

to actively participate in social processes. Therefore, a more precise definition of the non-formal education sector is needed, both in terms of enabling better competencies of those who educate others through non-formal education and the evaluation of the factual effects that result from non-formal education. Since it is indisputable that non-formal education can be used as a method of lifelong learning, measures should be devised in order to multiply non-formal education programs, especially those that are important for young people and even more important for members of marginalized groups. The exchange of best practices should be supported, as well as cooperation between the Council of Europe and the European Union in the field of exchange of knowledge and experiences.

European Youth Forum recommendations on social protection and young people in Europe, adopted by the General Assembly Brussels (Belgium) 19-21 October 2000, 0708-2K –FINAL, is a document adopted by the platform of youth organizations in Europe, which cooperates intensively with both the Council of Europe and the European Union. The document states that exercising the right to social protection is especially difficult for young people, given that adult citizens are directly linked to social services in situations of job loss or unemployment, so that they can exercise their basic social rights without practical and technical problems. The position of young people in the entire EU is not at an enviable level, while young people in Eastern and Central Europe and outside the EU are facing additional difficulties. Young people face difficulties in exercising their right to an adequate standard, housing and similar. For all young people, the critical period starts from the end of schooling and ends with acquiring a job, which is especially true for "invisible" young people who are not involved in the educational process or the labor market. The "invisible" youngsters do not exercise their rights to social protection, which increasingly pushes them into social exclusion. The realization of social rights is directly related to the realization of the right to education and information, which implies that young people from rural areas and excluded from the education system deserve special support in order to get to an equal position with their peers. In recent years European Youth Forum has been particularly committed to promoting the political and participatory rights of young people, especially those who for various reasons (gender, economic status, coming from minority groups) can be considered marginalized or unequal.

European Union documents

Although the European Union was primarily created as a supranational organization striving for the united European market and for economic and political cooperation of EU member states, nevertheless it also intensively deals with other issues important for the prosperity of the old continent and its citizens. In that sense, a significant number of documents refer to the sphere of exercising social rights and encouraging cultural exchange.

The following documents are recognized as most valuable ones:

- ◆ Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 2000

- ◆ Directive on the implementing the principle of equal treatment regardless of racial or ethnic origin, 2020
- ◆ Framework for establishing a European Youth Work Agenda, 2020
- ◆ Council Conclusions on Education and Training of Youth Workers, 2019
- ◆ Youth Strategy 2019-2027, 2018
- ◆ The European Pillar of Social Rights, 2017

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Official Journal of the European Union, 2007/C 303/01) guarantees the prohibition of discrimination on any personal ground (sex, race, social origin, genetic characteristics, sexual orientation ...), as well as based on citizenship (Art. 21). The right to cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, as well as equality between women and men in all areas, is guaranteed, provided that the application of measures in favor of the underrepresented sex in various spheres is not considered discrimination (Art. 22 and 23).

Directive on the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment regardless of Racial or Ethnic Origin, 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000, states that discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin may jeopardize the achievement of EU goals and objectives. Discrimination is especially detrimental in the field of employment, social protection, living standards and quality of life and incompatible with the EU as a community based on the principles of freedom, security and justice. Unequal treatment of citizens shatters economic and social cohesion and solidarity.

Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the **Framework for establishing a European Youth Work Agenda** (2020/C 415/01), refers to all types of formal and informal work with young people in order for them to achieve social inclusion both as a group and as individuals, regardless of their personal characteristics. Despite the great differences in the formats of engagement of youth workers across the EU, the essence of their engagement is to enable young people to learn and experience the values embodied in human rights, gender equality, democracy, peace, pluralism, diversity, inclusion, solidarity, tolerance and justice. It is necessary for youth work to respect the practical needs of young people and to create the best possible environment for acquiring knowledge. The beginning of the realization of the agenda is called the Bonn Process, after an online event broadcasted from Bonn and the guiding idea is to strengthen the youth work sector by connecting the local and European levels, both by creating appropriate contexts and strengthening competencies. In the coming period, it is necessary to focus on possible new crises situations, such as Covid-19, in order to plan strategies for overcoming them, in which context digital technologies could be extremely important. Also, intra-European cooperation is needed in order to promote intercultural learning, as well as the exchange of knowledge between young people themselves.

Council Conclusions on Education and Training of Youth Workers (Official Journal of the European Union 2019/C412) state that there are basic standards on which the training and work of youth workers everywhere should be based in

Europe as a whole, but that the specific needs of each country should be taken into account. Therefore, the education of youth workers requires a flexible and user-oriented approach, as well as cross-sectoral cooperation. It was noted that at the EU level there is a lack of programs for the education of youth workers, as well as that there are no adequate mechanisms for the exchange of knowledge in this field. Research, exchange of good practices and an approach that summarizes individual experiences in a generally relevant way are essential for the further development of youth work.

European **Union Youth Strategy** 2019-2027, Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field, Official Journal of the European Union, 2018/C 456/01) is a document that directs strategically youth policy in order to realize the potential of youth in the best possible way. The strategy is based on providing support to young people for active participation in political life, which implies that young people should have access to the necessary resources. The three key concepts in this document are the inclusion, connection and empowerment of young people, through which 11 key goals of youth policy are then to be achieved. Some of the goals are: popularizing the idea of a strong EU and reducing Euroscepticism among young people, gender equality, the inclusion of all categories of young people in social processes, creating preconditions for youth equality in rural areas, equal opportunities for education with a focus on non-formal education and spatial and other conditions for the participation of young people, especially through the provision of appropriate infrastructure and support for youth work.

The **European Pillar of Social Rights** is an important document that ensures standards and coordination in the field of social rights. On 17th November 2017, the Council of the EU, the European Parliament and the European Commission published and signed the European Pillar of Social Rights. This document is not formally binding and calls upon a set of documents relevant to the labor market, inclusion and social protection in the broadest possible sense. The pillar is based on 20 key standards, including: gender equality, equal opportunities for all, social dialogue and inclusion of workers in decision-making on their rights, work-life balance, social security, child protection, guaranteeing a minimum standard of living and social inclusion for persons with disabilities.