



# OPEN YOUTH WORK FOR OPEN SOCIETY

## Give a chance to informal youth centres

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With this handout we would like to explain why youth work needs support and sufficient funding.

Based on the Charter of Human Rights, we first state:

**Every person has the right and deserves to be accompanied in their education and development.**

**Open Youth Work is an alternative form of learning and education open to young people.**

In the framework of the Youth Dialogue, 11 objectives, the European Youth Objectives, were defined and used as a basis for the European Youth Strategy. They state:

"Young people are under-represented in decision-making processes that affect them, although their engagement is crucial for democracy. They need access to physical spaces in their communities to foster their personal, cultural and political development."

To highlight the importance of youth and their development needs and opportunities, the European Commission, at the suggestion of Ursula von der Leyen, has designated 2022 as the **"Year of Youth"**.

**European professionals have jointly identified what youth work needs to be and what form of support it needs.**

**Youth work is:**

- 1. UNIVERSAL**  
Open youth work is available and accessible to all young people.
- 2. FREE**  
Open youth work must not cost young people money.
- 3. EDUCATION**  
Open youth work enriches learning and enables learning in different life situations.
- 4. WELCOMING**  
Young people feel comfortable entering the house and talking to others or staff.
- 5. SAFE**  
Young people are protected from harm by trained professionals.
- 6. SOCIAL LEARNING**  
Young people get to know each other and learn how to behave in certain situations.



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#### **YOUTH CENTRES**

Open youth centres are a basic need of local communities, as all communities need to have an independent, autonomous and reliable space for young people that is an anchor in the social life of the community.

Open Youth Centres are accessible, barrier-free and safe environments that enable young people to better understand the reality around them. The premises of an Open Youth Centre must be sustainable and multifunctional to offer as many activities as young people need.

Local youth are the real owners of the space. It is their task to carry out activities aimed at individual, group and intergenerational growth. For this reason, a youth centre must be governed by a contract that is valid for as long as possible, in accordance with national regulations, to ensure continuity, reliability, sustainability and fairness in the opportunities offered.

#### **YOUTH WORK**

Different quality standards apply to Youth Work and Open Youth Work, each with their own measures and indicators. The recognition of youth work is an achievement for all EU, programme and partner countries involved in European programmes for youth. Youth workers and/or NGOs have representatives who work together in a council that addresses the needs and trends of youth work across Europe.

#### **YOUTH WORKER**

Youth workers working in an Open Youth Centre must be professional, experienced and employed on the basis of an employment contract.

The professional stability of youth workers has a positive impact on their interaction with young people and on the work itself. Competences, such as basics of psychology and sociology, methods and techniques of non-formal education, coaching methods, are needed and are therefore also quantifiable in terms of salary and working time.

To achieve this, all EU, programme and partner countries involved in European programmes for youth must recognise youth work as a profession and not as a craft.

A youth centre has an adequate number of staff corresponding to the number of young people living in the neighbourhood/region/city. The number of state-funded youth worker placements reflects integration needs, legal requirements and administrative requirements.

#### **VOLUNTEERING IN YOUTH CENTRES**

Volunteering is an appropriate form of engagement and therefore regulated and recognised.

Partnerships with educational institutions allow young people to



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have their volunteering recognised as a learning process through their involvement in youth centres.

Cooperation between educational institutions and youth centres is part of a quality standard for schools and universities to increase the availability of learning opportunities for young people.

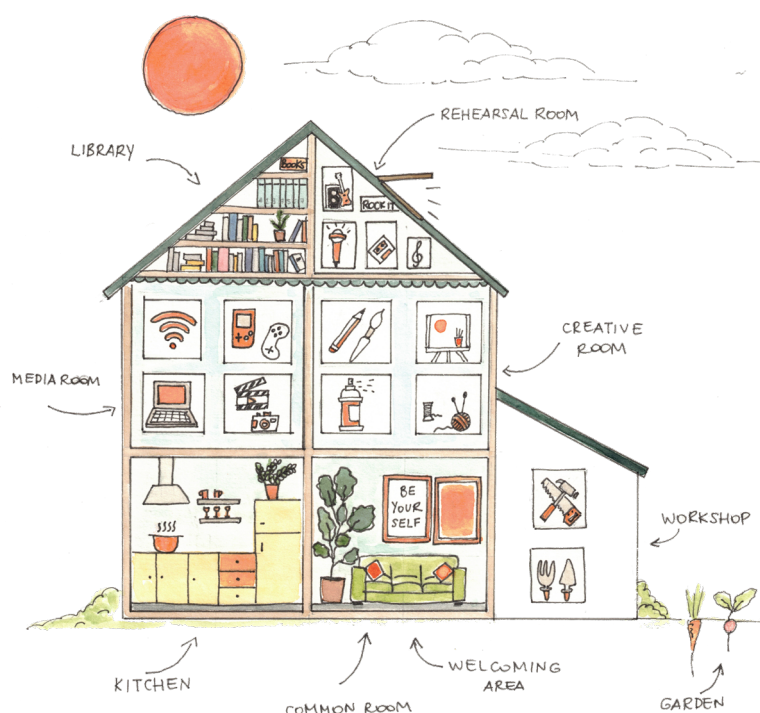
Youth centres have access to resources through various programmes established and regulated by local, regional, national and/or international institutions.

### RESOURCES

Part of the financial resources are directly available to young people to encourage initiative, responsibility and accountability. Resources are not only financial, but may also take the form of materials, equipment, support and access to decision-makers.

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For further information, please visit: [www.youthcentres.eu](http://www.youthcentres.eu)



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