Pohl is a German researcher with experience in field studies on youth policy and the participation of disadvantaged youth in Europe. He has a practical background in a young citizens' project, the URBACT network on the participation of young people in decision making in 9 European cities.*

 Website: [www.iris-egris.de](http://www.iris-egris.de)

 For a more recent research on “Urban Solutions”, download the SALTO Inclusion research publication from [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UrbanSolutions/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/UrbanSolutions/).

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Katrin lived and worked in Kreuzberg, a multicultural urban district of Berlin, for more than 20 years. She studied political science and adult education and has over 15 years' experience in the field of non-formal education. She worked as a trainer, coordinator and coach for local and international youth projects and training courses for youth workers in disadvantaged (sub)urban areas on topics such as youth participation, active citizenship and intercultural learning. Since 2007 Katrin has been working as a freelance trainer and coach in Granada, Spain, where she created an association for civic and intercultural education. She was involved in the publication of the T-Kit on Euromed Cooperation and a manual in German on how to include young people with fewer opportunities in international youth work.

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Tony lives and works in Brussels, a city with its beauty, but also its challenging neighbourhoods. As the coordinator of the SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion Resource Centre in Flanders-Belgium, Tony wanted to make the link between the international opportunities offered by the Youth in Action programme and the young people living in the disadvantaged city areas. The lives of the young people living there are often limited to the apartment blocks or housing estates they live in. However, 'going international' does open up new perspectives, gives new skills and could be a lever for change.

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SALTO Inclusion cares about the environment. This booklet is printed on environmentally friendly recycled paper. Order or print this publication only if you really need it. The Earth says 'Thank you!'

*Youth gangs are killing each other in London,  
teenagers are burning cars in Paris, youth  
protestors are battered by police in Warsaw,  
young people take to the streets in Spain,  
police starts a war with local rough kids,...*

Life does not seem all that positive in disadvantaged (sub)urban areas. That's why youth workers, street workers and social workers are all the more important in creating some alternatives for young people in the cities.

Why not try an international youth project? It opens up young people's worlds and helps them put things into perspective. Life in the city isn't that bad after all!

**"Youth and the City"** is a practical manual for youth workers about setting up meaningful international youth projects with young people in those disadvantaged (sub)urban areas. This booklet is about giving young people positive opportunities in the city area.

**"Youth and the City"** gives you suggestions and tips for motivating your group, finding partner groups abroad, raising funds for your urban project, working with the local community, encouraging participation and intercultural learning, avoiding things going wrong and lots more.

This booklet is part of the SALTO "Inclusion for All" series. Download them for free at:  
[www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/)

