

ID TALKS!

This series of ID Talks is about inclusive youth work policies and practices at local level. We'll discover the realities of different municipalities and of local youth work actors across Europe, from rural to cosmopolitan areas.



ID Talks:

EGL
VILLAGE
TOWN
METROPOLIS
QUALITY LABEL

Download this and other SALTO Inclusion & Diversity booklets for free at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/. This document does not necessarily reflect the official views of the European Commission, the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity Resource Centre or the organisation co-operating with them.

ABOUT SALTO

...‘Support and **A**dvanced **L**earning and **T**raining **O**pportunities within the Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes’. The European Commission has created a network of seven SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres to enhance the implementation of the EU Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes, which provide young people with valuable non-formal learning experiences.

SALTO’s aim is to support the implementation of the European Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps Programmes with regard to priorities such as Social Inclusion, Diversity, Participation, and Solidarity. SALTO also supports co-operation with regions such as EuroMed, South-East Europe, or Eastern Europe and The Caucasus and coordinates all training and co-operation activities, as well as information tools for National Agencies.

In these European priority areas, SALTO-YOUTH provides resources, information, and training for National Agencies and European youth workers. Most of these resources are offered and disseminated at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net. Find online the [European Training Calendar](#), the [Toolbox for Training and Youth Work](#), the database of youth field trainers active at the European level ([Trainers Online for Youth or TOY](#)), links to online resources, and much more.

SALTO-YOUTH actively co-operates with other actors in the European youth field, among them the National Agencies of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, the Council of Europe, the European Youth Forum, European youth workers and trainers, and training organisers.

THE SALTO-YOUTH INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY RESOURCE CENTRE WWW.SALTO-YOUTH.NET/INCLUSION/

The SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion and Diversity Resource Centre (based in Belgium Flanders) works together with the European Commission to support the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in the Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes. Through that, it works to contribute to social cohesion in society at large. SALTO Inclusion and Diversity also supports the National Agencies and youth workers in their inclusion work by providing training, developing youth work methods, disseminating information via the newsletter, etc. By offering opportunities for training, exchange, and reflection on inclusion practice and diversity management, SALTO Inclusion & Diversity works towards the visibility, accessibility, and transparency of its inclusion & diversity work and resources, and towards making ‘inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities’ and ‘positive diversity management’ a widely supported priority.

For more information and resources, have a look at the Inclusion & Diversity pages at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/



DISCLAIMER

This magazine contains pictures as a result of the Graphic Recording which is an integral part of all the ID Talks events. There are four types of styles throughout the whole magazine.

- **General Cover Picture.** It is used for promotional reasons throughout the social media channels and the dissemination materials and it depicts the logo of SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, the title, and the graphic elements of each version of the ID Talks events. It is displayed as a cover picture of each ID Talks version.
- **Portrait of Speaker.** It depicts each speaker and a few graphic recording elements such as written parts of their "speech" and/or any other graphics according to the style of each ID Talks version. It is displayed on top of the speaker's description page.
- **Main Graphic Recording Card.** It is used for promotional reasons throughout the social media channels and the dissemination materials and it depicts the logo of SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, the title, and the graphic elements of each version of the ID Talks events, including the specific name of the event, the portrait of the speaker, written quotes of their "speech" and/or any other graphics. It is displayed on top of the first page of each article.
- **Graphic Recording Elements.** Throughout each article, the graphic recording elements complement the text with essential parts of each speaker's "talk".

I & D Talks

“Europe Goes Local”

What is it all about?

“ID Talks” is a series of 5 online workshops on 5 major topics to promote inclusion & diversity (ID) and quality youth work. It features youth workers, professionals and volunteers, from all over the world to share insights, research findings, food for thought, good practices or inspirational stories. They will guide participants through the pressing matters and challenges affecting Inclusion & Diversity and inspire them to make their programmes and organisations more inclusive, embrace human differences, look ahead and picture how the future of youth work and Inclusion & Diversity might be.

Each workshop begins with an input from a guest speaker. Afterwards, participants have the opportunity to engage in the discussion, ask questions and share about their own realities and experiences.

For whom?

- Youth workers, youth leaders, professionals and volunteers involved in ID in the EU youth programmes, as well as all those interested in youth work and inclusion & diversity topics.

Why should you join?

- Get food for thought and learn from inspirational ID stories.
- Learn about ID topics from the youth work sector and beyond.
- Get information, inspiration, methods to help the youth sector address ID.
- Put some more quality in your (international) youth work.
- Identify and learn how to tackle existing and future challenges within ID.

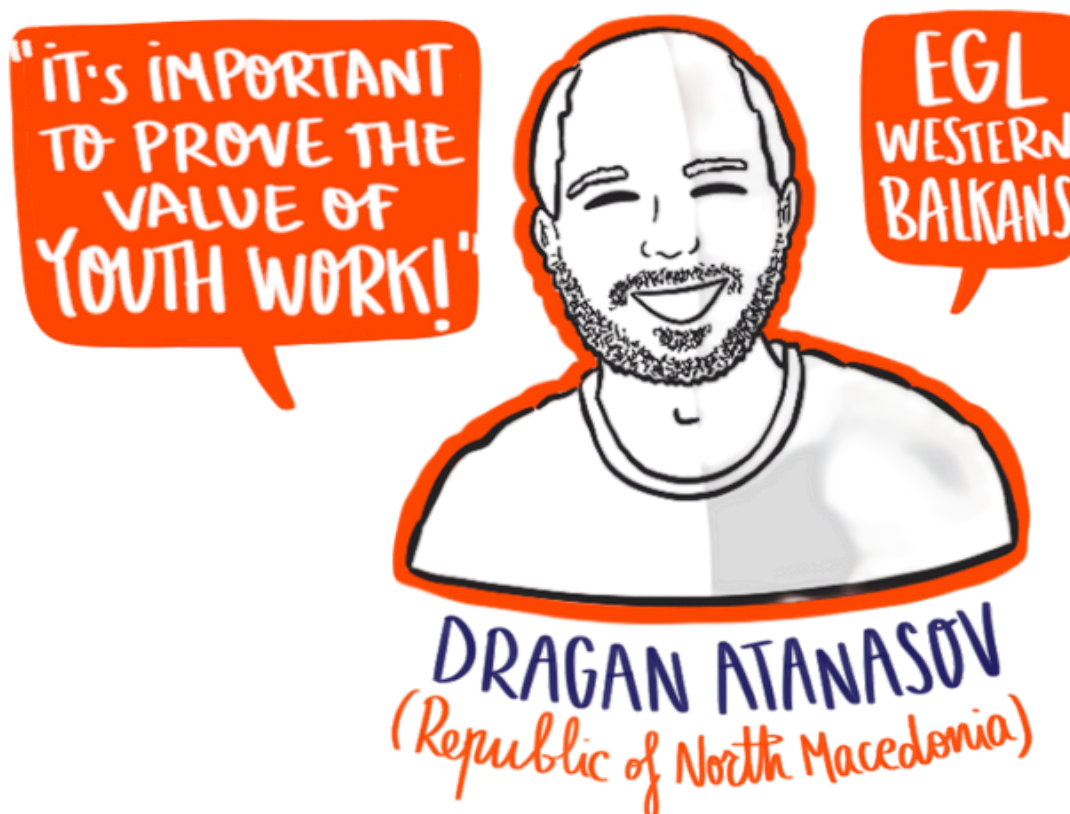


Event Dates:

- 5 February (13h CET) > **ID Talks EGL** - Find out what is Europe Goes Local, its need, scope and vision. Discover important tools for the quality development of local youth work. What is the European charter on local youth work about? Let's discover together how local youth policy can support inclusion and get an insight into the state of play of municipal youth work in Europe. Guest speakers: **Judit Balogh**, EGL, Belgium · **Jonas Agdur**, Sweden & **Marko Kovacic**, Croatia
- 19 February (13h CET) > **ID Talks Village** – Young people living in small rural communities are often overlooked and the local youth work offer is rarely accessible for them. At the same time, limited resources invested in small communities could have a significant, visible impact. Come and discuss the (dis)advantages and peculiarities of youth work development in a village. What does inclusion mean in such a context? Where do rural and international youth work intersect? Guest speaker: **Victor-Catalin Toma**, International Village, Romania
- 5 March (13h CET) > **ID Talks Town** – What is the key to an efficient local youth work strategy in a mid-size town? What do you need to take into account and how can you get all stakeholders on board? We discuss the most important issues young people are facing and how local youth work can address them. Find out about the specifics of municipal youth work development in Eastern Partnership countries, where youth work practice are not always backed by policies. Guest speaker: **Dragan Atanasov**, Republic of North Macedonia
- 19 March (13h CET) > **ID Talks Metropolis** – Is it possible to provide “local” youth work in a “global” capital? Find out how you accommodate the needs and expectations of over 300,000 young people, and make them feel seen and heard. The city of Paris is keeping inclusion and diversity at the heart of its youth work practice, using the European charter on local youth work as a guideline to manage the complexity of youth work in a metropolitan area. Guest speaker: **Thomas Rogé**, France
- 2 April (13h CET) > **ID Talks Quality Label** – Discover how you can create a more systematic approach towards municipal youth work. What is quality youth work and how can young people with fewer opportunities access and benefit from it? With the “child-friendly city” label, Bataljong is setting a standard for municipalities in Flanders, Belgium. At the same time, this quality label could be adapted and replicated in other countries. Why not yours? Guest speaker: **Marte Ingels**, Bataljong, Belgium-FL

ID Talks: Town

What is the key to an efficient local youth work strategy in a mid-size town?



GUEST SPEAKER: DRAGAN ATANASOV

Dragan Atanasov is a trainer, researcher, evaluator and author, specialized in youth work recognition, youth policy, cultural diversity and community development. He has over 15 years of experience in conducting research and assessments in the field of youth work, designing and delivering non-formal education activities, developing policy documents, and monitoring and evaluating programs. Dragan has a long experience supporting the establishment of municipal youth centres in North Macedonia, and is currently co-coordinating Europe Goes Local in the Western Balkans.



Article

Dragan Atanasov

ID Talks Town

IT'S IMPORTANT TO PROVE THE VALUE OF YOUTH WORK!

EGL WESTERN BALKANS

DRAGAN ATANASOV
(Republic of North Macedonia)

KAVADARCI
FIRST YOUTH WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE LOCAL YOUTH CENTER

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- SUPPORTIVE NATIONAL POLICIES (WHICH "PUSH" LOCAL AUTHORITIES)
- YOUTH WORK ADVOCACY WORK (WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER!)
- EUROPEAN POLICIES/DEVELOPMENTS (WHICH PROVIDE GUIDANCE & INSPIRATION)
- WORKING CROSS-SECTORIALLY (FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF RESOURCES)
- BUILDING SUSTAINABLE MODELS (WHICH ENSURE INITIATIVES LIVELIHOOD)

WITHOUT A SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY, IT WOULD BE TOO DIFFICULT TO KEEP THE YOUTH CENTER ALIVE

YOUTH WORK IS LIKE THE NEW KID IN THE BLOCK

2013 NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

2021 STARTED MANAGING THE YOUTH CENTER IN TOWN

FIRST PUBLIC YOUTH CENTER IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

- ANNUAL PUBLIC FUNDING
- COLLABORATION WITH YOUTH COUNCIL
- FUNDS FOR LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS
- COOPERATION CITY - LOCAL NGO

CHALLENGES

- YOUNG PEOPLE STOPPED BEING A PRIORITY
- LACK OF PROJECT-BASED FUNDING
- YOUTH WORK IS NOT FORMALLY RECOGNIZED
- LACK OF TRUST AND UNDERSTANDING
- INCORRECT YOUTH REACH & INVOLVEMENT
- NO FOLLOW-UP TO POLICIES
- ISOLATED YOUTH POLICIES

THERE IS A GROWING TENDENCY TO SUPPORT YOUTH WORK IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

COMMUNITY matters!

MUNICIPALITIES HAVE THE RESOURCES + ORGANIZATIONS HAVE THE KNOW-HOW = IT'S A MATCH!

YOUTH WORK TAKES DIFFERENT SHAPES DEPENDING ON THE LOCAL REALITY

LET'S KEEP BRIDGING LOCAL AND EUROPEAN YOUTH WORK

CHANGE TAKES TIME!

SALTO INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

EUROPE GOES LOCAL Supporting Youth Work at the Municipal Level

Prologue

I was 15 when I entered for the first time in "Babylon", the local youth centre in my hometown Kavadarci in North Macedonia. Very fast, the youth centre became my go-to place for almost everything – making friends, hanging out, learning, and for the first time in my life, volunteering. That was until few years later, when the youth centre was closed. At the time, there were in total 23 Babylon centres throughout the country, opened initially on the premises of the existing pioneers' centres. Funding for their programs was provided first by the UNICEF, then by the World Bank, and eventually it ceased. Most of the 23 youth centres stopped working, but the project played a major role in the development of youth work in the North Macedonia. It also inspired me, and many other young people, to start lobbying for establishing a sustainable model for youth centres in the country.

The case of North Macedonia

Fast forward, it is 2025 and youth work in North Macedonia is formally recognised. Those who want to become youth workers can enroll in a certified vocational training program and in master's studies in youth work. The Law for youth participation and youth policy includes an obligation for all local municipalities to establish and financially support local youth centres, which in turn should work according to formally adopted quality standards for youth centres. Currently, there are 10 public youth centres in North Macedonia, funded by local governments and managed by civil society organisations. One of them is the youth centre in my hometown, now jointly operated by the organisation that managed the Babylon centre more than 20 years ago, and the youth association that I started in 2007 to advocate for public youth centres. So, what can be learned from the case of North Macedonia, that can be relevant for establishing efficient local youth work policy and offer on a local level?



“THERE IS A GROWING TENDENCY TO SUPPORT YOUTH WORK IN THE WESTERN BALKANS”

Keys to success

Practice from towns in North Macedonia and elsewhere points to some key aspects that can help other mid-sized towns in providing sustainable and effective youth work services to their young people. However, while those, and certainly other factors should be seriously considered, it is important to note that there is no one magic formula that works in each case, and that all good practices need to be adapted to the local context.



Advocating for youth work

Advocacy efforts can bring youth work a long way forward, not just in relation to its formal recognition, but more generally for development of quality youth work offer. Advocacy can be focused both on national and local levels, and at the same time. Practice shows that national associations of youth workers and youth work providers are particularly effective in advocacy efforts, and can act as allies to the local governments and other local actors.

Utilising European policies and developments

Sometimes European policy documents can seem distant and detached from the local reality, but it is essential to understand their implications for the work of local authorities. The resolutions of the European Union and the recommendations of the Council of Europe should inform, motivate and support national and local governments to develop policy and practice. Both the EU and the CoE refer to quality youth work in their strategies in the field of youth, and their funding programmes provide concrete measures to support youth work development locally. The European Charter on Local Youth Work can be particularly useful for municipalities that are willing to work on youth work development.

Demonstrating impact of youth work

Over and over again, youth work is being asked to prove its worth and show its impact on young people and the wider communities. Demonstrating the impact of youth work is perhaps the most relevant in front of the local authorities, who are responsible for justifying the use of public funds to their constituents. Youth work providers, such as youth centres and youth organisations, should take the lead in showing why money spent on youth work is a good investment for the town and how it can potentially save future costs. Luckily, there are more and more tools for measuring impact in youth work developed throughout Europe that can be adopted and used in various contexts.



Working across different sectors

Young people are not an island isolated from the rest of the society; similarly, youth work does not need to be isolated from other sectors. There is a great deal of overlap between the work of youth workers and of other professionals working with young people, and a lot can be gained from exchanging information, experience and practices across different sectors. This can be particularly valuable when doing inclusion youth work with marginalised and disadvantaged youth. In addition, quality of youth work can be significantly improved if resources from the public, business and civic sectors are combined and jointly utilised to support the needs of young people in the community.

Building sustainable models

Perhaps the single most important message from the experience in North Macedonia is that youth work is most effective when it is provided through models and systems that can be sustainable on the long run. Project based funding can be effective in meeting specific needs, but donors will eventually move to other priorities and young people will be left without the long-term support they need. Only sustainable models based on public and other local resources can provide effective youth work services that will truly strengthen young people. How those models look in practice will depend on the local circumstances, so the process for their creation should involve a dialogue with everyone that is concerned.

WITHOUT A SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY, IT WOULD BE TOO DIFFICULT TO KEEP THE YOUTH CENTER ALIVE

YOUTH WORK TAKES DIFFERENT SHAPES DEPENDING ON THE LOCAL REALITY

Challenges

The challenges to establishing an effective local youth work strategy and provision in mid-sized towns are numerous and various. From the obvious ones, such as lack of funding, to more subtle ones, such as lack of capacities within the youth work sector, there are many obstacles standing in the way between young people and the services that rightfully belong to them. In many environments, youth work is still the “new kid on the block” that needs to prove its worth, make friends, earn the trust of others, and find its own place in the community. To achieve all that, it is essential to gather and use data, be aware of the needs that should be met, set clear goals, be united, work with others, and never forget that youth work exists for the young people.



CHALLENGES

- YOUNG PEOPLE STOPPED BEING A PRIORITY
- LACK OF PROJECT-BASED FUNDING | INCORRECT YOUTH REACH & INVOLVEMENT
- YOUTH WORK IS NOT FORMALLY RECOGNIZED | NO FOLLOW-UP TO POLICIES
- LACK OF TRUST AND UNDERSTANDING | ISOLATED YOUTH POLICIES

Conclusion

It goes without saying that in most instances, youth work happens on a local level, where young people live, learn and grow. Young people face many challenges and have various needs that should be met. The primary responsibility for provision of youth work naturally falls on the local government in the towns where young people live. But it doesn't stop there, and other stakeholders should also be aware of their own responsibility. All of us should be able to work together to ensure that young people become and remain a priority, not just on paper, but also in practice. There is a positive momentum on the European level and initiatives such as Europe Goes Local can be very helpful in pushing for positive local developments, but nothing will be achieved without the commitment of municipalities and their local partners from the youth work field.



EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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On behalf of the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity!

