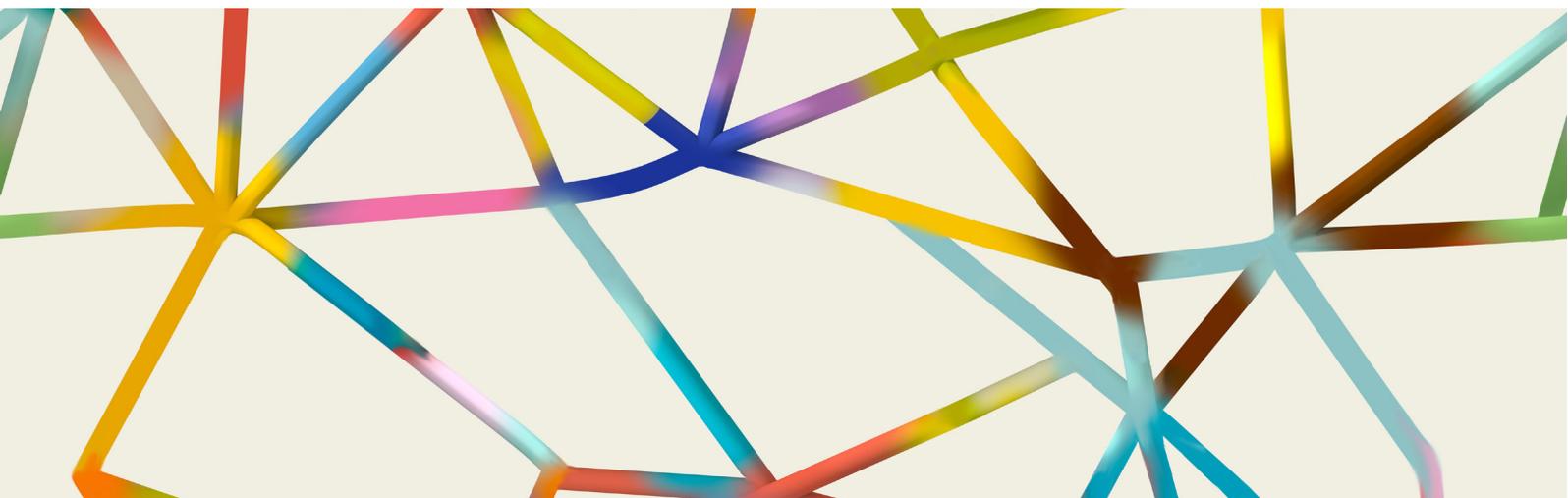Models for Integration and Prevention of Exclusion:

Empowering Migrant Youth (iYouth)

FINAL
PEER REVIEW
REPORT

iYouth

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Models for Integration and Prevention of Exclusion:

Empowering Migrant Youth (iYouth)

FINAL
PEER REVIEW
REPORT

Contents

1. Introduction

A. About iYouth

The European Commission-funded *Models for Integration and Prevention of Exclusion: Empowering Migrant Youth* (iYouth) was built on the assumption that the role of youth organisations could be better utilized in the integration practices for migrant youth in the European Union. The iYouth project aimed at empowering youth organizations to work towards young migrants' integration and the prevention of their exclusion.

Implemented during 2011-2013, in partnership with youth organisations and institutional partners from five EU Member States, the iYouth project explored the role and potential of youth organisations in integration processes through three major activities.

Firstly, through a 'peer review' process, iYouth partner organizations compared their integration activities and exchanged good practices across five partner countries: Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, and Poland. Among the most important findings of this process is that more efforts must be done, through substantive cooperation between authority and civil society actors, to empower migrant youth to become full and equal members of their new home societies. Furthermore, the process confirmed that youth organisations play a crucial role in empowering migrant youth through improving their understanding of their rights, responsibilities and opportunities, acquiring new knowledge, learning new skills and having the possibility to practice being an engaged adult.

Secondly, based on the findings of the peer reviews, the project created a public Online Training Platform to support capacity-building in a wide range of youth organisations. The Online Training Platform includes training materials, case studies, videos, useful tips and self-assessment tools for youth organisations and other actors working with migrant youth. The Online Training Platform is available in six languages at www.iyouth-project.eu.

Thirdly, national workshops and symposia further supported awareness raising and mutual learning on migrant youth integration among a wide range of stakeholders. These activities aimed to advance integration by promoting exchanges of ideas and knowledge, building the capacity of youth organisations, supporting multi-stakeholder networking, and producing joint recommendations, among others.

The iYouth project was implemented in partnership with ten partners from five EU Member States, including youth organisations and institutional actors. The project was managed by IOM Helsinki with support from IOM offices in Vienna, Prague, Marseille, and Warsaw.

B. What is a Peer Review?

Peer reviews have long been in use as tools for in-depth and systematic assessment at the national and European levels. In general terms, a peer review is:

> *"A process of self-evaluation and self-improvement through the systematic and collaborative comparison of practice and performance in order to identify own strengths and weaknesses, and learn how to adapt and improve as conditions change."*

> It *"Offers a way of identifying 'better and smarter' ways of doing things and understanding why they are better or smarter. These insights can then be used to implement changes that will improve practice or performance."*

Peers involved in the reviewing process are considered as both 'experts' and 'equals' – they are individuals holding hands-on experience of the issues under review. In this way, peer reviews support intensive exchanges and mutual learning: A peer review helps the reviewed organisation to understand its own performance and allows for a comparison with its peers. At the same time, the peers themselves gain new insights from the review of other organisations, enabling them to reflect on their own practices and approaches.

C. The iYouth approach to Peer Reviews

The iYouth peer review process compared the performance of each partner youth organisation against a 'Standard Model' (see below). iYouth peer reviews were conducted by teams of ca. 10 members from iYouth partner countries (institutional and youth organisation partners). Teams visited each partner country for three days to conduct interviews and workshops with internal and external stakeholders of the local partner organisation. Peers' detailed findings were then recorded in a database for further analysis and the production of a Peer Review Report. The peer review process was facilitated by ethical partnership, a consultancy company from the United Kingdom.

D. The iYouth Standard Model

During the peer reviews, each partner youth organisation was assessed against a 'Standard Model' (SM). The iYouth Standard Model used in the assessment of performance was developed within the iYouth project from an understanding of research and the very best practices of a wide range of working groups, organisations and institutions across Europe that are involved in the integration of migrant youth. It is substantially based on the work of ethical partnership and IOM, as well as inputs from all project partners.

The Standard Model is a framework for an 'ideal' organisation that is delivering services to migrant youth. This 'ideal' youth organisation is a 'construct' prepared for the purposes of the iYouth Project – it is 'aspirational' and no iYouth partner (or other) youth organisation is assumed to fully 'comply' with all aspects of the Standard Model.

The iYouth Standard Model consists of five main Thematic Areas, which are further divided into key factors (or 'Critical success factors') and indicators (which are either of qualitative or quantitative nature). The Thematic Areas are:

- Theme 1: Youth Engagement
- Theme 2: Education and Counselling
- Theme 3: Values and Principles
- Theme 4: Governance and Policy Networking
- Theme 5: Administration and Management

Each Thematic Area is explained in more detail below. The complete Standard Model is available at http://www.iyouth-project.eu/en/about-iyouth/publications/standard-model

E. The iYouth Peer Review process

The iYouth Peer Reviews took place during December 2011 and April 2012. Before each visit, the reviewed organisation prepared an initial report containing an overview of the background, history, aims, structure and range of activities of the organisation, as well as a self-assessment against the Standard Model.

Based on the initial report, each peer prepared a desk review with observations, an initial assessment of the reviewed organisation against the Standard Model, and questions to interviewees, among others.

The team of peers consisted of approximately 10-12 persons, representing one implementing and one institutional partner from each visiting iYouth partner country, a peer review facilitator from ethical partnership and the iYouth Project Coordinator from IOM.

Each peer review lasted for three days and started with a joint session among peers and the reviewed organisation, in which questions of general nature and clarifications on the initial report

were discussed. In teams of two-three persons, peers then conducted interviews and workshops with internal and external stakeholders of the reviewed organisation, usually lasting for ca. 45-50 minutes. These stakeholders included, among others, staff, volunteers and managers of the reviewed organisation, representatives of partner and donor organisations, clients and other beneficiaries of services (including e.g. parents), or local experts on youth and/or integration topics.

Where possible, peers also observed 'live' how activities and services were delivered, for example, by attending language classes, and visited the premises of the organisation. Most sessions were held in English, some in languages spoken by peers and interviewees, and some used the help of non-professional interpreters (mostly, staff from local IOM offices).

Peers kept records of all sessions ("interview" and "workshop cards") with their assessment of the organisation's performance against the Standard Model, including the strengths, weaknesses, development opportunities and training needs of the reviewed organisation. Major findings were recorded in short statements on colour-coded 'post-it' notes with references to Standard Model themes/key factors/indicators (green: performance according to Standard Model; red: performance not in line with Standard Model; yellow: recommendation, inconclusive evidence, or other observation). Post-it notes were collected on five large white boards (one for each SM theme), which provided for a rough visual representation of the reviewed organisation's performance as the peer review progressed, as well as for a quick initial summary of findings by the peer review facilitator.

iYouth peer reviews in numbers

Throughout the whole iYouth Peer Review process, six partner organisations' performance against the Standard Model was assessed, over 200 stakeholders were consulted in ca. 90 interviews and 40 workshop sessions, and peers produced over 250 interview/workshops cards and ca. 830 individual post-it notes (which provided the basis for the below Peer Review Findings and Recommendations).

Each peer review visit concluded with a closed session among peers to discuss their findings, followed by a joint session among peers and the reviewed organisation, in which the initial feedback was presented and discussed.

Following the peer reviews, IOM Helsinki prepared a written peer review report (of around 15-20 pages) for each reviewed organisation based on initial reports, desk reviews, peers' post-its and interview /workshop cards. Peer review reports were first shared with peers for comments and eventual approval, and then with the reviewed organisation for factual corrections (e.g. where peers may have misunderstood an interviewee) and endorsement.

This final peer review report aims to summarise joint findings of all six peer reviews conducted for the iYouth project. The presentation of findings is structured according to the five Standard Model themes. For each Thematic Area, this report will present peers' key findings and recommendations.

2. Peer Review Findings and Recommendations

A. Youth Engagement

1. STANDARD MODEL

Youth Engagement in the iYouth Standard Models refers to the ways in which the youth organisation plans, implements and evaluates the integration of migrant youth as well as its practical engagement with migrant youth. This thematic area recognises the value of youth work generally and the central importance of youth work in integration. It also acknowledges that many young people are at risk of being exposed to discrimination and exclusion. It recognises that for these people, sensitive and inclusive youth work can lead to successful integration if it is based on respect and dignity. The indicators of this theme recognise that voluntary and community-based youth workers and youth organisations can be as or even more successful in establishing contact and building trusting relationships with young people on the margins of society as those who are employed by national governments and municipalities.

2. FINDINGS: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FOR MIGRANT YOUTH WORK

In terms of **services/activities offered**, iYouth partners are involved, among others, in:

- (Professional or semi-professional) social counseling for individuals or in group settings
- (Open) leisure time activities, e.g.
  - » Sports and sports tournaments
  - » Cooking, handcrafts
- Open group meetings where youth jointly agree on activities or discuss topics of concern to them

- Informal and non-formal learning activities, including:
    » Games and excursions
    » Creative activities (music, theatre, dance etc.)
    » Awareness-raising sessions and discussions (e.g. on gender equality, citizenship)
- Support for youth's formal learning needs, such as
    » Language courses
    » 'Catch-up' and preparatory courses (e.g. high school/university entrance exams, 'preparatory exams' to improve grades and/or prevent having to repeat a year) and associated educational activities
    » Counseling for youth on the education system and vocational training (primary school, high school, prospective university students)
- Social interpreting
- Streetwork, aimed to get youth 'off the streets' and reduce 'risky' behavior, and to offer them meaningful leisure-time activities by encouraging them to participate in the organisation's activities

While all of the above were considered highly valuable for supporting young people's integration, peers found that there was particular value in *combining different approaches* (e.g. offering games as part of languages classes, 'recruiting' counselling clients through informal talks with participants in leisure and sports activities, or arranging excursions for counselling clients or students enrolled in the organisation's courses).

Peers found the below **factors to be at the basis of successful youth engagement.** It was found that engagement services and methods work best when they:

- Place the <u>youth at the centre of all activities</u>, and enable them to participate in their own integration processes, i.e. empower them to evolve from 'clients' to individuals taking an active role in their personal development
- Are <u>guided by the youth,</u> wherever feasible. For example, in leisure activities and informal learning, the ideas and demands of youth should be listened to and used to further develop these activities.
- Are <u>culturally and gender sensitive,</u> and show respect to young migrants as individuals
- Clearly address the <u>varied needs of the target group(s)</u> – which may require targeted activities for particular groups (e.g. youth of a particular ethnic background or only one gender)
- Engage youth through a wide range of <u>media and tools</u>, and by providing easily accessible and understandable information for the target group(s), such as:
    » (Multilingual) websites, newspapers and newsletters, brochures, fliers, social media (e.g. facebook.com)
    » Word-of-mouth through networks, migrant communities, schools
    » Streetwork
    » Personalised information, e.g. "welcome letters" by counsellors to new clients

- Are inspired by an <u>on-going dialogue with key stakeholders</u> and networks (parents, teachers, schools, other organisations and authorities), which also helps to create trust and commitment (e.g. among parents' of under-age youth, whose consent is needed for participation in activities)
- Aim to achieve <u>targets and/or objectives</u> that are defined in a <u>SMART</u> way
- Are based on theory and research, and guided/overseen by qualified staff or experts (where possible)
- Include <u>evaluation</u> in order to refine engagement programmes:
    » Target groups of evaluations should include the youth themselves, staff/volunteers, as well as external stakeholders (parents, donors, officials etc.).
    » A range of evaluation methods can be employed, ranging from formal to informal, oral to written, qualitative/quantitative, external or internal.
    » In order to maximize their value, evaluation results should be shared with relevant stakeholders, such as youth themselves (among others, to demonstrate that their views are taken into account), staff and volunteers (to help them improve and develop), and external stakeholders (to demonstrate transparency and the organisation's commitment to grow and learn)

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Among the most important **recommendations** made to reviewed organisations in view of further **developing and improving their youth engagement approaches** were that:

- Youth organisations should have a <u>written engagement strategy (or plan)</u> to define, among others,
    » Target groups and the specific needs the organisation wants to address
    » Engagement methods (e.g. sports, counselling, street work, arts)
    » Roles, responsibilities and resources within the organisation (staff/volunteers/youth etc.)
    » Young people's involvement in guiding and delivering engagement programmes
    » <u>SMART objectives and targets</u> for engagement programmes/activities, and methods for evaluating whether/how these have been achieved
    » The organisation's vision of a <u>pathway approach</u> towards full integration (i.e. how single steps and activities relate to each other and come together to comprehensively empower migrant youth, and support their progression towards education and employment)
    » Role and contributions of external stakeholders in delivering the strategy (donors, partners, schools, other NGOs etc.)
- Youth organisations should *share the above written strategies/plans* widely with internal and external stakeholders to ensure that:
    » <u>youth</u> themselves know what to expect from the organisation, and how they can participate and contribute
    » management and all <u>staff/volunteers</u> are 'on the same page' and jointly work towards common goals
    » <u>donors and partners</u> are well aware of the organisation, its aims and approaches, and trust the organisation to work in a transparent and reliable manner (which can also be useful for lobbying, future partnerships and obtaining funding)

- Youth organisations should make (more) efforts towards <u>broad and continued stakeholder involvement</u> in developing youth engagement programmes, based on a regular and in-depth dialogue, for example, with:
  - » Other NGOs (including migrants' associations)
  - » Schools and teachers' associations
  - » Parents
  - » Authorities and public service providers
- Youth organisations should make (more) efforts to <u>involve migrant youth themselves in planning and delivering engagement programmes</u>, for example, through consultations, focus groups (incl. on social media) or recruiting them as volunteers with (small) tasks on their own:
  - » To ensure that their needs and interests are met
  - » To contribute to migrant youth empowerment through new experiences and individual learning (group dynamics, decision-making, organisational and communication skills)
  - » To give youth the feeling of *being part* of the organisation, rather than only clients
- Youth organisations should make (more) efforts to encourage contacts and exchanges between youth of <u>different backgrounds</u>, including with 'native' youth.
  - » To enable contacts, networks, language and social skills of high value for young people's integration
  - » To increase mutual understanding and counteract prejudices
- Youth organisations should aim to <u>create linkages between different services and activities</u> wherever possible, to ensure that support for migrant youth is as comprehensive as possible. Examples include:
  - » Leisure-time activities are offered for students enrolled in language/integration courses or for counselling clients
  - » Staff/volunteers conducting leisure-time activities keep their eyes open for youth in need of support, and refer them to counselling services where needed
  - » Leisure time activities and games include educational elements, e.g. for improving language skills, (open) discussions on values and culture, or on how to be a self-sufficient adult (running one's own household, spending money etc.).

Youth engagement through free-time activities

iYouth partner organisation: Kanava Youth, Finland

Kanava Youth offers (migrant) youth meaningful leisure time activities that support their personal growth and social skills, and prevent them from spending their free time on the streets.

Through these activities, Kanava staff and volunteers also get to know youth and their personal situation, and can direct them to more targeted activities (counselling, mediation, homework clubs etc.) where needed.

How does it work in practice?

The starting point for Kanava's youth engagement is an "open doors"-policy: Youth can participate in leisure time activities or just come to Kanava's premises to spend their free time.

Activities are based on youth's proposals; they include discussions, board games, table tennis, watching football matches, or cooking. Group discussions and joint decision-making among youth on these activities also contribute to their social skills (respect for different opinions, listening, "discussion culture" etc.).

At least one Kanava instructor is always present to support and direct youth in these activities. By getting to know the young people and their specific needs, and by building trust in informal surroundings, instructors are able to notice issues faced by youth that require more targeted support, such as counselling, mediation, or help with homework.

Involving parents and the community

Kanava arranges regular parent evenings to keep parents informed and receive their feedback; these events also help to build trust among parents, which is sometimes needed for them to allow their children to join Kanava activities.

Kanava's "open doors"-approach is also an important tool for motivating and recruiting volunteers – many who joined Kanava as 'clients' have moved on to play a more active role in various activities.

What is needed to make it work?

Suitable premises for open leisure time activities (Kanava has a kitchen, a large multi-purpose 'living room', a media room etc.)

Training for staff/volunteers as youth instructors

Close contacts with the community and parents (to build trust)

More case studies available on www.iyouth-project.eu

Youth engagement through schools
iYouth partner organisation: ADRIC, France

What does the programme do?

The project "Jeunes pour l'égalité" (Youth for Equality) aims to instruct (migrant) pupils on different matters of importance for integration and citizenship. Through discussions and workshops, we equip them with knowledge of French society, its institutions and the rights, duties and responsibilities of each individual.

The project aims to empower youth to be active participants in democratic processes, to actively seek out information about integration and equality, and to be critical in developing their own vision of equality.

How does it work in practice?

"Jeunes pour l'égalité" has been implemented by ADRIC in collaboration with three other partners (in charge of creative workshops). This project is championed by the vice-president of the Ile-de-France region, in charge of high schools and education policy. More than 4000 students and 995 teachers in 18 high schools around the region have been participating in training sessions. Most of the students have a migrant background.

During first step of the project and at ADRIC sessions, students and teachers are made aware of the importance and impact of gender equality in four main axes:

1. Laïcité and boy-girl equality,

2. Sexual violence,

3. Gender-specific job presentations and their impact on employment choices,

4. Sexual freedom and liberation.

In the second step of the project, students participate in 3 creative workshops (out of the available 4: theatre, writing, poster design, radio production), in order to explore their experiences and encourage them to reflect on what they learned during the first phase.

What is needed to make it work?

• Staff need in-depth knowledge of the issues discussed (citizenship, equality, gender issues)

• Good contacts/networks with schools and educational authorities.

More case studies available on www.iyouth-project.eu

B. Education and Counselling

1. STANDARD MODEL

This thematic focus area of the iYouth Standard Model helped the peers to review the ways in which organisations support young people in developing their learning, values, (soft) skills and competencies through education and counselling work. This thematic area recognises the role of youth organisations in promoting a better understanding of the needs of migrant youth among formal education and training providers. It also recognises the complimentary role of youth organisations as advocates for migrant youth with formal education and training providers.

Many youth organisations focus on providing counselling as well as informal and non-formal education activities. What is special about informal and non-formal education is that individuals are actively involved in designing and delivering the education/learning processes and that it is participatory. Learning is recognised as an on-going process that takes place through participating with others in a diversity of structured activities, events, workshops, and organisations. Non-formal learning should be shared and designed in such a way that it creates an environment in which the learner helps to design the learning and education.

2. FINDINGS: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FOR MIGRANT YOUTH WORK

The education and counselling work of iYouth partner organisation encompassed, among others:

- Language courses, including language exams that lead to officially recognised certificates (enabling youth to enrol in the formal education system or seek employment)

- Counselling for individuals and/or groups on topics concerning:
    - » Education (at all levels: primary, secondary, vocational and university education) and recognition of foreign diplomas
    - » Employment (finding suitable job openings, contacting prospective employers, writing CVs and application letters)
    - » Personal issues (finding accommodation, financial topics, leisure time and hobbies, understanding their new home country's culture and society)
- Programmes complementing the formal education system, e.g.
    - » Preparatory courses for entrance examinations to high schools or universities
    - » 'Catch-up' courses and preparation for 'preparatory exams' to improve grades and/or prevent having to repeat a year (e.g. during summer holidays)
    - » Tutoring arrangements, such as:
        - » 'native' volunteers regularly meeting migrant youth to help with homework and school assignments, or to improve their language skills ('language tandems')
        - » 'teaching assistants' accompanying migrant youth in schools

> » Information and training for school teachers (and other pedagogical staff) in order to increase their awareness and capacity for working with students with migrant background
>
> » Delivering awareness-raising sessions for students in cooperation with schools, e.g. on citizenship, equality, anti-discrimination

- 'Chaperonage': volunteers/staff accompany young people when they meet e.g. authorities or landlords
- Informal and non-formal learning activities, including:
- Games and excursions (including to historical sites or national monuments)
  > » Creative activities (music, theatre, dance etc.), including those that acquaint young people with the cultures of their new home society and/or of their own country of origin, and strengthen their own identities
  >
  > » Art projects (dance, music, photography) that support cultural exchanges by introducing migrants' culture and backgrounds to the 'host' society, and vice versa

Peers found a clear added value in a *comprehensive approach* to education and counselling for migrant youth, which combines different aspects of the above elements. For example, peers saw great value in organisations that offer an initial counselling session to all youth enrolling in language courses in order to assess their needs and provide further support if required. On the other hand, offering informal learning and open leisure-time activities to youth already enrolled in e.g. language courses or counselling schemes was similarly considered to be of benefit.

Peers found the below **factors to be at the basis of effective education and counselling for migrant youth.** It was found that youth organisations' services and activities work best when they:

- Are based on a good understanding of migrant youth's needs, and of what is required on youth's path towards education and employment
- Are pro-actively promoted through a variety of means (websites, brochures, videos, word-of-mouth etc.) so as to ensure that information on services and support available reaches those youth in need of them
- Are easily accessible and employ a low-threshold approach in particular for new clients, e.g. by informally promoting services and discussing potential counselling needs with youth who participate in language classes or in leisure-time activities
- Include carefully-planned record-keeping mechanisms for the organisation to follow-up on young people's needs and their progress (e.g. in counselling or for participants in courses)
- Have been developed in partnership with stakeholders, such as teachers, sponsors, volunteers, authorities, or other NGOs
- Are designed so as to complement existing formal education and integration services in the public sector
- Make use of the knowledge and services of other organisations in order to provide youth with the most comprehensive support possible. This includes referring youth to specialised counselling or education offerings of other organisations, as well as (regular) inter-organisational meetings to share information

- Make efforts to continuously encourage youth to progress further by recognising their learning achievements and challenging them to meet higher levels, e.g. through prizes/certificates or 'year-end' events where (individual) youth are congratulated on their accomplishments

- Are continuously developed to ensure that methods and approaches are up-to-date and 'meet the youth where they are', e.g. by using online media and providing help to youth through blogs or discussion forums.

- Are delivered by qualified staff/volunteers who:
  » Truly understand the situation and needs of young migrants and are passionate about supporting young people to progress and learn
  » Are pro-actively supported in their work by the organisation, e.g. through supervision, written manuals, or regular staff/volunteer meetings/trainings where challenges and ideas can be discussed
  » Are provided opportunities to further develop their skills and knowledge through different trainings (in-house or through the possibility to attend trainings by external organisations)

- Are complemented (or even delivered in full) by making use of volunteering schemes. These, in turn, work best when they are based on an in-depth understanding of volunteers' motivation and needs, which include:
  » enriching experiences, meeting different cultures and people;
  » a feeling of doing "good things", being useful;
  » opportunities to acquire teaching/counselling/tutoring experiences and confidence;
    » flexible arrangements and the organisation's openness to tutors' ideas, while at the same time, feeling safe and secure in what they do (which requires support, training from the organisation);
  » a group identity of people who share similar values (tolerance, openness, positive attitude to immigration).

Informal learning through games

iYouth partner organisation: Interface Vienna, Austria

Students in each of Interface Vienna's language classes (ca. 10 students participate in one activity) engage in playing games aimed at informal learning

What does it do?

Interface uses a wide range of activities with different aims, all focusing on supporting the integration of our students. Interface Vienna always tries to organise fun activities on the topics which the organisation wants to present to their students to keep them motivated and interested. Therefore Interface has developed a wide range of games.

How does it work in practice?

Some examples include:

The job games: Students have to fulfil different tasks and answer questions on education and jobs in Austria in order to earn 'game money'. As part of the game they get to know different jobs and possible education opportunities and are invited to attend a school (within the game).

If they do so, they get more 'game money'. This is to make them aware that your chances on the job market and a good income depends on the education you took. It is part of the game that students are asked about their ideas and plans, and they are invited to take advantage of Interface's individual counselling.

The orientation in Vienna-game: Students have to chase and find an "agent" in the Vienna subway system. When calling him on his cell phone, he has to tell them where he is at that moment. His possibilities narrow down, as he may only use each subway line once.

The aim of the activity is to practise getting around with the Viennese public transportation system, to work together as a group and develop a strategic plan (they can split up, chase the agent, and wait for him at a central point).

"Selina wants to be a doctor": The story of a girl who wants to become a doctor is presented. Students have to support her in a role-play to convince her parents that studying at a university is an appropriate and good thing for a girl. The importance of getting a good education also for girls is discussed.

What is needed to make it work?

No special preconditions apart from regular skills necessary for teaching a class

More case studies available on www.iyouth-project.eu

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Among the most important **recommendations** made to reviewed organisations in view of further **developing and improving their education and counselling approaches** were that youth organisations should:

- Have written strategies or plans for the education and counselling services they (want to) deliver in order to define, among others:
  - » Target groups and the specific needs the organisation wants to address
  - » Roles, responsibilities and resources within the organisation (staff/volunteers/youth etc.)
  - » Young people's involvement in guiding and delivering programmes
  - » SMART objectives and targets for programmes/activities, and methods for evaluating whether/how these have been achieved
  - » The organisation's vision of a pathway approach towards full integration (i.e. how single steps and activities relate to each other and come together to comprehensively empower migrant youth, and support their progression towards education and employment)
  - » Role and contributions of external stakeholders in delivering the strategy (donors, partners, schools, other NGOs etc.), including clarification on when youth are to be referred for help to other organisations/service providers (e.g. when their needs cannot be properly addressed)

- Review their strategies/plans regularly to ensure that it answers to the current needs of youth, and is delivered through up-to-date approaches and methods

- Regularly map skills and experiences of staff/volunteers, so as to ensure that all required expertise is in place, as well as to find out whether new services/programmes could be delivered with the existing resources

- Make (further) efforts to cooperate, and make use of synergies, with other (youth) integration stakeholders, e.g. for:
  - » Ensuring that other organisations are aware of the organisation's own services for migrant youth
  - » Staying updated on what services are available to the organisation's own clients elsewhere (for referrals and 'seamless' transitions etc.)
  - » Exchange information and knowledge on the situation of migrant youth

- Make (more) efforts to ensure that staff and volunteers have all skills, information and motivation they need in order to effectively support migrant youth, e.g. through
  - » Ongoing in-house or external trainings
  - » Regular (team) meetings to discuss challenges and new ideas, supervision

- Make (more) efforts to complement existing services through volunteering schemes:
  - » Volunteers can be migrant or 'native' youth or adults; both will not only help the organisation to support migrant youth but at the same time grow and develop themselves through volunteering – volunteering in itself is empowering!
  - » In order to effectively contribute to the aims of the organisation, volunteers have to be 'taken care of' (rather than being 'taken for granted'): The organisation should ensure that they feel safe and motivated, receive all necessary training and support to do their work, and are

compensated appropriately (which may range from publicly acknowledging their contributions, to financial compensation for travel or subsistence)

» Review and (where necessary) further develop record-keeping mechanisms. Keeping track of youth's needs and progress in a way that allows the organisation on a whole (i.e. not only individual staff) to support the youth is important for the effectiveness of education and counselling services. At the same time, unnecessary bureaucracy must be avoided to ensure that staff/volunteers can focus on the actual tasks at hand.

» Review on a regular basis how its services and programmes are promoted and how information is distributed: to make sure that relevant information reaches all of those in need.

Counselling for migrant youth
iYouth partner organisation: META, the Czech Republic

META's counselling services are available to immigrants in the Czech Republic, including migrant youth and students, as well as parents or pre-school children.

Some 400 clients receive counselling support from META each year, out of which ca. one third are long-term clients. Also social workers, teachers and other educators can use META's services in order to support their work with migrant youth.

What does it do?

META's counselling aims to improve young immigrants' opportunities in education and the labour market caused e.g. by advancing language skills, access to information, awareness of the Czech system and society.

How does it work in practice?

As a registered provider of social services, META offers Professional Social Counselling in education and employment opportunities in the Czech Republic.

Primary concerns:

- Czech education system

- Czech language courses

- Validation of foreign diplomas

- Identifying suitable study options and support during studies

- Facilitating interpreting services

- Helping with kindergarten and primary school registration

- Support for job seekers in finding job openings, writing CVs and application letters

META's counselling services are **advertised** through:

- leaflets

- other NGOs, schools

- newspaper announcements

- authorities

- word-of-mouth

Delivery of counselling services:

- When a client contacts META for the first time, their needs are discussed and META's services presented. If services are considered useful for their situation, an (oral or written) agreement and individual plan is made with the client. The extent of the counselling depends on clients' individual needs: it can range from short ad-hoc advice to long-term counselling.

- A regular counselling session lasts ca. 60 minutes (it can be shorter/longer if needed) and is usually conducted in person, but using phone, email or Skype are possible, too.

- When longer term counselling is required, the individual plan (for which we have prepared forms and guidance for our staff) is revised and supplemented. The plan is always shared with the client. It summarises the client's current situation, needs and the overall aims concerning education and/or employment.

Overall aims for the counselling are broken down into smaller steps, which are reviewed in the following counselling sessions.

META **keeps records** of counselling sessions and clients' progress on paper (counselling plan, documents, diplomas etc.) in a locked register, and electronically (in password-protected files, so that access to personal information is restricted to only those staff who need it).

What is needed to make it work?

- A degree at least at B.A. or similar level in e.g. pedagogy, social work or social politics is a legal requirement for professional social counsellors in the Czech Republic

- Good background on the counselling topics (educational system, legislation, labour market etc.)

- Language skills (English, Russian, French) and access to interpretation services (e.g. for Vietnamese, Mongolian, Chinese)Social and communication skills

More case studies available on www.iyouth-project.eu

C. Values and Principles

1. STANDARD MODEL

This thematic area of the Standard Model focuses on the values and principles that provide the foundation for the work of the organisation. The values and principles of the organisation should be 'visible' in all its services and activities. The organisation (including all of its staff, volunteers and other responsible persons for upholding the organization's values) should take positive action to implement its values and principles and in so doing be both aware and willing to address global challenges.

The values and principles of the organisation help to foster 'critical thinking' and to challenge discrimination and the values promoted by extremists. This thematic area recognises the importance and contribution of the values and principles of the organisation in counteracting counterproductive ideologies such as hate speech, discrimination, prejudices and stereotypes, intolerance, violence, poverty and the scarcity of/unequal access to resources.

2. FINDINGS: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FOR MIGRANT YOUTH WORK

Peers considered the following approaches of partner youth organisations to work well for upholding and promoting values and principles:

- Charters, mission statements and other documents that contain a commitment by the organisation to the values and principles underlying its work

- The organisation, its management, staff and volunteers, translate values and principles into action in activities and services: Youth feel appreciated for who they are, they are met with respect, and discriminatory speech and practices are addressed as soon as they are noticed.

- Mediation and conflict resolution services among:
  - » Individual persons (youth themselves, youth and parents, youth and teachers)
  - » Groups (youth of different ethnic background, 'clans')

- Trainings and awareness-raising sessions for internal and external participants on e.g.
  - » (Gender) equality and anti-discrimination/racism
  - » Cultural sensitivity
  - » Mutual respect and trust
  - » Intercultural encounters and migrants' social realities
  - » Legal questions (e.g. legal rights of migrants, residence and work permits, anti-discrimination)

- Social and cultural events that advance mutual awareness and understanding among migrants and the 'host' society, aiming to reduce stereotypes and prejudice

- Inclusion of topics related to understanding values and norms in curricula for (language) courses for migrant youth and delivering these contents in a culturally sensitive manner

- Media work and publicity (websites, blogs, newspapers) that
  - » Provide migrants with information on their rights, legal status etc.
  - » Give a public voice to migrants and sheds light on their situation, their contributions to society, or the challenges they are facing

» <u>Awareness-raising campaigns</u> on ethno-cultural diversity, anti-discrimination, or specific legal issues (e.g. two iYouth partners were involved in a campaign that brought about an amnesty for irregular migrants in Poland).

Promoting values and norms

iYouth partner organisation: Interface Vienna, Austria

The aim of many activities of Interface's standard counselling and education curriculum is to present the values of the Austrian society to our students and engage them in discussions on the topic.

How does it work in practice?

There is a wide range of activities on values and principles. They are always presented in a way that does not try to force the students to accept, but offers them to get to know what we see as important values.

There are activities on topics such as 'Solving difficult situations without violence', 'Men and women have equal rights and equal chances', 'Why generalisations are dangerous'.

Interface does not expect those who do not share these values to be convinced after just a few lessons, but even if somebody has a different opinion, s/he shall not be judged, but feel invited to get to know the values we present and get involved in a discussion on them.

What is needed to make it work?

General skills necessary for social counsellors working with a group.

More case studies available on www.iyouth-project.eu

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Among the most important **recommendations** made to reviewed organisations in view of ensuring that values and principles are upheld and promoted – and can thus support the integration and empowerment of young people – were that:

Youth organisations should:

- Define and make publicly available, for example, through mission statements or charters:
  » the basic principles underlying its work (such as confidentiality and respect for the individual, responsibility, professionalism, flexibility) and
  » the values it wishes to promote through actions (equality, non-violence etc.)

Organisations should display summaries or key points in visible places (e.g. on organisation's website, posters, brochures)

This will help to ensure that:

> » Youth are aware of what the organisation stands for and feel welcome, appreciated and motivated to contribute
> » Internal and external stakeholders understand the organisation's mission and can work towards a common goal
> » The organisation itself can measure and report its performance against a distinct set of principles – which is important, among others, vis-à-vis current and potential donors

- Aim for <u>broad stakeholder involvement</u> when creating or updating the organisation's mission statements: Staff, volunteers, the youth themselves, parents and partners can contribute important perspectives and expertise, while their commitment to the organisation and a shared vision of its mission will be strengthened at the same time

- Ensure that (all) staff and volunteers are encouraged and have opportunities to further their knowledge on legal rights, anti-discrimination, equality, gender and cultural sensitivity, peace and non-violence, or mediation and conflict-resolution through trainings and other educational measures (in-house or external)Contacts and networks with other organisations should be explored for exchanging expertise and trainers (which may make on-going trainings more affordable for the organisation)

- Aim to ensure that the values at the core of the organisation (as well as important legal principles) <u>are put into practice in *all* activities and services throughout the organisation</u>, e.g. through trainings, mentoring, or monitoring of staff/volunteers

- Carefully consider how genuine two-way integration can be advanced through its activities. This includes engagement also of members of the 'host' society to increase mutual understanding and trust (e.g. as volunteers, through events or awareness-raising). Organisations established and run by members of a particular migrant group, in particular, should furthermore aim to find a good balance between upholding the cultural identity of youth and their overall integration in society (so that identification with one's 'own' group does not happen at the expense of overall integration)

Integration through cultural activities

iYouth partner organisation: Armenian Cultural Association, Poland

The Armenian Cultural Association (ACA) engages the Polish society at large and the Armenian community in Cracow/Poland, including Armenian youth, in cultural dialogue, increasing understanding and appreciation of different cultures.

What do the activities do?

Cultural events contribute to the two-way integration of Armenians and Polish, including youth, in Poland by:

- Making Armenian culture known to Polish society, and familiarising Armenians with Polish culture and customs

- Supporting the development of stable identities and self-esteem of (young) Armenian migrants

- Developing and maintaining networks with schools/universities and among pupils and students, local community representatives, NGOs and other migrant organizations, authorities etc.

- Promoting multiculturalism in the Polish society

How does it work in practice?

The Armenian Cultural Association (ACA) has organised a range of cultural events over the past years. These include "Armenian Days", end-of-school celebrations, exhibitions, or 'cross-cultural' Christmas celebrations.

The programme of such events may include lectures, exhibitions, films, presentation of Armenian cuisine, and artistic performances (music, dance, theatre, or living poetry). Some of the events also serve as fund-raisers for good causes, e.g. for creative work with disabled children.

Armenian youth play an important role in many of these events. Among others, they practice music, dance, and "Banali"-theatre in ACA's Saturday school, and then perform these in front of the audiences.

Through these events and performances, interaction is promoted, interest and understanding of each other's cultures is raised among Polish and Armenian people, and a sense of belonging and appreciation is strengthened among the performing youth.

What is needed to make it work?

- Teachers/volunteers able to work with youth on performing arts (pedagogical and artistic skills)

- Parents and others who are willing to help (e.g. with transportation).

More case studies available on www.iyouth-project.eu

D. Governance and Policy Networking

1. STANDARD MODEL

This thematic area includes the ways in which the youth organisation is 'governed' and its services are 'directed'. It also includes the way in which the organisation influences the policies that affect its operation, for example through lobbying or campaigning.

It includes the way in which the organisation must be legally established. Organisations involved in delivering services to individuals from migrant backgrounds should be 'governed' by people who are culturally aware, who have an interest in migrant youth, and have a knowledge of the historical/political/ethnic backgrounds of the individuals they are serving and wish to serve. Those who govern and direct the organisation should establish and set the values, principles, polices and practice of the organisation, based on their experience and knowledge. The individuals that the organisation serves and wishes to serve should be involved in the governing and directing of the organisation.

This thematic area includes the ways in which those who deliver services (professional staff, volunteers etc.) should 'relate' to and 'work with' the young people. It recognises that young people are more often likely to accept guidance and information from other young people than from adults.

2. FINDINGS: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FOR MIGRANT YOUTH WORK

Peers found a range of factors in the area of governance and policy networking that contributed to the effective delivery of services and activities aiming to advance the integration of migrant youth.

These included that the organisations:
- Are <u>legally established and registered</u>, and fully aware of their legal duties and responsibilities
- Have defined <u>specific priorities and objectives for clearly stated areas of engagement</u> – and ensure that these are known and understood by internal and external stakeholders
- Have <u>governance structures</u> in place that ensure effective communication, consultations and mutual support between the management level and all stakeholders, such as
    » Boards of directors and committees, composed of diverse members including youth, volunteers, parents, and external stakeholders (sponsors, authorities etc.)
    » Consultative processes (e.g. focus/discussion groups, evaluations) that ensure the needs and ideas of youth are listened to and serve to direct the organisation's services and activities
    » Staff association committees to contribute to safe and satisfying employment practices
- Are directed by effective <u>management that acts as advocate</u> for the needs of the organisation, e.g. with donors, municipalities, ministries, partners and other stakeholders
- Have clearly defined the <u>division of labour and responsibilities</u> among staff for all areas of its engagement
- <u>Cooperate and engage in networks</u> with other service providers and organisations, for example, for referral of youth to other organisations' services, exchange of information, policy networking and joint lobbying on topics of mutual interest (e.g. through NGO umbrellas or ad-hoc advocacy initiatives)

- Have a <u>media profile</u> or are <u>recognised as experts</u> on specific topics by external stakeholders, so that statements and lobbying efforts by the organisation are noticed, listened to and have an impact.

Involving migrant youth in governance
iYouth partner organisation: Kanava Youth, Finland

Kanava Youth organisation aims to actively involve youth in the governance of the organisation in order to:

- Ensure the organisation's activities serve the interests and needs of migrant youth

- Grow young people's social and organisational skills and self-confidence

How does it work in practice?

Kanava's executive director guides and oversees all of the organisation's activities. The executive director is selected by, and responsible to, Kanava's board. The board is elected annually by the organisation's members and has nine regular and six alternating members; ca. 70% of board members are migrant youth.

- Various committees (or teams) operate under the board, such as:
- Education team
- Youth team (including sub-teams for girls, boys, and children)
- "Activity centre" team (for free-time activities)
- Media team
- Projects team
- "Think tank" team

Teams are composed of members of the board, interested youth, and volunteers (youth and adults). Youth can join any committee they are interested in – there are no formal selection/election procedures.

Teams plan and implement activities, collect feedback from youth on events and new ideas, and are in continuous exchange with the board and executive director.

This open administrative structure enables 'lived democracy' and to supports learning among youth on management, project development, decision-making, communications, taking responsibility etc.

The board and teams meet at least once a month to review/discuss recent events and plan future activities, but can meet more often when needed.

What is needed to make it work?

An 'open mind' and readiness to listen to youth and a supportive culture that stresses the importance of youth involvement to all staff, volunteers, and stakeholders.

More case studies available on www.iyouth-project.eu

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Among the most important **recommendations** made to reviewed organisations in order to further strengthen their governance and policy networking were the following. Organisations should:

- Work towards a broad(er) and (more) structured on-going multi-stakeholder involvement in the organisation's governance and decision-making processes to ensure that:
  - » Relevant views and expertise are utilised in planning services/activities and the overall direction of the organisation
  - » Stakeholders are committed to the organisation by having a say themselves, and are motivated to jointly work towards common goals
  - » Migrant youth are empowered by being given responsibilities and gaining experiences and skills (social skills, group dynamics, democratic decision-making)
  - » External stakeholders, in particular donors, consider the organisation to be governed in a transparent and effective manner, which may help secure their continued commitment to (financially) supporting the organisation

- Among others, the above recommendations could be put into practice by:
  - » Defining the organisation's governance arrangements in writing – which should be based on a stakeholder analysis and extensive consultations with internal and external stakeholders – including statements on why multi-stakeholder involvement is considered important, and how it is done in practice
  - » Opening up governing arrangements for broader involvement of stakeholders, e.g. by reserving seats on the board for youth or external stakeholders, establishing committees, teams, focus groups composed of youth, staff and volunteers on specific topics
  - » Encouraging and educating youth on the value of their active participation in directing the organisation

- Aim towards a more profound and nuanced networking and lobbying strategy, by:
  - » Identifying the organisation's and its staff/volunteers' strengths and expertise in order to better engage and get due recognition for the organisation
  - » Creating a stakeholder analysis which will help in developing more effective working relations with relevant counterparts and policy/decision-makers in order to influence policies regarding migrant youth
  - » Setting SMART targets and evaluating the achievement (including recording feedback from stakeholders)
  - » Focusing on securing mid- and long term contracts and partnerships
  - » Strengthening partnerships with e.g. similar organisations or umbrella organisations in order to achieve common interests through advocacy work (sometimes joint actions may prove more effective than individual endeavours, however, also individual staff/volunteer's expertise may at times be more suitable for better achieving specific lobbying goals)
  - » Enable key staff/volunteers to develop their lobbying and networking skills through internal or external trainings

- Develop legacy planning and mechanisms that reduce management risks, and in order to secure and develop the future of the organisation and avoid risks associated with loss of (contributions from) key individuals ("legacy planning")
- Explore possibilities for establishing (or further developing) volunteering schemes

E. Administration

1. STANDARD MODEL

This thematic area of the Standard Model includes the key factors needed to effectively administer and manage the organisation. The success of organisations involved in delivering services to migrant youth is dependent on the day-to-day and long term administration and management of the organisation, including the management of finance, performance, human resources, safety, security, communication and reporting.

This thematic area recognises that effective administration and management provides the credibility needed so that other organisations will agree to form partnerships in co- delivery of programmes and in jointly making applications for funding and grants. Similarly, credibility is needed vis-à-vis potential donors and authorities. The thematic area recognises that administrative and management credibility, as well as communications and PR measures, build and attract additional capacity, volunteers and resources. It also recognises that effective administration, management and communication are needed to attract sponsorship and donations.

2. FINDINGS: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FOR MIGRANT YOUTH WORK

Quite a few of the organisations reviewed were rather small and had only briefly set up administration systems. However, given their size and experience in administrative matters, peers found good initiatives and structured methods of administrative work. Peers found the following administration and management-related practices especially functional in further enabling and enhancing the work of the organisations:

- <u>Understanding and delivery of basic reporting and accounting obligations</u>, including annual reports that are produced and shared with external stakeholders
- <u>Structured and effective staff management</u> and regular supervision of staff/volunteers, which enables:
    » Collaboration and communication between different staff members/volunteers as well as mentoring of new colleagues, including time-management and staff appraisals
    » Acknowledged division of labour and tasks; internal as well as external partners and donors are well-aware of responsibilities of different staff/volunteers
    » Development and maintenance of staff/volunteer manuals that further support their work and ownership in the organisation

- <u>Medium and long term planning</u> is undertaken, including:
  - » Developing a strategy for income generation, which helps moving the organisation from being heavily dependent on short-term project funding (that often causes instability and bottlenecks in service provision due to inflexible resource allocation)
  - » An in-depth understanding of the organisation's need for continual improvement and seeking external support for this
- <u>Refining the organisation's evaluation mechanisms</u> in order to:
  - » Ensure that projects/services are effectively delivered and monitored
  - » Collect and take into account internal and external stakeholders' views for the further development of the organisation
  - » Consistently improve programmes and provide relevant trainings for staff/volunteers,
- <u>External communication and its methods are well thought-out</u> and aim to support the organisation's overall strategy in youth work, which can also increase fund-raising opportunities. This includes that:
  - » A communication strategy is built on the organisation's unique identity (including communication designed to reach different target groups such as youth, schools, partners)
  - » Skilled and trained staff/volunteers are responsible for the organisation's external communication
  - » Different communication channels are used for different target groups (e.g. website, word-of-mouth, brochures)

Manual for volunteers

iYouth partner organisation: META, Czech Republic

META Volunteers supporting migrant youth. Ca. 25-30 volunteers receive the manual each year (who support around 50 clients per year)

What does it do?

The manual supports the volunteers in their work with migrants/clients of META and guides them through the whole volunteer program.

How does it work in practice?

The manual gives volunteers structured and brief information about META and its mission, information about the integration of foreigners in the Czech Republic and the topics that clients of META usually face.

After the initial training, each volunteer receives a printed copy of the manual, which they study and refer to as guidelines.

What is needed to make it work?

The manual is regularly updated by META's volunteer coordinator. This requires:

- Experience with volunteers in META

- Training in foreigner's law (to be able to gather and share information about changes in the law of residence of foreigners in the Czech Republic).

More case studies available on www.iyouth-project.eu

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Among the most important recommendations made to reviewed organisations in order to further strengthen their administration procedures were the following. Organisations should:

- Work towards establishing <u>effective and transparent management mechanisms</u> and administration systems that are:
  - » Well documented (i.e. based on written policies, record keeping)
  - » Shared, i.e. not dependent on individuals but on the organisation as a whole
  - » Customer focused
  - » Outcome-oriented
  - » Based on using (systematic) feedback and continual improvement
  - » Based on business planning principles

- Explore ways for <u>diversifying funding</u>, in order to:
  - » move towards a more sustainable business model that can help reduce risks and dependence on project funding
  - » address changing operational environments

- Get training on principles of business administration and management, which will help to use important business planning principles (e.g. for running a profitable business, medium-term planning and target-setting)

- Develop <u>structured and effective staff and volunteer policies</u> that take into consideration:
  - » The provision of management information that allows the organisation to be flexible and adaptive to current developments and evolving needs
  - » Staff well-being and motivation, including time-management and staff-appraisal
  - » Jointly agreed and written formal administrative structures, internal communications and division of tasks/responsibilities among staff/volunteers
  - » Opportunities and encouragement for developing staff/volunteers' competencies through internal and external trainings
  - » Benefits of thorough background checks when recruiting staff, to ensure the safety of youth and colleagues
  - » The need for well-developed two-way communication mechanisms with/among volunteers in order to ensure shared ownership of decisions and understanding of the organisation's polices, and to avoid information getting lost

- Develop a well-resourced communication strategy, that:
  - » Includes short and long terms goals
  - » Builds on the unique identity of the organisation as well as on good communication tools and techniques, e.g. the use of social media
  - » Defines target groups for each communication form. Youth, parents, donors, partners as well as other relevant counterpart and stakeholders need to be added as distinct target groups, for which communications need to be tailored
  - » Recognises that stories must be pro-actively shared with the press (rather than waiting for the media to approach the organisation for information)
  - » Is consistently managed and better coordinated among staff and with the organisation's lobbying/fund-raising efforts.

Supporting immigrants through communications

iYouth partner organisation: Foundation Our Choice, Poland

Warsaw-based Foundation Our Choice (FOC) offers a web portal and a newspaper directed at Ukrainian immigrants, including migrant youth and students, and to the Polish society in general.

- The "Our Choice" web portal (www.naszwybir.pl) is bilingual (in Polish and Ukrainian) and has at least 1500 unique visitors/month. The project is financed by the European Integration Fund and the Polish state.

- The newspaper is free of charge, published monthly (2000 copies) and distributed in the main urban centres where Ukrainian migrants reside (NGOs, churches, Ukrainian consulates, or Polish institutions visited regularly by Ukrainian immigrants).

The newspaper and web portal contain information on:

- Legal changes in Poland and Ukraine that concern migrants
- Advice concerning everyday life in Poland
- Information on institutions supporting migrants, education possibilities, etc.

FOC also supports peer-to-peer counselling through our web portal and our Facebook page, where clients can exchange information and help each other by using the forum. The web portal, the Facebook page as well as different meetings and events organised for Ukrainian migrants help FOC also to identify topics of concern for their target groups. These topics can then be further addressed and covered in the newspaper and the web portal.

The FOC newspaper and web portal are advertised through:

- Public presentations
- Other NGOs and public institutions/authorities
- Leaflets
- Newsletters
- Polish and Ukrainian media
- Word-of-mouth
- Facebook

What is needed to make it work?

- Education in journalism, humanities, sociology, legal studies etc.

- Background knowledge on immigrants' issues (legal knowledge, educational system, practical issues, labour market, cultural issues, everyday life issues) – coming from the same country as the target group is a crucial benefit

- Language skills (Ukrainian and Polish)

- Cooperation with other newspapers/web portals directed at immigrants, and NGOs.

- External financial support (European or local grants, sponsors, etc.)

    More case studies available on www.iyouth-project.eu

III. iYouth recommendations: Enhancing and supporting migrant youth work by youth organisations within the EU

The iYouth partners have concluded, based on the overall peer review findings, their own evidence-based experiences in migrant youth work, as well as through discussions in national iYouth workshops and seminars, that the following recommendations can be considered as good guiding principles for further enhancing and supporting migrant youth work by youth organisations within the EU. The following recommendations are addressed at both youth organisations and relevant public authorities that can support capacity-building and the work of youth organisations in enhancing the integration of migrant youth.

The iYouth partners are aware that a range of the below recommendations do apply to 'mainstream' youth work just as well; the difference may be in the fact that the needs of migrant youth may at times differ, and should be taken into account in order to support their successful integration.

Recommendation I

MIGRANT YOUTH ORGANISATIONS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE (WRITTEN) PLANS/STRATEGIES for their areas of engagement, which should be:

- Developed/updated through broad stakeholder consultations
- Defined according to: target groups and their needs, the organisation's objectives and methods of implementation, roles and responsibilities of internal and external stakeholders, as well as by including the youth themselves
- Shared with all stakeholders

WHY is a written strategy important?

- youth themselves know what to expect from the organisation, and how they can participate and contribute

- management and all staff/volunteers are 'on the same page' and jointly work towards common goals

- donors and partners are well aware of the organisation, its aims and approaches, and trust the organisation to work in a transparent and reliable manner (which can also be useful for lobbying, future partnerships and obtaining funding)

It is also important to remember that the need for gender-sensitive approaches applies to migrant youth work just as much as to youth work in general. When working with migrant youth, it is important to keep in mind that transferring 'mainstream' approaches may not always work with migrant youth, especially from a gender-sensitive standpoint, as they may be turned away.

Recommendation II

Migrant youth organisations should make (more) **EFFORTS TO INVOLVE MIGRANT YOUTH THEMSELVES IN PLANNING AND DELIVERING PROGRAMMES, AND IN THE OVERALL DIRECTION OF THE ORGANISATION.** This can be done, for example, through:

- Giving the youth a place in the governance of the organisation

- Consultations and focus group discussions with the youth

- Volunteering schemes that enhance and encourage the participation of the youth in implementing the organisation's activities and programmes

WHY is it important for the youth to be involved?

- To ensure that their needs and interests are met

- To contribute to migrant youth empowerment by providing them with new experiences and individual learning opportunities (such as group dynamics, decision-making, organisational and communication skills)

- To give youth the feeling of being part of the organisation, rather than only clients

Recommendation III

Migrant youth organisations should make (more) **EFFORTS TOWARDS BROADER AND CONTINUED STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR GOVERNANCE,** by better involving, for example:

- Parents

- Other NGOs (including migrants' associations)

- Schools and teachers' associations

- Authorities and public service providers

WHY is it important to include a broader stakeholder composition?

- To ensure that the organisation's actions meet needs of youth and are suitable for the specific context of working with migrant youth, and that the services are complementary to actions by other actors (rather than duplicating efforts)
- Including a broader set of stakeholders often means fresh blood and ideas
- To gain external stakeholders' support and benefit from their knowledge, contacts, networks, and as a basis for joint initiatives/projects by combining resources
- Parents should be involved:
  » so they better understand the aims and benefits of the organisation's work (and can influence how activities are planned to take into account any parents' concerns)
  » As a means to support integration of parents, too, by building knowledge
  » To support good parent-child relations and help ensure that 'dual identities' do not lead to conflicts (which are important for youth's development towards adulthood)

Recommendation IV

Migrant youth organisations should make (more) efforts to ensure that **THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE OF YOUTH INTEGRATION ISSUES IS KNOWN AND MADE USE OF** also outside the organisation. This can be done e.g. through effective networking, public information, advocacy, and lobbying.

WHY should organisations make efforts in highlighting their expertise externally?

- Through involvement in umbrella organisations and coalitions, youth organisation can make their voice heard and exercise more influence
- Raising the organisation's profile and underlining its expertise is often good for partnerships and funding
- Organisations can then better contribute to improved overall conditions and policies for youth integration in society by advocating on their behalf, and contributing to evidence-based youth work (policies, programmes, practices)

Recommendations V

Migrant youth organisations should make (more) efforts to **COMPLEMENT EXISTING SERVICES THROUGH VOLUNTEERING SCHEMES THAT ARE BUILT UPON AN EMPOWERMENT APPROACH.**

- Volunteers can be migrant or 'native' youth or adults
- Volunteering does not only help the organisation to support migrant youth but at the same time helps volunteers to grow and develop their skills and knowledge – volunteering in itself is empowering!
- Migrant youth in particular will develop skills, knowledge, and networks they may not get otherwise. These can be helpful also for their future education/employment opportunities

In order to effectively contribute to the aims of the organisation, volunteers have to be 'taken care of' (rather than being 'taken for granted'). The organisation should ensure that they:

- feel safe and motivated

- receive all necessary training and support to do their work,

- are compensated appropriately (which may range from publicly acknowledging their contributions, to financial compensation for travel or subsistence)

Recommendation VI

Migrant youth organisations should **ENSURE THAT THEIR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS ARE SAFE, MOTIVATED AND QUALIFIED** for the work they do with migrant youth in a continued and sustainable manner. This includes:

- Continuous opportunities for training and up-scaling of skills (in-house and external) on all areas of engagement (education, counselling, youth engagement, media/lobbying, as well as in the values and principles the organisation upholds, including intercultural sensitivity, anti-discrimination, legal rights, conflict resolution/mediation)

- Staff/volunteer policies and manuals that establish reliable, transparent and motivating working conditions and support effective management of the organisation

- A focus on legacy-planning, staff development, staff retention so as to create arrangements for continuous success of the organisation by identifying and supporting individuals (staff or volunteers), who can lead and develop the organisation in the future, e.g. through
    » flexible working practices and definitions of roles
    » encouraging continued learning on-the-job

Recommendation VII

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES, in particular at the local level, **SHOULD WORK TOWARDS EMPOWERING MIGRANT YOUTH ORGANISATIONS BY PROVIDING (MORE) OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE COOPERATION AND KNOWLEDGE-SHARING,** as well as capacity-building measures.

A crucial precondition for such increased cooperation is a better recognition of the important role and contribution to successful integration of young migrants by youth organisations!

HOW can public authorities engage in cooperation and knowledge-sharing with youth organisations?

- Consultative processes (e.g. thematic networks) and meetings for information-sharing and policy development

- Training and 'special' support for youth organisations (e.g. advice on running and governance of organisations, methods of youth engagement, seeking funding)

- Sustainable funding will benefit organisations as well as youth: many organisations have a hard time working primarily/exclusively with short-term project-based funding

WHY is enhanced cooperation between authorities and youth organisations important?

- Cooperation is of mutual benefit because:
    - » authorities can use the knowledge of youth organisations on migrant youth's situation, needs and working practices
    - » Strong and effective youth organisations actually reduce the need and pressure on public (integration/social) services and can reach youth that is not easily reached by public service providers in the first place
    - » Youth organisations can get an access to more knowledge and information that can further build their capacities, and at the same time can participate in influencing policies to the benefit of migrant youth

Recommendation VIII

DONORS AND POLICY-MAKERS at the European Union, national and local level **SHOULD BROADEN TARGET GROUPS REGARDING POLICIES AND FUNDING SO AS TO AVOID FRAGMENTATION OF ACTIONS AND BENEFICIARIES.**

WHY is it important to consider broader target groups?

- Too specific target groups mean that not all who would need and benefit from integration measures are 'eligible' to receive them; in many cases people have to be turned away because their 'profiles' don't match the tightly-defined criteria

    In particular smaller organisations must continuously 'hunt' around for funding, and can only work based on short-terms strategies – to the detriment of both the organisation and those it wishes to serve.

IV. iYouth Project Partners

iYouth project partners included both youth organisations and institutional partners from all five partner countries. The *institutional partners* in the project were: Austrian National Youth Council; Czech Ministry of the Interior; Helsinki City Youth Department (Finland); French Ministry of Sports, Youth, Non-formal Education and Voluntary Organisations; and Warsaw Municipality (Poland). The project was managed by IOM Helsinki with support from IOM offices in Vienna, Prague, Marseille, and Warsaw.

The below youth *organization partners* were at the focus of the iYouth peer reviews, based on which the findings and recommendations presented on this report were produced.

INTERFACE VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Interface, an NGO financed by the City of Vienna supports the integration of children, young people and adults with an immigrant background. The organisation has 200 staff members and in 2012 they assisted approximately 10,000 young migrants. Interface Vienna consists of three sections: Jugendbildungswerkstatt(training workshop for young people), Eltern und Kinder (parents and children), Startbegleitung für Asylberechtigte und subsidiär Schutzberechtigte (starting aid for persons entitled to asylum or holding a subsidiary protection status). Interface Vienna's educational, information and counselling measures are based on the motto "improvement of basic and key skills and strengthening of the ability and readiness for coequal participation".
For more information: http://www.interface-wien.at

META, PRAGUE, THE CZECH REPUBLIC

META, the Association for Opportunities of Young Migrants, was established in 2004 with the aim to support young immigrants living in the Czech Republic. Their clients include both migrants, regardless of their residence status, and educators working at all grade-levels and types of schools. META's core activity is a Consultancy and Information Centre for Young Migrants (PIC) where social workers are available to clients to consult and assist them in the decision-making process for further studies, job opportunities, and tackling difficulties arising from their specific social and legal status in the Czech Republic. Part of the social consultancy service is the opportunity to get assistance from a volunteer who can help clients to achieve their goals. META also offers Czech language courses lead by experienced teachers, and preparatory courses for admission exams.
For more information: http://www.meta-os.cz

KANAVA YOUTH ASSOCIATION, HELSINKI, FINLAND

Kanava Youth Association is a youth organization based in Finland, offering activities for Somali children and young people. Kanava was established in 1995 and has approximately 500 members, of which most are under 26 year old migrants living in Helsinki. Kanava's core activities support the well-being of children and youth. Together with other organisations it seeks to influence decision-makers in enhancing integration of young migrants. Kanava tries to find new ways to challenge the specific risks of social exclusion among children, young people and families. Activities include providing advice and support, reconciliation services, street work, sports and other leisure activities, as well as camps and excursions. These functions reach out to a broad range of immigrant young people, offering them something meaningful to do during their free-time.

For more information: http://www.kanavary.com

ADRIC, PARIS, FRANCE

Agency for Development of Intercultural Relations Citizenship (ADRIC) is an association that partners with local and national actors to support migrants, to fight against discrimination and violence and to push for equality. With over 20 years of experience, and together with institutional actors, businesses, and other organisations ADRIC builds its actions through awareness-raising, training, and through research / diagnostics, as well as develops publications and training tools. Understanding and knowledge of cultural diversity is seen as an integral and constitutive dimension of social integration and support for citizens' involvement. ADRIC relies on multidisciplinary skills combining different resources for a better articulation of theoretical and practical knowledge in its activities.

For more information: http://www.adric.eu

ARMENIAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION, CRACOW, POLAND

The Armenian Cultural Association (ACA) was founded in Krakow in 1990 and is a sociocultural organization of Polish Armenians. The aim of the organization is to help in the integration process of Armenians in Poland and to document their history and culture. ACA establishes ties with Armenia and the Armenian diaspora abroad to help Polish Armenians maintain contact with the rest of their countrymen. Since 2004 ACA has also run a school that aims to: 1) Inform Polish society about Armenian culture, 2) Raise awareness in Poland, 3) Help and inform Armenian immigrants (through Polish language courses), 4) organise activities around music, art and theatre that support migrants' integration as well as two-way integration with the host country.

For more information: http://otk.armenia.pl

FOUNDATION OUR CHOICE, POLAND

Foundation Our Choice works mainly with the Ukrainian community in Warsaw, with a special emphasis in communications activities. The organization was established in 2004 as an initiative of a group of friends, Ukrainians and Poles, interested in Warsaw's environmental issues. The organisation's mission has evolved into supporting the development of cultural, educational, economic and political relations between the Polish and Ukraine and to promote democratic values and civil society. Foundation Our Choice's cultural and information activities are aimed at increasing acceptance both for the phenomenon of migration in host societies as well as for efforts to integrate immigrants. These activities are carried out through awareness-raising campaigns to improve communication between Ukrainians and the host society, to overcome negative stereotypes and to promote tolerance and understanding.

For more information: http://www.naszwybor.org.pl