

Opening Seminar of the European Peer Learning on Youth Policy: Designing Youth Policy in Europe – What is the role of the regions & municipalities?

DOKUMENTATION

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Designing Youth Policy in Europe – What is the role of the regions & municipalities?

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Youth
in Action

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European Peer Learning on Youth Policy is part of the „Multilateral Cooperation Project on Independent Youth Policy“, realised within the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010 -2018).



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¹⁾ Since 1 July 2012 Mr Stroppe has been appointed as State Secretary of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

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1. MINUTES 

CHRISTEL DE LANGE

Summary of the findings of the Opening Seminar of the European Peer Learning on Youth Policy: Designing Youth Policy in Europe – What is the role of the regions & municipalities?

In Berlin representatives from local authorities, National Agencies, National Youth Councils and governments from Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Lithuania, Sweden and The Netherlands met for the first seminar of a two-year project on the designing of youth policy. The following meetings will be held in Rotterdam (The Netherlands), Prague (Czech Republic) and in Brussels (Belgium). This report will summarize the speeches and discussions of the first seminar.

The seminar's objectives were

- To initiate a transnational exchange about how to involve and activate regions and municipalities in youth policy;
- To get to know and to discuss different models of horizontal cooperation;
- To bring together representatives of different levels and offer them space for exchange and discussion;
- To promote European translocal exchange and European peer learning as strategies for (local and regional) youth policy.

Overview of the seminar

Keynote speeches

After the opening and introduction of the program the seminar started with three presentations on youth policy in order to inspire the discussions later in the seminar. Lutz Stroppe, head of the division for youth, German Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), introduced the participants with the German concept of an independent youth policy. Independent youth policy is characterized by a holistic approach and in Germany there is a focus on three fields: formal and non-formal (extracurricular) learning locations, participation of young

people and a successful management in the transfer to the labour market. These topics can be linked to the structured dialogue of the EU Youth Strategy.

Stroppe mentioned that it is now time to try to find answers, answers going beyond Germany. It is inappropriate to do this without young people and therefore young people should be included while designing policy. Next to this, it is important to involve as many institutional levels as possible. Another challenge is to look to the overall group of young people but also include individual young people who face more difficulties, such as unemployment or lower educational levels. In conclusion: it is important to include different institutional levels, look at young people as a whole, and therefore a coordinated approach is necessary. Institutions should advocate for young people and describe youth in positive terms.

Bart Eigeman, former alderman on Talent Development in the city of Den Bosch, and former chair of the Netherlands Committee on Education, Care and Welfare of the Netherlands Association of Dutch Municipalities, stated that young people are a key to community. Active youth policy is an important factor to making municipalities attractive. A condition for designing active, positive youth policy is to see young people as young people, in being young. Young people can completely live in the present, are absolutely loyal and spontaneous and they also believe in miracles. Adults can learn a lot from young people. Designing youth policy is therefore answering the question: do we want to go back to school and learn from young people? Young people are not only an object in society; they are also a subject. We need to arrange possibilities for young people to live life and participate.

Being young brings opportunities in discovering life. That means that young people do not live in models. If we want to be effective, we should create ministries of movement. These movements should be based on the stories of individual young people.

Eigeman described the need of a European perspective on peer learning and youth policy. First of all, because peer learning is an opportunity to inspire each other. Secondly, because there is a demographic need to invest in human capital, not only an investment in young people but also in the relationship between young people and adults. And thirdly, a European policy is necessary to sharpen the existing policies. Stories are a good way to motivate people to work on youth policy.

Uwe Lübking, deputy at the German Association of Towns and Municipalities, identified different challenges in local youth policy. He stated that youth policy is carried out on the local level. One of the challenges to work with youth policy concerns the different competences on all levels. It is important to have good communication between all different actors. It is also important to make clear that youth policy is more than youth services. In order to design good youth policy, it is necessary to include young people in the process. Another challenge that Lübking identified, concerns the financial framework in Germany. Municipalities had to double their budget for youth work in the last twenty years but still more money is necessary. Also the gap between young people and elderly people is a challenge. It is important to invest in the intergenerational dialogue.

In order to tackle some of these challenges on a municipal level, it is essential to have someone on the municipal level that is responsible for youth and is a positive advocate for young people. There should be special attention for young people in rural areas and their social places and also for the educational system. Formal and non-formal learning should come together and companies should be included in education.

Presentations of local youth policy in different countries

The second part of the seminar contained presentations about national and local youth policy in the different countries. An overview of these strategies and implementations can be found in the fact sheets that were provided during the seminar.

Identification of the main challenges and questions

All the challenges and questions that were raised during the seminar are attached in the appendix. After a voting process the following six main priorities were identified:

- Participation and Empowerment of Young People (17 votes)
- Cross-sectorial cooperation (15 votes)
- Positive Youth Policy (14 votes)
- Implementation of Youth Policy (10 votes)
- Social Challenges addressed by youth policy (8 votes)
- Evidence-based Youth Policy (5 votes)

These main challenges formed the topics of the working groups.

Results of the working groups

Participation and Empowerment of Young People:

- Good structures for participation:
 - Good working relation with the ministry;
 - Make subsidies accessible;
 - Accessibility of networks;
 - Establishment of a regional network to exchange difficulties;
 - Not only short-term projects, also long-term projects or strategies and resources;
 - We need a master plan, a holistic vision on youth policy and the allocation of budget;
 - Include young people in the current structures but also change the structures to make them more youth-friendly;
 - Include the knowledge and experience of people who work on a daily basis with young people. Let them report about the trends and tendencies.

Use the media



- Good projects on participation:
 - Let young people participate in all topics;
 - Get young people in charge of the project. Civil servants don't always know what is the best for young people;
 - Support young people, but let them work in their own ways;
 - Use culture and music to get to young people;
 - Evaluate the projects and youth participation and act upon it;
 - Use the media.
- Raising awareness about the added value of youth participation:
 - Use examples, stories and people to inspire each other;
 - Explain local councils the added value of youth participation;
 - Offer best-practices;
 - Measure the success of youth participation, e.g. through benchmarks.
- Let politicians recognize young people for being young:
 - Getting politicians and civil servants out of their comfort zone;
 - Politicians and civil servants should go to where young people are;
 - Let young people be in planning of the meeting, change the power balance;
 - No preaching, but listening;
 - Prepare politicians and civil servants beforehand. Don't just prepare young people; also prepare politicians and civil servants;
 - Recognition of non-formal learning experience, e.g. in the framework of young leadership.
- Empower young people:
 - Use role models to inspire other young people;
 - Start on an earlier age, in primary school and continue working during youth;
 - Let young people influence and help each other, e.g. through mediators;
 - Invest money before it is too late, sometimes already in Kindergarten you can see vulnerable children.
 - Teach young people the skills to participate, to be self-confident and use their talents.

Implementation of youth policy

We started by the child itself. Youth policy is all about growing up of young people. They grow up in three domains: family, school and leisure time. On all levels different departments are working on this triangle and they formulate different goals. On the street level these goals might not coincide. If everyone formulates its own goals, then you have a structure with conflicting interest. To combine these points we need a triangle of research, practice and policy. In this way we get a form of peer learning. This way we can develop a movement around the child instead of structures around the child.

We need a ministry of movements and a common understanding of youth policy. We also need a common vision on the practical level and a commitment on the implementation of youth policy. In order to reach these goals and establish a ministry of movements we need the following instruments:

- Coordinating body with a mandate on a local level as expression of that commitment;
- Common funding: level and accountability;
- Exchange of Knowledge (peer-learning);
- Co-construction between levels and sections;
- Explicit responsibilities.

Positive Youth Policy

From the examples we went on to challenges. These are represented in this figure:



- 4: Commitment by media, politics. Cross-sectorial approach. Political commitment
- 3: Overall Long-term Objectives. Building an infrastructure. Strategic goals to meet the challenges
- 2: Society opening up to Society (criteria like space), co-creation
- 1: Youth Friendly Areas

The following challenges need to be addressed:

- Inclusion for all – reaching out
- Decreasing unemployment and early school leaving
- Space
- Splitting up responsibilities
- Campaigning/positive image

Cross-sectorial Approach

First we discussed what we meant with a cross-sectorial approach. It is very important to have political support for the cross-sectorial approach on a national and on a local level. We have discussed the different actions that are taken in the countries: national working groups, evaluation of local youth policy, training and preparation for municipalities, experts for establishing regional youth policy, co-working and user experience, bigger understanding on a practical level, national working groups working on new laws with political relevance and support, delegate more responsibility, involve people from the bottom and give them responsibility. Working groups on all levels with a cross-sectorial approach should be established:

- Coordination (strong);
- Monitoring the working flow between all members and contact;
- Political support;
- Political Relevance;
- Involving Young people;
- Visibility (PR);
- Evidence-based youth policy;
- Clear goals and tasks;
- Clear profile of members;
- Clear contact.

Young people should be involved in the cross-sectorial approach; the triangle should become a square and involve young people.

Social Challenges

A national framework should be created. This framework can arise from the local level. On the national level there needs to be an agreement on the targets, for example the target that all young people have the right to education. There needs to be facilitation for

this: information, funds, trainings, research and education of youth workers. On the local level there needs to be an agreement on the challenges. Next to this, there needs to be an organisation, methods, implementation and output or results. We should trust in the professionals and make sure that youth work becomes recognized.

There needs to be constant communication between the local level and the national level and there needs to be a framework for this.

Appendix 1: Challenges

The questions and challenges are clustered and the countries that raised the challenge are mentioned:

Participation and Empowerment of Young People:

- Participation of young people has to involve young people in shaping youth policy (FR)
- Participation on local level (DE)
- How to reach and activate young people? (LIT)
- Stimulating young people to be active in culture and sports (BE)
- Providing various forms of participation (BE)
- Youth participation as standard (SE)
- Creating a meaningful, reciprocal relation between young people and decision makers? (addition)
- Lack of suitable information on how to be part of structures and how to adjust them (addition)
- How to empower young people (FR)
- Empowering youngsters (BE)
- Young Leadership (SE)
- Need to recognize and use the (informal) skills of young people (SE)
- How can we involve young people in the process of analysis? (addition)

Implementation of Youth Policy:

- Question of Competences (DE)
- Competences in schools divided between cities, federal states etc. (DE)
- Autonomy of municipalities is an obstacle for youth policy sometimes (SE)
- National youth policy not mandatory for municipalities (implementation) (SE)
- Governance of Youth Policy (FR)
- Decentralisation of Youth Policy + redefinition of competences of each level (FR)
- Diverse competences of the different levels and not necessary to cooperate (FR)
- Magic Triangle: policy, practice, research (NL)
- And the young persons (magic square) (addition)
- How to Build a Ministry of Movement (addition)
- Link between EU youth policy and local youth policy (Addition)





2. OPENING SPEECHES AND INTERVIEWS ❖❖❖

LUTZ STROPPE

Presentation of the German concept for a new national youth policy

Ladies and Gentlemen,
I am very glad that I can welcome all of you here in Berlin to this opening seminar of the Multilateral Cooperation Project on Independent Youth Policy.

Youth in Europe

Young people grow up under a variety of framework conditions. Institutions and the society are different in each country. A child in France has totally different first learning experiences at institutions than a child in the Czech Republic. For children living in Lithuania, daily life at school differs from that of children of the same age in Belgium, and even the prospects of a Swedish youth differ completely from those of a German teenager.

However, there is one thing they have in common in all countries. In their youth people are more intensely examining the world around them than in any other period in life. Depending on where they live in Europe young people may ask different critical questions with regard to the transition from youth to adulthood, leaving their parental home and developing an own, independent individual personality, i.e. regarding their own emancipation.

However, all states have in common that they have to provide political responses for all young people's justified or at least understandable questions and demands towards their societies.

Young people in Germany

In Germany, we face the enormous challenge of demographic changes: While today more

than 16 million people under the age of 20 are living in Germany, this number will decrease to less than 14 million in 2020. Until 2050, this number will probably further decrease to 10.5 million. This means that young people will then amount to only a tiny 16 per cent of the entire population.

At the same time, the proportion of young people with migration background within this age group will increase and so that this group will have to be given more consideration.

Therefore it is indispensable for Germany to embed youth policy within the society as a future-oriented social policy since we depend more than ever before on as many young people as possible getting actively involved in the society and participating in shaping it.

Within the last years, we have also observed significant changes within the period of youth itself. It is not least Europeization and globalization that make growing demands on knowledge and competences at quite a young age.

I am sure that this does not apply to German young people only but also to young people in your countries.

In general we find that because they have to complete their education within a shorter time young people now have less time for learning important social competencies as they might acquire them for instance by being active in a youth organisation. At the same time business and society are craving young people with a broad education and social empathy.

This means that it is expected of young people – especially those who want to get a

university degree – that they achieve this goal within less time. However, this also leaves them with less time for commitments other than in formal education, for friends and recreation – i.e. for acquiring social competencies.

We cannot and we do not want to reverse these measures.

However, there is no doubt that we have to face their consequences, and that we have to support our young people in coping with these changes.

In general we are facing the phenomenon that the period of youth becomes more and more heterogeneous: Youth as a period of life embraces a broad range of different ways and perspectives of life, of biographical, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.

The facts I have described above are just indicators.

Some of the issues I have described may seem to you to exist in a world that is different from your own. We are aware that the situation – for instance with regard to youth unemployment – is much more dramatic in other countries. For that reason it is not surprising that more than 80 per cent of the young people in Germany are quite optimistic with regard to their future (Shell study 2010).

An Independent Youth Policy – National Fields of Action and Dialogue

For the reasons explained above we started to develop an independent youth policy in 2011. However, by “independent” we do not mean a youth policy that is separated from other political areas - we rather mean that aspects of youth policy should play a more important role of in all political areas that affect young people in the various situations of their lives. By means of an independent youth policy, we want to take a new approach to that phase in life.

In this process we want to achieve tangible improvements for the three important fields

of activity which have been identified also by the EU Youth Strategy:

1. linking formal education and non-formal learning
2. enhancing the opportunities for young people to become involved and to participate
3. ensuring a successful transition from school to vocational training and to the labour market.

We deal with these aspects at expert forums on the national level throughout Germany involving experts coming from the children and youth services, schools, municipalities, industry, science and politics, and young people themselves.

Since last year, already three expert forums have taken place. Their results are being assessed and commented at the moment by German young people within their own project: „I make policy“.

Their results will become the guidelines of an independent youth policy for the three fields of activity mentioned above.

This process is particularly important for us. Especially for this purpose we have founded a national centre for developing an independent youth policy that provides orientation for this process and promotes it together with the

- German Youth Institute (Deutsches Jugendinstitut), Children and Youth Services Association (Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kinder- und Jugendhilfe),
- German Federal Youth Council (Deutscher Bundesjugendring),
- municipal umbrella associations
- Federal Länder
- and with us.

In order to give German young people the opportunity to join discussions and decision making the German Federal Youth Council has developed a new participation project.

The aim of this project is not only to include some young people as representatives in the decision making process but to give as many young people all over Germany as possible the chance to make their voices heard.

Create individual areas



The 'ePartool' – an online participation tool – presents the results obtained in the expert forums. Young people deal with them for example within their youth organisations, schools, peer groups or on their own. Discussion material and help are available, of course.

In turn, these young people post their views in the ePartool, and according to their importance they will then be prioritized.

At national level, the ministry and our partners in the centre deal with these views and use ePartool in order to give the young people feedback as to what, how and why precisely things are being implemented or not.

This way we want to implement an independent youth policy which is supported by both the society and by the young people themselves.

Youth policy – Departmental or Cross-Sectoral Policy

However, an independent youth policy is more than simply a good list of requirements, as for instance for a better time management at school as a place of life.

An independent youth policy will particularly aim to overcome isolated assessments of individual issues and to develop a view at the overall picture of youth.

It has to ensure a harmonization of individual areas within the overall concept and their individual measures, and it has to create the best possible conditions for our young people.

But how can this be done successfully?

Should youth policy focus on its core area or rather be implemented as cross-sectoral policy?

If youth policy is to commit itself as an agent for young people, how can it then influence and qualify decisions which do not belong to the core area of youth policy?

» **An independent youth policy will particularly aim to overcome isolated assessments of individual issues and to develop a view at the overall picture of youth.**

What does youth policy need in order to gain the necessary respect of other policies?

These are questions which cannot be answered by concrete measures but which require the establishment of sustainable governance structures.

There are only few experts with whom it is possible to address such questions at national level. At the same time, these are questions which are not asked in Germany only but also in other European states.

Therefore, we have decided not to deal with these questions on our own but to launch a joint learning process together with other interested countries. Thus the idea of „European Peer-Learning on Youth Policy“ was born.

Acknowledgement and Improved Image of the Target Group, i.e. Young People

Another question which is not only of our concern is that of the image of young people within society.

Are young people being regarded as a resource or rather as a fringe group that causes problems?

How is it possible to develop an atmosphere of acceptance and respect for the achievements and commitment of young people?

It is an established fact that although young people play an important role in our society, they do not always get the necessary attention.

At the centre of attention are often young people without any orientation or those who are fun-oriented.

It is an image which is strongly supported by the media. The “binge drinking” and excessive violence produce headlines. But it is rather seldom that the focus is on young people’s achievements and commitment.

Yet, young people do make great achievements, for instance in musical competitions, as helpers within parishes and sports associations, or when they participate in municipal activities through youth associations or as volunteers.

And all this happens against the background of increased challenges and a leisure time which – at least in Germany – is getting ever scarcer.

Young people must get a better image. The diverse commitments of young people need to be recognized in a new way.

In future young people must be perceived as partners who have to be taken seriously with regard to all issues that are related to the future.

This is because the consequences of decisions that influence the future affect today’s young people more and longer than the older generation.

However, young people also have their very own views with regard to current developments which will definitely be a benefit for our societies.

This is why young people are not only an economic and future labour market factor. Already today they are an important socio-political factor which we must not exclude.

This also entails the question of who the people are for whom we actually plan youth policy.

Within the last few years, we in Germany have mainly focused on young people who needed special support, for instance those who were not able to complete their school education on their own, or who found it particularly difficult to find and fulfil their own role within the German society.

This is an important aspect and we will also have a special eye on these young people in the future. However, we must not forget those young people who apparently find their way in life without any problems.

We will only get closer to our goal of realizing a sustainable policy for our society if we focus on the period of youth in its entire diversity of individual ways of life, needs and skills.

In Germany, our guideline in this respect is the idea of a nationwide „alliance for youth”.

» Are young people being regarded as a resource or rather as a fringe group that causes problems?

Young people must get a better image



We want to attract supporters from all spheres of society who join us in our commitment for an independent youth policy.

In addition to children and youth services it includes schools and industry, as well as the media, science and the young people themselves.

Within this alliance the Federal Youth Ministry has to fulfil its task by representing the interests of the young people by standing up for young people when they are not able to directly and effectively represent their interests.

In order to be successful, such an alliance must be able to build on the basis of a broad consensus across all levels. This is one of our most important goals in developing an independent youth policy.

You notice that this is very important for me. However, I also know that I am not the only one who is concerned about this matter. Our partners in the Netherlands have also addressed this issue.

In autumn, a seminar will be held in Rotterdam on “positive youth policy” whose discussions I do not intend to anticipate - for this my heartfelt thanks to our Dutch partners – so, let me now turn to a set of issues on which we will focus today:

The Importance of the municipalities and regions

I have only described a fraction of the challenges young people are facing today. The fragmentation of competencies at national level makes their lives even more difficult. Yet - I think you know that from your home countries. However, in a federal state like the Federal Republic of Germany, we have the additional levels of the Länder and municipalities which have to be involved right from the beginning.

The more players, the more difficult it is to find a joint solution. At the same time, decentralized solutions provide many opportuni-

ties to respond quicker and more appropriately than central authorities could.

I would like to point out especially two aspects which, in my point of view, make regions and municipalities particularly important for any youth policy:

1. they are much closer to young people and
2. young people are more interested in influencing their own environment than an entire state.

Especially when political players interact with young people exciting fields of practice emerge which are not only significant for the regions themselves but which may also contribute significantly to shaping the overall national youth policy.

This is because youth policy is not shaped only at federal level, but especially in the places where the young people are living.

A good federal policy may only provide good framework conditions.

This framework has to be complemented by activities in that are interesting for the young people, in the places where they live, learn and commit themselves.

Therefore, a good national youth policy can only be successful if it is simultaneously developed and shaped at all levels, i.e. also in the municipalities.

Our task at federal level is, first of all, to firmly anchor a sustainable, independent youth policy in society. However, the way how and when youth policy is changed on the municipal and regional levels depends on the municipalities and regions.

This does not mean that the federal level intends to rid itself of responsibility but rather that we want to strengthen the role of municipalities and regions.

I am pleased that, right from the beginning, we were able to involve the municipalities and regions as partners and share with them the responsibility for developing an independent German youth policy.

Therefore, not I but Mr Uwe Lübking, the representative of Deutscher Städte- und Gemeindebund (German Association of Towns and Municipalities) is the right person to describe the municipal youth policy in Germany.

However, as soon as it turns to questions regarding governance all levels are important:

1. How can regions and municipalities be encouraged and supported in shaping youth policy in a responsible manner?
2. How can we enhance the comprehensive cooperation between the local, regional, national and European levels?

These were the two concluding questions we presented in October last year when inviting you to discuss an independent youth policy together with us.

We were pleasantly surprised by the broad response we got from all over Europe.

The fact we can celebrate the start of this project today not only with four partners – as we had been hoping – but with even six European partners is proof for three things:

1. The European Youth Strategy came at the right time. The national states are not only prepared to provide reports on their social policies but also to learn and discuss together and give mutual feedbacks.

This revolutionises the role of youth policy in discussions on the European level.

European and national youth policies have now reached a stage where they can mutually influence and strengthen each other. We have to use this opportunity!

2. Drafting new national youth policies as cross-sectoral or coherence policies has indeed the particular international value I have just tried to describe.

It has been the right decision to answer the questions involved not only on our own and for ourselves but to dare see further than the end of our own nose.

» I do hope that we will be able to draw conclusions for the national youth policies and to the European Youth Strategy.

I am very keen to see the results of the seminars that will be held during the next two years.

I do hope that we will not only be able to draw conclusions for the respective national youth policies but, beyond that, to make a joint contribution to the European Youth Strategy.

3. Perhaps, Europe is the most visible in song or soccer contests, but it is most beneficial when we jointly address important questions of social policy.

This day, we have the rare opportunity together to shape Europe during the day and together to experience Europe tonight. It is a particular pleasure for me to welcome you to Berlin during the European soccer championship. I wish you lots of success for the coming two days and good luck to the nations that participate in the championship.

UWE LÜBKING

Local Youth Policy in Germany – Central. Challenges and Possible Solutions

Before I am going to address the challenges and possible solutions – as far as we already have any – I will briefly describe the framework conditions for local youth policy in Germany, while these framework conditions themselves are part of the challenge:

- On the one hand, we have to consider the legal framework which in a federal state is not easy to understand.
- On the other hand, we have to mention the local financial situation.
- Finally, we face a demographic development which may be described by the words ‘less’, ‘older’ and ‘more diverse’ which has concrete impacts on youth policy.

Let me first talk about the legal framework: Youth political issues are determined by most diverse laws, first of all by the Children and Youth Services Act but also by other social codes as for instance the Youth Protection Act, Youth Courts Act, the Vocational Training Act etc. They are complemented by statutes of the Länder, for example implementing statutes for the Children and Youth Services Act or – quite importantly – the school laws of the Länder. Education comes under the responsibility of the Länder. We have 16 different school laws and all of them entail problems which I do not want to explain in detail. By the way, this situation also means that we use 18 different procedures in 16 Länder for promoting language skills in childcare facilities.

This is complemented by all the measures which the local governments provide as part of the general services for young people. Usually the district or respectively towns that do not belong to a district – or in some cases major towns that belong to a district – are

responsible for providing the youth services required by the Children and Youth services Act. How this is handled depends upon the legislation of each federal state (Land).

In this respect, it is necessary to explain the German administrative structure: A federal state or Land consists of administrative districts and towns not belonging to a district administration, and we have three city states which are Berlin, Bremen and Hamburg. They are both municipalities and states. This is why I will not refer to them here.

Let us have a look at North Rhine-Westphalia: There are towns that do not belong to a district administration, large towns like Cologne, Düsseldorf, Essen and Dortmund, and there are also administrative districts. The towns that are located in these administrative districts are called ‘towns belonging to a district’. North Rhine-Westphalia has between 3,000 and 150,000 inhabitants. The tasks which municipalities have to assume are distributed to the administrative districts, towns not belonging to a district administration or towns belonging to a district administration. As a result in North Rhine-Westphalia also large towns that belong to a district have an own youth office. In Bavaria the situation is quite different. Only administrative districts and towns that do not belong to a district have administrative structures that provide youth services.

These different competences at local level are a challenge since they require remarkable coordination at least between administrative districts and towns and municipalities that belong to a district administration.

Youth policy is more than just youth services. Sport and cultural activities as well as leisure

facilities are offered at local level. However, is this done in accordance with the youth service planning of the administrative district? If the administrative district is responsible for youth work how does it ensure that the necessary offers are provided throughout the entire district? Thus youth policy always involves cooperation and negotiations between the district administration and the towns and municipalities that belong to the district. In practice, many towns and municipalities handle youth policy issues independently. Often towns belonging to a district administration are responsible for operating the schools. So how can the necessary cooperation between schools and youth services be organized? In Germany we have one more problem: The municipalities are only responsible for operating the school facilities, which means that they pay for the school premises, gymnasiums and non-educational staff while the Länder that are responsible for the educational activities including teachers. This does not facilitate cooperation.

In addition, I would like to point out another particular aspect: In Germany, the principle of subsidiary applies to children and youth policy and actually almost to the entire social policy. This means that it is not the public youth services, the municipalities that are to provide offers but rather non-governmental welfare organisations, youth organisations, associations and initiatives. Even here coordination is necessary since - on the one hand, it is not always sure that offers made by these bodies meet the interests of young people (in many cases, the organisations do not care since they get paid by the municipalities). On the other hand, fewer young people want to join these traditional associations than in the past.

The municipality as a public youth service provider should actually be aware of the interests and needs of young people. For this purpose, youth offices have youth services committees, and youth offices have to plan youth services. Often the quality of these plans is not sufficient and, in many cases, the youth services committee only works as a kind of self-service for associations and organizations which are represented there. In conclusion, the different competences and interfaces are

a challenge for which no satisfactory solution has been found so far.

Let me now turn to the financial situation of municipalities. There has been some improvement. However, the situation is still bad which is due to considerable social expenses which municipalities have to pay. After reunification, social expenses have doubled and reached 45 billion Euros. As a consequence, many of the so-called voluntary tasks performed by municipalities can no longer be fulfilled. These tasks also include many offers for young people, as for instance leisure facilities, cultural facilities or youth work measures.

Now I would like to elaborate on the demographic development: The population in Germany is decreasing. This fact in itself would not be bad. The problem is that we get older and the proportion of old and young people is changing drastically. This implies the following challenges for youth policy: The increase in the number of older people turns the focus of policy to senior policy. In towns, more attention is paid to questions like: Do we have living space for elderly people? Do we have enough nursing homes? and not to the question: What does a generation policy look like which also takes young people into account? In this respect, the strategy of the federal government is useful and even we as a municipal umbrella association will have to focus attention on youth policy again and again.

We have also lost track of young people with regard to municipal policy. We care for children (child protection, child care facilities) and older people, but in many cases young people are left alone. Aging also results in the fact that young people are often being perceived with their deficits by elderly people. Violence and alcohol are only two examples. Of course, these problems exist, and there are also many examples where municipalities become active by launching preventive actions for tackling alcoholic problems of young people or violence issues. However, altogether it can be said that today's young people are more adapted than young people were during my youth.

Another challenge resulting from demography is that more and more young people with a

Link the different tasks



migration background live in cities, in some boroughs much more than 30 per cent. Youth policy has to adapt to this situation: We need employees with a migration background. We need an understanding for other cultural backgrounds. In this regard municipalities have taken most diverse integration measures for quite some time.

Within the framework of demographic development, there is still another development: There are towns and municipalities where only few young people live. What offers can be provided in such cases? If those young people travel to another town in order to go to school, and if they attend an all-day school where do they spend their leisure time? Do they have any interest at all in the town where they live?

This is what I wanted to say with regard to framework conditions which are challenges in themselves.

By the way, what are the challenges at local level and what do possible solutions look like?

First of all, it is necessary to link the different tasks and areas of youth policy. Too often they exist isolated from each other. On the one hand, we need a policy of protection and support which means youth protection, youth services, safety for youth with regard to media, and on the other hand, we need a policy for competence building, which means education in its widest sense and the enabling of young people to participate in society; and finally we need a generation policy which balances the burdens for the generations.

In Germany, we have a low youth unemployment rate but at the same time a large number of dropouts. How does this fit? We have many young people who attend vocational training measures. How can we tackle the issue of school education? The cooperation between the youth services and schools is being improved. We create so-called local educational landscapes where we try to provide individual help to pupils, for instance by offering language courses and support by social workers if young people have problems within their families or personal problems. Moreover, municipalities try to offer support for the transi-

tions between school, vocational training and working life.

In the educational landscapes, municipalities try to combine formal and non-formal educational facilities. All-day schools and the reduction of the number of school years up to university entrance level result in young people having less leisure time. This may reduce their civic commitment. Associations and organizations may have to adapt to this.

Another issue is the increase of family or personal crises young people experience. More and more we see that young people are overburdened or pushed beyond their capacity. They also exert pressure on themselves in order to finish school and the university with good results in order to find good jobs afterwards. Companies demand young people to have qualifications which none of the bosses have. This is where young people need help and support.

Another challenge for which we have not yet found satisfactory solutions are risks presented by the media.

Finally, I would like to address the topic of participation which is something that youth associations demand more and more. Do they aim at strengthening their own position or the position of young people? Participation of the citizens is an important topic for the towns and municipalities. For achieving it we try to use the new means of communication offered by the internet and social networks.

It is interesting to see that associations and organization complain about the fact that young people are less willing to commit themselves in fields where they have to assume responsibility. Some towns have established youth parliaments in addition to municipal representations which are supposed to deal in particular with the interests of young people. Experiences with these youth parliaments vary.

Finally I can say that a lot is happening in towns, districts and municipalities. However, we have not yet achieved the aim of a cross-departmental cooperation which includes all federal levels.

INTERVIEW WITH UWE LÜBKING

„We cannot really be satisfied with what we have achieved so far.”

JfE: Mr. Lübking, the opening event of the European Peer Learning project of the German Federal Ministry of Youth dealt with the role of the regions and municipalities. Are there any common requests or models from other countries that Germany can learn from?

Lübking: Basically, it is always good to see further than only to the end of one's own nose. However, it is always necessary to see what is suitable and what is not. I cannot really imagine that we would be able to draw positive conclusions for the local level in Germany from a very centralist state like France. I would have been interested in knowing what is happening in Austria as there is a situation which can be compared to German federalism. We orientate ourselves towards Scandinavia, in particular Sweden, as in Sweden it is the municipalities, irrespective of their size, that are responsible for almost everything including education. They have a national educational act which is implemented at local level. At the moment, this is something inconceivable in our country. But in Sweden it is also the municipalities that impose income tax whereas the state only receives a very little share of it. They have a totally different financing concept.



JfE: Would you like to have something similar in Germany?

Lübking: If you wish that municipalities were really strong and able to offer all the services their citizens need, then the only way is to think in such patterns. In Sweden you will not find any mayor who would not say: "I am responsible for all things that matter to my citizens."

JfE: Does the Swedish model not run the risk to cause major injustices depending on whether a municipality has richer members and a higher tax income? In our country, the Social Code SGB VIII as a federal law is to ensure equal opportunities for all children and adolescents.

Lübking: This injustice already exists in Germany. If you look at the local landscape in Germany, you find municipalities that are rather well-off in the south of Germany while in North Rhine-Westphalia 75 % of all municipalities have legally restricted budgets because of their large debts. This means that all so-called voluntary services, as for instance cultural education, sports promotion and leisure facilities depend on whether a municipality has enough financial means at its disposal. Of course, certain balancing mechanisms have to be introduced.



JfE: Our Dutch colleague Bart Eigeman similar to you expressed dissatisfaction about the fact that on the local level services for young people are provided by different authorities. We do have a good basis with the obligation of youth service planning. Moreover, we have the tool of individual welfare planning. Does this not suffice?

Lübking: Actually the question is how these things are implemented. Just take the relation between the districts and the towns within districts. Normally, the districts are responsible for the youth services. This is where youth service planning is done. But how does it take into account what happens at municipal and urban level within the districts? In North Rhine-Westphalia for instance, many towns that belong to a district are responsible for

youth services. In these cases the complaint is raised that they were too small. However, I think that they have a much closer relation to young people than in huge districts as they have been formed now in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. I am grateful that welfare planning is also evaluated within the program “independent youth policy” of the Federal Ministry, because we cannot really be satisfied with what we have got so far.



JfE: Which changes have to be made?

Lübking: We have to think about the question to what extent the local level might take over more responsibilities. For example, we reach most young people at school. But it is still very difficult to make schools and the youth services cooperate. The success of attempts to set up local ‘educational landscapes’ which we want to establish around the schools and in the schools themselves must not depend on whether a school director agrees to do take part or not. It should be a matter of course for schools open themselves to the municipal social environment, and that other offers have to be integrated into the rhythm of everyday school life.



JfE: In this context, you have demanded a coordinating local body. Wouldn't it be the youth offices that have to play this role?

Lübking: Can the youth offices really do this if responsibilities are divided? Or do we rather need another body at local level to take over this responsibility? The youth office is not responsible for everything concerning young people and youth policy is more than the Youth Services Act. Furthermore, if school development planning and youth service planning take place at totally different local levels, things will be really difficult.

JfE: Is the local level sufficiently involved in the strategy for an autonomous youth policy in Germany?

Lübking: I think it worked excellently at federal level. We had been involved right from

the outset. This is something I would wish to happen in many other political areas.



JfE: What benefit do you expect to be generated by an ‘independent youth policy’?

Lübking: First of all, I would like to see that youth is regarded again as an independent period of life, and that policy no longer focuses on children and elderly people only. Second, we must stop focussing on the deficits of young people. We have to support the diversity of young people and to provide them with the offers they need. This is my vision. In individual rural areas, we have made the experience that only few young people live there, or that poor regions are not able to provide offers - which has many negative consequences. This only attracts attention if young people meet at the bus station with a crate of beer, or if groups of right wing extremists exploit this situation by offering leisure activities for families or private tuition. We need financial support for towns and municipalities so that it is possible to implement a good and effective youth policy everywhere.

(Interviewer: Helle Becker)

» I would like to see that youth is regarded again as an independent period of life, and that policy no longer focuses on children and elderly people only.

BART EIGEMAN

Active youth policy as important factor for making municipalities attractive: Citizenship of young people is a key to community-building

To start with a challenging conclusion: The condition for designing youth policy is: See the value of young people in being young!

My expertise is: 1. Vision on youth, 2. Results in governance by movement, 3. Using inspiration as a key to success.

It is an honor to be here, as an expert. Until March I used to be an alderman (for 11 years) and as such involved in National networks on Youth Policy.

1. Vision on young people: Young is young

At first: young people, little ones, children, teenagers – they are not ‘inadequate adults’. Let us face some characteristics of children:

- Youngsters are capable to be ‘in’ a situation
- playing is playing and not, playing and being somewhere else
- totally dedicated to here and now
- absolutely loyal
- spontaneous
- expressing emotions easily
- in search for limits
- asking ‘why, why, why?’
- not even in need for answers
- nothing is for granted
- and everything is for granted
- believe in fairy tales, in miracles
- pain and success can be together at the same time.

All these life-skills - we adults can learn a lot from young people. Designing Youth Policy is asking adults wanting to go back to school again with youngsters as our teachers. Can

we – responsible people in our communities – accept young people as our teachers? Young people are not only valuable as ‘becoming adults’ with a certification, a job and housing. Young people, children as well as teenagers, are valuable in their own possibilities in contributing to society – in being young .

This is, in my opinion, the heart of the designing process towards ‘positive Youth Policy’. Young people are not an object of all kind of goals. They are subject in taking part in society. ‘Positive Youth Policy’ is in the first place working on experiences. Often the goal of youth policy is: ‘Give youth the future.’ My opinion is: ‘Give youth the here and now.’

Traditional 20th century policy is analyzing-and-giving-instruction-to-manage-main-issues-and-main-strategies. Analyze and instruction! Challenging 21st century policy should start with passion for youth and relationship between young people and you, responsible for positive youth policy. In the transition to a 21st century policy, also at European level, there is more and more emphasis on the social and cultural dimension in its policies and a focus towards a more communicative approach with citizens in Europe. Designing positive youth policy is a response to the talents young people present us.

Relation comes first, after that comes organization. That is why I want you to meet Tarik:

Tarik is 14 years old. His parents came from Iraque. His father is gone for years already. Tarik could not go to a regular school any more, he was fighting with classmates, with teachers, and his results were far below the average. Even at his special school he is ‘a case’. In some ways Tarik seems an adult, in some

ways Tarik is a boy of 4 instead of 14. And his mother? Tarik is driving her mad, especially with his music. He is playing drums, percussion. When his mother has a little time to relax - she is working as a housecleaner and taking care for her 3 kids alone - Tarik is playing percussion in his room. It makes a lot of noise; he can play for hours and hours. Tarik goes out on the street, where he meets some bad friends....

My vision on young people is not just: 'Don't worry, be happy with children.' Positive youth policy starts with accepting young people as partner (dia 3). Being young brings opportunities in wanting to discover live, especially your own live. Being adult brings opportunities in having experience and wanting to explore live, especially your own live in relation to others. These both opportunities are asking for connections. No childish relations-connections. I am pleading for reciprocal relations between adults, responsible adults and young people, both designing community.

Responsibility for community demands reciprocal relations with reciprocal responsibilities

Working on citizenship is working with shared responsibilities. It is not the government anymore that tells people what to do. Society is society of every citizen. They all contribute, working as a part of community on community-building. As we are in search for positive youth policy, this is not taking the easy way.

In history it seems that youth is always being made problematic. In Mesopotamia there is a golden apple from 3500 years ago with an inscription: "Youth of today is brute and without respect." Socrates says about his students in 480 BC: "Youth of today are without limits and don't pay respectful attention." Nowadays every 5-10 years we hear about 'The youth of today'. My conclusion: Conflict of generations seems to be the problem of adults!

I could give a lecture on network society, social media, learning communities, crowdsourcing, Facebook, the possibilities of modern behavior etc.etc. But that would be analyzing to come to instruction. I will try to put it another way.

If we want a movement of 'positive youth policy', we have to move with positive impulses. Just to give you an idea that many people keep moving on the 'problem stairs': What we often do is starting with the problems, in politics as well as in the connection with young people. In the Netherlands we speak of 'medicalization' of behavior of children. The professional world knows a lot of experts. Children are divided in labels. For every problem we build up an institute.

Some statistics from The Netherlands are really shocking. The last 5 years there is an increase of 15% in 'Speciaal Onderwijs', and 10-20% increase of indicated problem behavior. So there is an increase of education for children with special needs – or even better: increase of labelling children with special needs, concentration problems, autism etc. It seems that there is not an increase of more problems, but an increase of labeling problems by professionals.

Tarik knows all about this:

Teacher, Remedial Teacher, social worker, youth welfare, guardian, police: 11 professionals are busy with Tarik, focusing on his problems, and most of the time not working together. Professionals often take problems as starting point of professional acting, every professional has his own working process. Tarik isn't seen as Tarik; Tarik is a pupil that doesn't listen; Tarik is a naughty son; Tarik is a risky teenager; Tarik is a drop out; Tarik is part of an ethnic group; Tarik is part of a broken family etc. Every problem has its own professionals, every problem creates aims, goals with separate administration and responsibilities. And: the professionals – all off them – don't see Tarik as part of his daily live in community. Tarik is divided into parts and not seen in his community.

But then, on the street, there is this street-worker, Harvey. He asks for Tarik's passion. It takes three short conversations before Tarik tells him that 'percussion' is his absolute passion. But Tarik is also telling that this passion shouldn't exist, because it causes trouble with his mother. Harvey motivates Tarik to participate in a sort of talent-scouting-contest.

Empower young citizens



It is called: “For talent we clap in our hands!” To make it short: Tarik wins the first round and goes on to the finals. His prize is one lesson in the public music school. Here Tarik meets teachers who are really interested in his percussion. And by the way, he accepts the feedback that he doesn’t make any contact with his audience.

Tarik wins the final, his performance is absolutely moving the audience. His mother is proud, Tarik is proud, and guess what? Tarik is motivated to go to vocational education to study music. He made appointments with his mother at what time he can play percussion, but his mum likes to hear it now! Noise became sound, fight became proud, and escape became the way to himself. And Tarik wants to be an example for others!

Positive Youth Policy has everything to do with creating stages for life skill experiences

2. Necessity on European perspective (linked to 2020-Lisbon-strategy)

There is a lot to say about the need for Youth Policy in perspective of European policy! I would like to point just three things:

1. For the Peer-learning group: local benefit and national and European policy can help each other. I think the Peer-learning group can act on two levels:

- a) Inspiring each other to support ‘Local Positive Youth Policy’ (local practice)
- b) It is important to lobby, to organize input for Erasmus for all (lobby strategy)

2. There are lots of reasons to design Positive Youth Policy: Demographic challenges, the level of public facilities on the countryside, regionalization of governance.

- c) The necessity of public facilities in urban cities and subareas;
- d) Access to education because the labor market of today and tomorrow asks for new skills;
- e) Human capital – hands, brains and hart – in responsible en respecting citizens.

3. The European youth strategy is already

quite adequate. But I think we need to sharpen it, where we want to go, we take as a start:

- a) Responsible citizenship in the future starts with giving responsibility to citizens now.
- b) Being young is not ‘preparation on society’, being young is taking part in society.
- c) Skilled citizens who carry a democratic Europe as a community of values start with our own values.

To put it clear: What can we learn form the story of Tarik working in local situations and building a strategy for Brussels? We need investment on talent in terms of human capital. Skills for the 21th century are not only school-skills or work-wisdom. The way to school is also passion in music. The road to become employee is also being motivated to make contact with your audience. The best way to built community is building community.

A warning: There is a great risk in acting on crisis-impulse. If there is a crisis we start taskforces in making connections. If there is no crisis we lose attention in education and connections between schools and enterprises. For the program on Positive Youth Policy it is important to see a perspective in Brussels for a sustainable community program in the period 2014-2020.

3. Governance: No department of models but ministry of movement

What kind of governance and what kind of professionals do we need to work on Positive Youth Policy?

As I said, often we design policies in analyzing and formulating instructions - I speak of the ‘Department of Models’. I think it is worth trying it different. I come from the ‘Department of Stories’, stories that are enabling us to take different ways of governance.

The story of Tarik teaches us a lot. We all know stories like that. Not only success stories, also stories about what went wrong. At this point of the designing process, it is worth not to analyze but to vary stories and not to instruct but to select stories that – in real life – make the difference.

I notice that there is awareness among decision makers. In The Netherlands in 2006 started 'Operation Young', a small awakening team lead to a special department on youth policy. Social affairs, education, youth-welfare and the department of justice are working together since four years. The youth department became, that's a pity, too much subject of ideology. After four years the special department for youth policy already and unfortunately ended. But there is still an attempt to work integrated and give local governments more responsibilities.

There is a huge transition in preparation to make the local governments responsible for all the work that has to do with youngsters – from building playgrounds to programs for juvenile delinquents, from prenatal health-care to labor market. It is a huge decentralization of responsibilities and also of billions of euros.

Goals are:

1. To make it simple: reduce political and financial complexity
2. Direct – local-responsibility: close to citizens

Most important opportunities are:

3. Innovation: more empowerment of citizens, also when they are young
4. Prevention should increase the number of heavy and expensive support

In Germany I feel the same sort of energy in what is called 'alliance on youth'. Sweden has integrated subjects on youth. We can learn a lot from each other. There is a combined effort to be more effective with less bureaucracy. My pleading is to use the power of positive challenging like the 'piano stairs'. Inspiration, challenge, fun: It brings satisfaction. My pleading is to form, together, a movement rather than models. This movement is a sort of Robin Hood gang, which is stealing from the 'rich' to divide to the poor. The rich are the good practizes...! Peerlearning in European exchange is not only a matter of sharing and stimulating good practices. Peerlearning is also: The first you meet in contact with foreigners is yourself.

Before coming to conclusions, I would like to share my own experiences in 11 years as an

alderman, and before that I was a teacher for four years and a street worker for five years. I formulate some obstacles, but of course, in Positive Youth Policy there are challenges, often learned by not being successful.

4. Obstacles are challenges in designing Positive Youth Policy

About young people

They are shortly young, so every two years there is a new generation. This is not only a practical problem. It comes to the heart of the principles of governmental organization. We often work with farm factory processes, but youth policy asks for free range chickens in public services! What I try to say is that connection to the life of young people is a condition for results. The intragenerational method can be helpful. Young people can give each other a lot of support; the elder youngsters enjoy this responsibility. Younger youngsters see this as a challenge because they see themselves also as in the opportunity to become responsible.

You need civil servants who can deal with this moving perspective. For example: the story of city trainers: In my city 100 young people are being trained on their passion: dance, basketball, rap, and graffiti. They are trained to be the trainer of other young people. They learn to be responsible. Connections between young people are an impulse to community, and young people being positively active do not make any trouble.

But there are also stories of intergenerational contact. Young and old meet in a dialogue-organized connection between teenagers and 60+. They play games from 50 years ago and modern computer games as well. They talk about alcohol and drugs, sex and relations. It all ends with great respect, reciprocal respect!

About diversity

'The young people' doesn't exist. They are very divers, in age, in background (social-economic, ethnic, countryside or city), in level of education, in subculture, in parental support. But for almost all of them there are a lot of opportunities in sports and in cultu-

ral events to make young people moving in experience, as a pupil and as a teacher. I told you already about a method we invent, the city-trainer. The `tradition' of values – respect, initiative, responsibility, community-care, working together, differences – is insight experiences. They don't want a lecture about life; they want to live life. And by the way, young people are super fast, super social and super smart. It is called: 'Generation Einstein'. In all the diversity, working with the passion of young people is a fun factory! We saw it in the story of Tarik as well.

Using the passion of young people in meaningful experiences is creating results personal and in community!

About invisible results

Prevention is hard to prove. Investment on motivational programs or in education is sometimes very difficult. As an alderman, Mayor, leader of a department, we all know that the claim on what is `urgent' is much stronger than the claim on what is `important'. An example: In fighting the unemployment of young people the national government gave some rules to the local government. As an alderman I developed a program with vocational schools to keep students one or two years longer in education. There were no jobs, but better skills for later on could be developed. We called it 'school-ex'. The financial system said: We support only programs for young people who first have been unemployed for three months. The effect: loss of contact between school and student.

It is easier to plead for money for repressive programs than for more street workers like Harvey. By the way, Harvey, the street worker in the story of Tarik used to be a Tarik himself. Municipality and the organization of social work invested in eight youngsters who lived on the street. One of them was Harvey. They started to train with music and sports, it all ended in vocational studies with a job guarantee. Streetwise street workers are handicraftsmen in scouting talents. Are we daring to prove that preventive measures work? International research shows that 'what works' in prevention is 40% based on how the customer/client is motivated to be supported: 30% bases on relevant competences of the

» Positive Youth Policy starts with positive vision on young people.

professionals, 15% bases on good working methods and 15% bases on the relationship between the professionals and their 'clients'. This is evidence based information based on research e.g. by Lambert. We tend to focus on evidence based methods only or mainly and forget about the relationship and motivation.

About institutes

I don't want to blame professional institutes. Their work can be very successful. But their autonomy in self-centered activities can also be very strong. In The Netherlands we also see a greater dependence on or governmental professionals, or public services. People feel less responsible. Throw your garbage on the street – oh, the dustman will pick it up! Professionals see their own knowledge about the situation as more important than the strength of citizens. And we often ask for responsibility, but organize accountability. Department of Models, Department of Statistics, Department of monitoring..... In the labyrinth of professionals it is hard to discover who is the 'boss'. There is a lot to say about how public services can be directed in the right direction.

About professionals

It is not always for sure professionals try to work in a way they make themselves not needed anymore. Skills are needed to work in reciprocal relationships and in empowerment; not thinking of shortages but of opportunities are necessary. The former coach of the ladies national hockey team told it this way: Marc Lammers worked with the best and most scoring forward. She always scored with her backhand tip. She had problems with her forehand passing. So Lammers started to practice her forehand. She lost her motivation and didn't score anymore. After that, Lammers learned and changed his program. The forward found back her motivation and her strength. She became the top scorer on the world championship and the Dutch ladies became world champion. Develop where the strength is, instead of investing on the

weakness! I think leaders should pay more attention to give direction to professionals!

About leadership

Modern leadership is not 'Telling what people have to do'. Bring movement in people and bring them to goals is more effective by 'dividing is multiplying'. Start from where you want to go to! Positive Youth Policy starts with positive vision on young people. Practice what you preach! People want to be part of a story more than being part of a model. I hope the Peerlearning group can develop as a department of stories, growing to a ministry of movement! It is interesting that a shepherd is behind his sheeps. The shepherd leads his dogs with clear instructions, and the dogs listen even better when the shepherd gives them positive attention.

About out of place organizing

At the end: Leadership in organizations. You should have some courage. Mostly we organize that people do their work well, but more interesting is, do they do the right work? While organizing the 'what' it is important to pay attention to the 'How'. An example: I wanted to stimulate playgrounds in public space. I wanted that an expert on designing started to communicate with the children and parents in the neighborhood. I wanted the expert to spend more time in the relation with the people. Firstly she said: That is not my expertise. I am a designer in public space. But whose is this public space, and whose are public services? At last, the designer learned how to communicate. And she discovered that her expertise in designing became even more interesting in responding to citizens. From one-way-traffic it became a reciprocal designing process. She didn't have to put aside her expertise; she had to proof it in a challenging community process. As a result the playgrounds are not 'made by' the government anymore. Public playgrounds became the public's playgrounds. The citizens' satisfaction increased. And, by the way, the costs of up keeping are a lot lower now!

Another story: Entrepreneurs as ambassadors for dropouts. Ten businessmen started eight years ago to search traineeship for those students who were not able to find traineeship

themselves. When the director of 'Heineken' calls a colleague it has more impact than the call of a public servant or a teacher. They succeeded with over thousand traineeships. 87% of the students succeeded with a certificate!

5. Challenging Conclusions: designing local practices and a European Youth strategy

What:

1. Young people are no object, they are subject in Youth Policy.
2. Professionals in public services have citizenship as a goal.

The program is not: acting towards citizenship but towards acting citizenship.

Creating – in reciprocal relationship with young people – meaningful experiences in daily life contributes.

3. Creating citizen-experience in daily life is focused on local practice through connection between Community-Schools-Companies (C-S-C) (Civil-SoCietiy).

How:

4. Local governments have ownership in creating C-S-C-connections .
5. National and international governments support and take away obstacles and develop leadership on Positive Youth Policy.
6. Designing Positive Youth Policy is a cooperation of
 - local practice
 - national commitment and responsibility
 - international outline
 - in a 2014 -2020 program (It is important to think about Erasmus for all. Is that enough or do we lose the possibility of informal learning, very important in Positive Youth policy) with focus on:
 - passion to empower personal development
 - relations to built community
 - acting entrepreneurial to produce C-S-C connections
 - reciprocal cooperation is living democracy.

Goethe about Tarik: "Treat someone as he is, and he will be like that. Treat someone as he can be and he will be like that."

Thank you very much for your attention!



INTERVIEW WITH BART EIGEMAN

„What is important is the inspiration that is passed on!“

JfE: Mr Eigeman, what is a “positive youth policy“?

Eigeman: There are two challenges for a current youth policy: The first one is to make young people not an object but a subject of youth policy. This means to entrust young people with responsibility and to win them over to it. The second one is a “deproblematization” of young people. We should see their potential and not only their deficits. This is what I call a “positive youth policy”.



JfE: Is this not a long standing principle of youth work?

Eigeman: Yes, but it should also be a guideline for youth policy. Often we only see the need to take action when problems of or with young people occur. In the Netherlands, we talk about a “medicalization” of young people. The behaviour of young people is increasingly described through medical terms. This way children and young people get “labelled”, they get labels, and they are no longer viewed in their entirety with all their strengths and potentials. A positive youth policy does not invest in diseases but in talents, motivation and positive impetus.



JfE: By the way positive impetus: What do you expect from the European Peer Learning Project launched by the German youth ministry?

Eigeman: A lot! Often exchange is regarded as a type of luxury. According to my experiences this is not correct. If you meet a stranger, the first one you meet is yourself. It is very important to give yourself time to learn. And this is something that happens here. Asking

other people questions is actually a kind of self-reflection.



JfE: Aren’t framework conditions quite different in the individual countries and municipalities? Is it possible at all to compare things in this respect?

Eigeman: We are all concerned about discussing the concerns of young people, their participation in social development and the relations between young people and adults. Another topic which I have heard from almost all people present here is the problem of “divisions” between formal education and informal learning. This is where we throw away potential for the socio-emotional development and citizenship of young people.



JfE: Why is this matter a topic in all countries? Has youth work become more difficult?

Eigeman: The systems at local level are over-organized. We are specialized too much; there are so many “shops” existing next to each other. Each problem has its own institute, its own financial world, and its own area of competence. There is no longer any contact between them. But a child cannot be divided. Moreover, a pupil is also a sports person, and a child with bad concentration skills is also a talented musician. What matters is that we combine these things. We must stop to focus on our own organization. This also requires courage. But in the end it is about children and their parents.

JfE: What role does Europe play in this regard?

Eigeman: With all due respect to national governments – actually there are only two communities with which people identify. One is the municipality where people lead their daily life, and the other one is Europe. This is something I have learnt from a German who is also a Frenchman, from Daniel Cohn-Bendit. At local level we should establish links, for instance between schools and youth work, but also between schools, organizations and the industry. Europe itself is not only an organization but also a community of values. It stands for freedom and individuality, but also for the opportunity to be friendly towards people coming from other countries. This is also important in life, and it serves identity development in Europe.



JfE: With this in mind - what do you think about the most recent political developments in Europe?

Eigeman: My experience from being a mayor for 11 years now is that we should not make ourselves so much dependent, and that we should not wait for decisions made in Brussels or Strasbourg. No! We should make clear what is necessary for local and regional policy. And then we should say: Brussels, you can do something for us!



JfE: Do you also expect this from this peer learning process?

Eigeman: If you look at Lithuania and see how they can be very successful with little money, and that they also have a very positive

» There are only two communities with which people identify. One is the municipality where people lead their daily life, and the other one is Europe.

environment for youth policy, then new prospects open up for even more prosperous countries. The attempt made by the Czech people to motivate 6,000 municipalities for an active youth policy is indeed quite interesting. Other countries can learn from them how to stimulate a “positive youth policy”. I have also found this energy in the concept which is described in Germany as an “independent youth policy”: it is an alliance for young people! What is important is the inspiration which is passed on. Positivity creates new positivity!

(Interviewer: Helle Becker)

INTERVIEW WITH MICHAL URBAN

„We will notice that we all have learnt from each other“**JfE: Mr. Urban, who is responsible for youth policy in the Czech Republic?**

Urban: Youth policy in the Czech Republic is coordinated at national level by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, namely by the youth department.

**JfE: What role do municipalities play?**

Urban: Of course, national youth policy should be implemented at local level. A national strategy without work at local level would only be a theoretical background. However, unfortunately our strategy documents do not explicitly mention that municipalities have to implement their own youth policy. This is why we try to cooperate with them as much as possible and motivate them to have their own youth policy which should be in line with the national and European strategies.

» **A national strategy without work at local level would only be a theoretical background.**

JfE: Is the local youth policy supported by the national level?

Urban: The municipalities receive funds according to the number of inhabitants. However, the municipalities decide how they distribute these funds. In some areas, it is stipulated by law for what purpose they may use them. But with regard to youth work and youth services, municipalities are allowed to act quite independently. Therefore, we can only by indirect means try to have a good youth policy implemented on the local level. For instance, we disseminate good examples and good ideas; and we support training for staff members of the youth services.

**JfE: What influence has the development in the field of youth policy in the European Union and the EU Youth Strategy on the Czech youth policy?**

Urban: When the EU Youth Strategy was adopted, it was nothing revolutionary for us as it corresponded more or less with the youth political strategy which we already had. We harmonized our policy with the European requirements. For example, we don't want to draft a youth report according to national guidelines one year and according to European ones the next year. This is why we synchronized corresponding issues and schedules. However, for us the significance of the EU Youth Strategy was in particular that it constituted a kind of "additional argument" in negotiations with other departments. As if to say: "It is good to support youth policy because it is also a European priority."

JfE: What relevance has the Youth in Action program in the Czech Republic?

Urban: For us the program JUGEND IN AKTION is of special importance. The interim evaluation two years ago showed us that in the Czech Republic, there is no national alternative for support as provided by most of the activities run by JUGEND IN AKTION. So it is crucial for our international youth work.

Other than that, we are happy to have the opportunity to use funds from central actions for activities on local level, especially under action 4.6 (support for partnerships for developing long-term projects which combine various program measures). At the moment, we are implementing the second successful project. The first project supported youth political cooperation in the Silesian region in the northeast, the second one in Southern Moravia. In both cases, local youth political programs run by Youth in Action were established together with many partners like NGO's, young people, the industry and authorities.



JfE: What do you expect from this peer learning project?

Urban: I have high expectations, to be honest. In every country, those responsible for youth policy try to resolve similar problems. Therefore, it is important to learn about different solutions that may be possible. I found the example of Lithuania very interesting. They have a network of coordinators in the regions for implementing the national youth strategy

across the country. This is only one example, I could also mention others. The most important thing for me is to learn about other approaches and to examine what fits our own conditions.



JfE: Have your expectations been fulfilled?

Urban: There were aspects which were interesting for me but perhaps not for everybody. Therefore, I would have wished to have more time for bilateral exchange. However, this is only the beginning of the process. Apart from this, I am very grateful that Germany invited us. I feel I have been granted privileges. I regard it as an indicator for the fact that it is not only us who can learn from others, but that the Czech Republic can also inspire others. In two years' time – when we will be looking back at the peer learning process – we will hopefully find that we all have learnt from each other and that good ideas have been implemented in the countries.

(Interviewer: Helle Becker)





3. PRESENTATION OF LOCAL YOUTH POLICIES BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE OTHER COUNTRIES ❖❖❖

PRESENTATION

Youth Policy in Belgium (Flanders)**Facts and figures****1. Basics:**

- Youth in Belgium: (2008): 0-9 years: 10,8%; 10-14 years: 5,7%; 15-19 years: 6,1 %; 20-24 years: 6,0%, 25-29 years: 6,4 %, in total more than 2,9 million people aged under 25 years live in Belgium, which has a high level of migration (25% of the population 2011) .
- Youth (15 to 24 years) unemployment rate: 17% (March 2012) of the population.
- Governmental structure: Parliamentary monarchy with a bicameral system.
- Belgium is a federal state consisting of the regions Flanders, Wallonia and the Brussels Capital Region. Those regions and there respectively speaking communities have far-reaching autonomy. The administration level in the middle (below the regions) is divided into 10 provinces under the particular direction of a governor. At the lower administrative level, there are a total of 589 municipalities.

2. Responsibility for youth policy

The responsibility for the child and youth policy in Belgium is not on the national level, it is on the one of the Flemish, the French and German-speaking community. Accordingly, there are three separate ministries with separate children's and youth policies. At the international level (for example at EU meetings) there are usually all three communities represented.

2.1. The regional level - Flemish Community:

For youth in the Flemish Community (58% of the population), the Ministry of Culture, Youth, Sports and Media (*Vlaams Ministerie van Cultuur, Jeugd, Sport en Media – CJSM*) is responsible. It does the preliminary work

for the current Minister of Education, Youth, Equal Opportunities and Brussels (*Vlaams minister van Onderwijs, Jeugd, Gelijke Kansen en Brussel*) to. The main tasks of the ministry in the youth sector are: the definition of youth policy priorities; promote and support youth work in the Flemish Community; regular dialogue with representatives of youth.

Flanders has a youth council (*Vlaamse Jeugdraad*), The key task of the Flemish Youth Council is to help ensure that the voice and views of children, young people, youth organisations and youth advisory bodies (youth councils and pupil councils) are effectively heard and integrated into policy-making. The Flemish Youth Council may, at its own discretion or at the request of the Flemish Government or of the Flemish Parliament, give advice on all youth related issues. In addition, the Flemish Youth Council may counsel federal authorities and other bodies on its own initiative. One of the tasks of the youth council is designing a three-year youth (work) policy plan with the aim to support to youth participation and therefore funding opportunities for specific participation projects and associations as defined in the Flemish Parliament Act on Flemish Youth Policy (29 March 2002). Participation has also been given a significant position in the Flemish Youth Policy Plan 2005-2009.

2.2. Level of municipalities and regions

Most local authorities have youth services or at least one officer who is responsible for youth matters.

The Flemish Parliament Act on supporting and stimulating municipal, inter-municipal and provincial youth (work) policy (2005) requires that each local authority recognizes or establishes one or more youth councils. There are 5 provincial youth councils (West



Flanders, East Flanders, Antwerp, Limburg, Flemish Brabant). Members of the provincial youth council are primarily youth clubs but can also be local youth councils and even individuals. The provincial councils have the same advisory powers as local youth councils.

Each local authority (including Brussels Capital) has a local youth council in which representatives of local or inter-municipal youth work initiatives and young people (being not a member of youth organization) are present. The Board of Mayor and Aldermen is obliged to seek the youth council's advice on youth policy issues. Moreover, the local youth council may offer advice on its own initiative on issues affecting youth or youth work.

The Flemish Parliament Act on Pupil Participation (2004) provides participation at school, since the composition and working of the school council and the pupil council are strictly regulated. The creation of a pupil council is obligatory in primary and secondary schools if it is demanded by at least ten percent of the pupils, as long as this is made up of at least three pupils¹⁾.

Organized by the municipal youth service are *Grabbelpas*, *Swappas*, Some playground associations, Youth council / youth work policy plan, Some youth clubs (Before 1993: national funding, After 1993: funding by the municipalities), Some youth centres (400 youth clubs in Flanders (*members of Formaat*))

Priorities in youth politics

By the ministry:

Empowerment and Participation of youth (via language capabilities, access to information, youth structures); Positive youth (oriented towards the potentials not the deficits) ;

Promotion of equal opportunities e.g. with exchanges; Cultural education; Lifelong learning (with formal and non-formal education)

By the 3 year youth work policy plan of the youth council:

Key topics are: youth work support programmes, volunteer training, greater access to youth work, participation, infrastructure, and integrated youth policy, space for youth, communication and information.

Source : „<http://www.dija.de>“ www.dija.de (Database of international youth work)
Guidelines 2009-2014, Pascal Smet (*Vlaams minister van Onderwijs, Jeugd, Gelijke Kansen en Brussel*)
European Knowledge Center for Youth Policy (country information Belgium Flanders)

1) See Council of Europe, Youth partnership, http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/documents/Questionnaires/Participation/2008/Belgium_FL.pdf page 3-6

PRESENTATION

Youth Policy in the Czech Republic

Facts and figures

1. Basics:

- Youth in the Czech Republic (2009): 0-9 years: 7,3%; 10-14 years: 4,6%; 15-19 years: 6,1 %; 20-24 years: 6,6%, 25-29 years: 7,5 %, in total more than 3,3 million people aged under 30 years are living in the Czech Republic; still as in most industrialized countries the proportion of youth in total population is decreasing.
- Youth (15 -24 years) unemployment rate: 19,4 % (May 2012) of the population. That figure, however, is on the rise and is even higher in some regions, reaching more than 30 percent in parts of north Moravia and north Bohemia, according to the Czech Statistical Office.
- Governmental structure: parliamentary democracy with two chambers; substructures: 14 regions (higher units of territorial self-government), consisting of municipalities (lower units of territorial self-government) with proper competencies and regional government headed by a governor named “*hejtman*”.

2. Responsibility for youth policy:

The competencies in the youth sector are mainly on national level. The main coordinator of the implementation of the Government Policy on Children and Young People 2007 – 2013 is the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

2.1. National level:

- The responsibility for child and youth services is with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (*Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy – MŠMT*) which coordinates drafting, implementing and evaluating the Policy. The implementation of tasks

resulting from the Government Policy, are specified in two-year Action Plans and are covered by individual ministries from their budgets. Youth Chamber as a cross-sectoral advisory body for the minister responsible for youth is an efficient instrument for a cross-sectoral youth policy. Apart from the representatives of partner ministries and the organisation directly controlled by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (National Institute for Children and Youth), Czech Council of Children and Youth including youth NGOs, and Leisure Time Centres, there have been nominated representatives of regions, municipalities at local and regional level, employers and religions as well as members of the Youth Chamber. In the Ministry, the Department of Youth Affairs is responsible for the provision of funding to NGOs, support of talented children and young people, youth participation, non-formal education, youth voluntary activities, mobility of young people, information for and about young people, youth research, the international relations in the youth field etc in accordance with the thematic fields of the Government Policy on Children and Young People 2007-2013.

- Other national ministries affecting matters with relevance for youth:
 - The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (*Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí*)
 - The Ministry of the Interior (*Ministerstvo vnitra*)
 - the Ministry of the Environment (*Ministerstvo životního prostředí*)
 - The Ministry of Culture (*Ministerstvo kultury*)
 - The Ministry for Regional Development (*Ministerstvo pro místní rozvoj*)
 - The Ministry of Agriculture (*Ministerstvo zemědělství*)



- The National Children and Youth Institute (*Narodni institute dětí a mládeže – NIDM*) was created in 2005 and is directly subordinated to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The NIDM takes responsibility for implementing non-formal education in the youth field, supports the implementation of several programs initiated by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports including the national “Keys for Life” ESuropean Social Fund Project which supports building up key-competences of young people and youth leaders and youth workers. Activities of the NIDM include programs and projects for talented students, the organization of festivals for children and young people and activities in the field of youth information. NIDM is a hosting body for the Youth in Action National Agency and the “Eurodesk” in the Czech Republic, does some PR activities and is researching in the field of youth. It is also active in the field of European cooperation in promoting youth exchanges and study visits of multipliers. From its predecessor organization.
- The Council for the leisure education (*Rada pro zájmové vzdělávání*) is an advisory body to the MŠMT in questions of providing meaningful recreational activities for children and young people, especially in state institutions (youth after-school centers, child and youth clubs, school clubs, etc.). The Council members, appointed for three years, consist of representatives of the Ministry, employees in educational institutions and youth experts.
- The Czech Council for Children and Youth of the Czech Republic (*Česká rada dětí a mládeže – CRDM*) 1998, an umbrella organization for 104 non-governmental children's and youth organizations provides space to members ranging from leisure-oriented, to ecological and cultural or political associations for children and youth. CRDM is committed to improving the living conditions and education of children and adolescents, promotes non-formal education and represents the interests of its members on national and international level. Since April 2010, CRDM has observer status in the European

Youth Forum, the umbrella organization of national youth councils and international youth organizations in Europe.

2.2. Level of municipalities and regions

Regional authorities elaborate, assess and complement long-term objectives in the sphere of education and development of the educational system in the region. They present the long-term objectives and an annual report to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic. However the main tasks are administrative ones such as materializing the funding programmes of the Ministry or creating conditions for the development of leisure-time activities of youth in cooperation with non-governmental non-profit organizations.

Priorities in youth politics

The child and youth policy priorities and associated implementation measures are fixed in two-year Action Plans. Currently the 2010-2011 Action Plan has been evaluated and the last two-year Action Plan for the 2012-2013 has been drafted and submitted to the Government for their approval. It is for the first time when, while working on a new Action Plan, a link between challenges which youth policy in the Czech Republic is facing and the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy have been taken into consideration. In the context of discussions about a new generation youth policy concept in the Czech Republic after the year 2013, following thematic areas have been prioritised: youth employability including the recognitions of youth work and non-formal education, youth participation, volunteerism of young people and social inclusion.

Sources : „<http://www.dija.de>“ www.dija.de (Database of international youth work)

European Knowledge Center for Youth Policy (country information Czech Republic)

Government Policy on Children and Young People for 2007-2013 (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports)

PRESENTATION

Youth Policy in France

Facts and figures

1. Basics:

- Youth in France (2007): 0-14 18,6%; 15-24 years: 12,8% of the population ; 20,11 million people aged under 25 years are living in France 2011.
- Youth unemployment rate (May 2011) below 25 years: 23% of the population.
- Governmental structure: centralised state, presidential democracy with 2 chambers.
- regional substructures: the regions (26), the departments (100) and the municipalities (36.780)

2. Responsibility for youth policy

The competencies in youth policy are on national level. The ministry of sport, youth, civic education and social life ("*Ministère des Sports, de la Jeunesse, de l'Éducation populaire et de la Vie Associative*") is coordinating the implementation of youth politics. Beside the responsibility on national level, youth issues are generally governed jointly by the State and all the local authorities.

2.1. National level

- Further ministries concerned with youth issues are the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Ministry of Employment and Health, Ministry of Culture and Communication, Ministry of solidarities and social cohesion, Ministry of the City.
- The Youth Department deals with the following issues:
 - Youth information,
 - Young people participation and Youths Councils,
 - Initiatives and engagement of young people and the "Envie d'Agir" program (Will to act)
 - Youth camps,
 - recreational centres,
 - educational entertainment and cultural issues,
 - European and international exchange programs.

And, it supports the associations active in the youth field, labelled "youth and non-formal education".

- To carry out these missions, the central administration is organised into an objective-based division that covers the areas of youth, non-formal education, voluntary organisations, jobs and training. The ministry has a network of 105 local devolved services and public national establishments in charge of implementing national policies.
- The Committee of national and international relations of youth associations and education ("*Comité pour les Relations Nationales et Internationales des Associations de Jeunesse et d'Éducation Populaire*") CNAJEP offers exchange for its members (76 youth associations and organisations of non-formal education) and represent



their position towards public, politics and within some committees of child and youth services, furthermore it is member of the European youth forum.

- National institute of youth and education (“*Institut National de la Jeunesse et de l’Education Populaire*”) INJEP is functioning as a service unite and facilitator for actors from youth work and non-formal education. It organizes trainings, seminars and conferences to foster PR for their topics or to further qualify for example professional youth workers. It has also a strong international character since it is hosting the national agency for the program youth in action (“*Agence française du programme européen Jeunesse*”) and the SALTO YOUTH resource center „EuroMed”, furthermore it is cooperating with countries in Africa and Asia.
- In 2000 the position of guard of children (“*Défenseur/e des enfants*”) has been established to facilitate the protection and promotion of child rights defined by the respective UN convention. The Defender of child rights receives local back up from 55 departmental assistants and 32 young ambassadors acting as peers for example in schools.

2.2. Level of municipalities and regions

Public authorities are: at the Regional level: *Conseil Régional*; at the Departmental level: *Conseil Général*; at the Local level: *Conseil municipal*, each of these bodies has specific competencies in the Youth field and can deal with youth issues when local interests are concerned.

The *Conseil municipal* (local government) may share some of the fields of action, such as in metropolitan communities or communities of parishes. The responsibility for youth

issues is often transferred to these communities.

Priorities in youth politics

- Youth information
- Social and vocational integration of youngster below 25 years
- Support of youth and educational associations
- Creation of pedagogical recreation activities
- Promotion of participation and volunteering
- Voluntary services
- European and international exchange
- Qualification in the field of sport and youth care

Sources : „<http://www.dija.de>“ www.dija.de (database of international youth work)

„http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/ekcyp/By_country/France.html“ http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/ekcyp/By_country/France.html

„<http://www.jeunes.gouv.fr/ministere-1001/actions/>“ www.jeunes.gouv.fr/ministere-1001/actions/

„<http://www.injep.fr>“ www.injep.fr

„<http://www.defenseurdesenfants.fr>“ www.defenseurdesenfants.fr

PRESENTATION

Youth Policy in Germany

Facts and figures

1. Basics:

- Youth in Germany: (2012): 0-9 years: 8,6%; 10-14 years: 4,9%; 15-19 years: 5,3 %; 20-24 years: 6,0%, 25-29 years: 6,1 %, one quarter of youth (15-25 years) has a migration background, however as in most industrialized countries the proportion of youth in total population is decreasing. In total approx. 25 million young people under 30 years are living in Germany.
- Youth (15 to 24 years) unemployment rate: 7,9% (March 2012) of the population.
- Governmental structure: Parliamentary democracy, federal republic with 16 federal states (11253 municipalities).

2. Responsibility for youth policy:

Child and youth policy in Germany is characterised by a diversity of levels and responsibilities. In

line with Germany's federal structure, child and youth policy is not only a matter for the Federal

Government but also for the federal states (*Länder*), municipal authorities and voluntary child and youth service organisations in the framework of their partnership with public agencies.

2.1. The national level

- The Federal Government understands child and youth policy as a general responsibility of society, a challenge which all societal groups and protagonists need to face. In this context, the Federal Government defines its child and youth policy as:
 1. A governmental policy anchored in the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (*BMFSFJ*). The Ministry is responsible for central program-

mes of the Federal Government's youth policy and important youth policy interfaces with other policy areas.

2. A cross-sectional responsibility across all Federal Ministries whose policies have a direct or indirect impact on the different situations in a young person's life. These include i. a. education, labour market, social, health, justice, interior, regional and urban policies.
3. An enabling child and youth policy.
 - Main tasks of the Youth department in the *BMFSFJ*: The Youth department is in charge of federal laws concerning youth, for example: Social Code Volume Eight (*SGB VIII*) Child and Youth Services and the Protection of Young People Act. It represents the interests of children and youth in all areas of policy, mainly in the areas of education, health and labour market as a cross-sectional task maintaining close contact to other ministries, the federal states (*Bundesländer*) and municipalities as well as to organisations of public youth services. The department supports and promotes supraregional and federal non-statutory organisations in the field of child and youth services. It takes part in the further development and implementation of European youth programmes and asks independent experts to inform about the situation of young people in Germany and supports respective research projects.
 - The national youth council is the German National Committee for International Youth Work (*Deutsches Nationalkomitee für internationale Jugendarbeit - DNK*) being divided into 2 independent organisations: the German Federal Youth Council (*Bundesjugendring - DBJR*) and the political youth council (*Ring Politischer Jugend*).
 - The umbrella organisation of more than 90



national youth organisations is the Association for Children and Youth Services (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kinder- und Jugendhilfe – AGJ*). Further important members are associations of public welfare, Youth Authorities of the federal states (ministries) and youth welfare offices.

2.2. Role of regions and municipalities

In line with the federal structure of Germany child and youth policy is mainly a matter of the federal states and the municipalities. Almost 85% of the public funding made available for child and youth services are provided by local authorities.

The child and youth policy of the federal states (*Länder*) is coordinated by the Conference of Youth and Family Ministers in charge of child, youth and family policy of the federal states. The Conference works towards an equal development of institutions and programmes and supports local youth offices and youth offices of the federal states. In the framework of the Conference of Youth and Family Ministers legal questions of the youth service, specialist youth service policy questions as well as youth political questions are decided upon and corresponding resolutions passed. The Chair of the Conference changes regularly. The Chairperson represents the Conference at European level (European Union and Council of Europe). In its work, the Conference of the Youth and Family Ministers is supported by the Working Party of the Highest Youth and Family Authorities of the Federal States.

At local level, the municipal youth office is the central institution of child/youth services. The Youth Offices have been given the authority of carrying out/guaranteeing the tasks and services laid down in the Social Code Volume Eight (SGB VIII) Child and Youth

Services. It rules that the work of the youth office will be carried out by the Committee for Youth Services and the administration of the youth office. The administration of the youth office carries out the resolutions/laws with the specialist competence of its staff. The Committee for Youth Services has the steering function of child and youth services at local level, is concerned with all matters of youth services especially with the discussion of current problems of young people and their families as well as ideas/suggestions for the further development of youth services, youth assistance planning and the promotion of voluntary youth services.

Priorities in youth politics

In May 2011 the BMFSFJ published a concept paper under the title “Independent youth policy – an alliance for youth” which describes basic points for a new youth policy in Germany. Independent youth policy is directed to all young people and sees itself as a socially relevant future-oriented type of policy. The thematic priorities of this new policy approach are:

- Fair chances for young people
 - Increased requirements in shorter periods (of time)
 - Perspectives and optimism for the future

Sources: „<http://www.dija.de>“ www.dija.de (Database of international youth work)
European Knowledge Center for Youth Policy (country information Germany)

PRESENTATION

Youth Policy in Lithuania**Facts and figures****1. Basics:**

- Youth in Lithuania (14-29 years): (2011): 14-19 years – 259971 (34,8% of all youth); 20-24 years – 252861 (33,9 % of all youth); 25-29 – 233616 (31,3 % of all youth). In total 746 448 people aged 14-29 are living in Lithuania (23 % of total population).
- Youth (15 to 24 years) unemployment rate: 34,3% (March 2012) of the population.
- Governmental structure: Parliamentary democracy. Administrative divisions: ten administrative districts, which are divided into 60 districts (*rayons*) and county-level cities.

2. Responsibility for youth policy:

- Parliament commission in charge of youth issues – Commission for Sport and Youth Affairs of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania (Chairman: Jonas Liesys).
- Ministry in charge of youth – Ministry of Social Security and Labour of Republic of Lithuania (Minister: Mr. Donatas Jankauskas).
- Governmental institution in charge of youth – Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (Director: Mindaugas Kuliavas).
- Council for Youth Affairs (Chairman – Aistė Gaučytė)
- Non-governmental organisation – Lithuanian Youth Council (President – Loreta Senkute).

2.1. The national level

- Commission for Youth and Sport Affairs (hereinafter referred to as the Commission) concerns about the rights of youth, implementation of the state youth policy, gives suggestions on implementation of objectives thereof, performs parliamentary control, lis-

tens to the announcements of ministries and other state institutions (Department of Youth Affairs, Department of Physical Culture and Sports), as well as assesses the information received.

- The State Council for Youth Affairs under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania was set up in 1996 by the Law on Youth Policy Framework as an institution, accountable to the Government which performs the functions assigned to it by laws and other legal acts. It was formed according to the principle of parity from representatives of state institutions and representatives of youth organisations. The National Youth Council shall delegate representatives of youth organisations to the State Council for Youth Affairs. Since 2006, the system was re-structured and The Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour appeared, which became responsible for preparing and implementing state youth policy programmes and measures, analysing the condition of youth and youth organisations in Lithuania, co-ordinate the activities of state and municipal institutions as well as agencies in the field of youth policy, carry out other activities related to youth and youth organisations. However, Council for Youth Affairs stayed in the structure as institution, which works on voluntary basis and consists from the representatives of state institutions, agencies and the Lithuanian Youth Council in compliance with the principle of equal partnership. The composition of the Council for Youth Affairs and regulations thereof has to be approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on the recommendation of the Minister of Social Security and Labour. The Council for Youth Affairs is considering the main issues of youth policy and submitting proposals to the Department of Youth



Affairs on the implementation of a youth policy meeting the needs of youth and youth organisations.

- Lithuanian Youth Council (LijOT) – the biggest non-governmental, non-profit umbrella structure for Lithuanian national youth organizations and regional unions of youth organizations. LijOT was founded on the 19th of September 1992. Currently LijOT has 63 members (non-governmental youth organizations), and represents more than 200 000 young people in Lithuania.
- The National Youth Affairs Coordinator Association is a non-governmental organization uniting the coordinators of youth affairs of the Lithuanian municipalities, which aspires to frame and give a unanimous position on framing and implementing youth policy in municipalities, solution of mutual problems, as well as enhance the competence and qualification of coordinators of youth affairs, was established in 2006.

2.2. The level of municipalities and regions

- In Lithuania structures with competences in youth affairs are established at national and local level, but not at regional level.
- **Coordinator of Youth Affairs.** The establishment of positions of coordinators of youth affairs was initiated by some municipalities in 1998; all municipalities started establishing these positions in 2003 after the state has delegated the protection of youth rights to municipalities and allocated financing to have such positions. Coordinator of youth activities assists the municipal institutions to frame and implement the municipal youth policy. Standard functions of youth coordinator are approved by the Order of the Minister of Social Security and Labor (4 March 2008, No. A1-68). They are intermediaries between local politicians, civil servants and young people. In order to implement the municipal youth policy, youth coordinators oversee and initiate necessary measures for its implementation, if needed examine the situation of young people.
- **The Municipal Youth Affairs Council** is an institution having a deliberative vote and a long-term objective – to ensure the involvement of youth in solving essential problems. The local youth council is made up equally of representatives of local institutions and

authorities and youth organizations. The representatives of youth have a chance to learn how to recognize the needs of youth frame and represent the interests, combine needs and possibilities, interests of youth with interests of community, get the measure of democratic decision-making and implementation procedures. In turn, the politicians and representatives of administration can go into the situation of youth, realize problems, as well as together with the representatives of youth search for the best solutions.

Priorities in youth politics

For the period 2011-2019, the Lithuanian government has been implementing a long-term youth strategy. The main points are: promote youth involvement and improvement of youth employment; development of an integrated youth policy at all levels, promote information exchange and cooperation between the institutions and organizations that are active in the youth field; secure a systematic monitoring of the situation of youth; creating favorable conditions for quality assurance and development of activities and actions of youth organizations and agencies working with young people, continue implementation of youth programs that strengthen the work of the voluntary sector in youth work.

Program of development of youth policy in municipalities for 2010-2012. The purpose of this program is to develop youth policy in municipalities: encourage the establishment and activities of youth organizations, sustain the relation thereof with the municipal institutions, rural as well as urban communities, improve the activities of municipal coordinators of youth affairs, improve the activities relevant to framing and implementing youth policy of municipal institutions, improve the qualification of experts as well as volunteers working with youth, introduce and coordinate the system of monitoring youth situation and quality assessment of youth policy in municipalities.

Source : „<http://www.socmin.lt/index.php?-460861425>
 „<http://www.socmin.lt/index.php?-460861425>
 „<http://www.dija.de>“www.dija.de (Database of international youth work) European Knowledge Center for Youth Policy (country information Lithuania)

PRESENTATION

Youth Policy in the Netherlands**Facts and figures****1. Basics:**

- In 2011, 5 million young people aged 0-24 years are living in the Netherlands, (In youth politics of the Netherlands children are included), every fifth youngster has a migration background, but still as in most industrialized countries the proportion of youth in total population is decreasing.
- Youth unemployment rate of youth below 25 years (April 2011) : 6,9% of the population.
- Governmental structure: parliamentary monarchy, substructures: 12 provinces with commissioners nominated by the queen.

2. Responsibility for youth policy:

In The Netherlands, the coordination of youth policy is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. The Netherlands however is a decentralised unitary state. This means that decentralised authorities at the provincial and municipal level carry out certain tasks and responsibilities with a certain degree of autonomy, including general and preventive youth policy and youth care. There is no longer a Ministry with responsibilities on youth policy, since the **Netherlands has decentralised its responsibilities** towards the regions and communes. The process started in the 80s and is still on-going e.g. with the initiative “no child excluded” (11/2011). Thereby different ministries “describe a framework for further and complete decentralisation to the local level including a change in the youth policy system.” So there is no youth work plan on national level.

2.1. National level:

- Since 2010 there was an initiative not only to further decentralize competencies in the youth sector but also to “integrate the different ministries involved in elements of youth policy” to tackle all issues with a joint effort.
- The national ministry of health, welfare and sport (Ministerie voor Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport) only supports the decentralized structures and fosters youth policies in general (for decisions and activities not executable on the subsidiary level).
- Beside the ministries touching youth issues there is a parliamentary commission that monitors the cooperation between the ministries touching youth matters.

Relevant Dutch legislation on children and young people

In the Netherlands there is no encompassing law for issues on children and young people. However, two laws are very important:

- The Youth Care Act (in Dutch: de Wet op de Jeugdzorg), introduced in 2005, is the legal framework of youth care services for youth at risk and their families. It’s aim is twofold: to ensure that better care is made available to young people and their parents (the clients in the youth care process) and to strengthen their position. The client is at the centre of a more transparent, simpler youth care system. This act will be replaced by the Act on care for children and young people at some point in 2012 or 2013.
- On 1 January 2007 the Social Support Act (in Dutch: Wet maatschappelijke ondersteuning – Wmo) came into force. Under the Act, the municipalities are responsible for setting up social support. The aim of



the Social Support Act is participation of all citizens in all facets of the society, or otherwise with help from friends, family or acquaintances. This law defines nine 'performance areas'. Local authorities are expected to 'perform' in these areas, but precisely how they do this is left to the local authorities themselves. However, regarding 'preventive support of adolescents with growing up and parents with parenting problems', all municipalities must offer information and advice, identify possible problems, give guidance to help, offer pedagogical help and coordinate care within a Youth and Family Centre.

- The Dutch National Youth Council NJR (2001) is an umbrella organisation, has around 30 various (national) youth member organisations and is open to representative, democratic organisations that are run for, by and through young people.
- The Netherlands Youth Institute (Nederlands Jeugdinstituut) is the Dutch national institute for compiling, verifying and disseminating knowledge on children and youth matters. (<http://www.nji.nl> www.nji.nl).

2.2. The level of municipalities and regions

- In the Netherlands the youth care system is the responsibility of the 12 provinces. The youth care system covers all forms of care available to parents and children in order to support in the case of serious development and parenting problems.
- In contrast, general and preventive youth policy – such as youth work, leisure time and child health care – is the responsibility of the 415 Dutch municipalities. It also includes specific preventive tasks, such as access to help and care coordination (with special focus on parenting support), that are offered by youth and family centres.

- There is still a close cooperation between the different actors e.g. in July 2011 there was a set of agreements reached valid for the next 5 years between interprovincial structures, municipalities and public administration.

Priorities in youth politics

- participation (like assignment of code-termination rights via youth parliaments relevant for communal decisions on youth matters, community schools with family participation)
- prevention (in regard to drugs and crime challenges for youth)
- trans-sectorial cooperation promoted by the initiative operation young people (Operatie JONG) with e.g. the result of new laws such as the child and youth service act (2005)
- reduction of bureaucracy and simplifying administrative regulations
- local solutions for local challenges and needs (made-to-measure care)
- national action plan on children and youth, which is based on the UN decision 2002 that aims for the inclusion of youth in shaping the action plan for the 4 topics: better popular education, enabling healthy lifestyle, sex and HIV education, plus welfare and care

Source: <http://www.dija.de> www.dija.de (Database of international youth work)
 European Knowledge Center for Youth Policy (country information The Netherlands)
 «Being Young in the Netherlands», by Netherlands Youth Institute (www.nji.nl)

PRESENTATION

Youth Policy in Sweden**Facts and figures****1. Basics:**

- Youth in Sweden: (2008): 0-9 years: 11%; 10-14 years: 5,6%; 15-19 years: 6,9 %; 20-24 years: 6,3%, 25-29 years: 6,1 %, in total more than 2,7 million people aged under 25 years are living in Sweden, which has a high level of migration (13,7% of the population 2007).
- Youth (15 to 25 years) unemployment rate: 22,7% (May 2011) of the population.
- Governmental structure: Constitutional monarchy that has the governing structure of a parliamentary democracy, substructures: 21 provinces, state administrative functions at the regional level are held by a president (landshövding) and a provincial government (länsstyrelse). Relevant for Youth Policy one should mention the existence of communities (kommuner, currently 290) and provincial state parliaments (landstinger).

2. Responsibility for youth policy:

The competencies in the youth sector are on both levels, whereas main decisions are made on national level. Thus the Ministry of Education is coordinating state youth policy.

2.1. National level:

- Responsible for the field of youth policy is since 2011 the Ministry of Education (Utbildningsdepartementet), where Youth policy is a cross-sectoral working area. Ministry is coordinating matters relating to youth organizations and the international youth cooperation and works closely with other ministries and agencies. Furthermore it entails a great deal of contact with Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions. Similarly, the Ministry cooperates with youth organizations, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and innovative youth projects.
- The executive body of state youth policy on behalf of the Ministry is the National Council for Youth Affairs (Ungdomsstyrelsen).
- The Swedish national youth council is called Landsrådet för Sveriges Ungdomsorganisationer (LSU). He is the umbrella organization for about 90 youth associations and organizations with a total of around 700 000 members.
- Since 2003 there is the Swedish youth council called (Sveriges Ungdomsråd) composing the regional youth councils, aiming to enlarge the network.



2.2. The level of municipalities and regions

- In Sweden, regional and local authorities are relatively independent in their youth-related decisions. Youth policy goals established by the Parliament (Riksdagen) are requirements for the central government but only advisory for the municipalities. Often the municipalities closely work together in order to keep the expenses low.
- There is no hierarchical relation between the municipalities and the regional public authorities. The local authorities have a considerable degree of autonomy and have independent powers of taxation.
- The municipalities perceive the municipal tasks, such as education, social services, child and elderly care and community infrastructure. Voluntary activities for the municipalities (which many of them commit to) are: recreation activities, culture, housing, energy, industrial facilities and employment.
- Many decisions that concern young people are taken at municipal level. The framework is centrally determined (Skolverket). The landstinger are responsible sectors for local autonomy, which exceed the strength of individual communities.
- The local level has such a strong autonomy that youth policy decisions from national level are not mandatory to implement the municipal level. The youth policy at local level can take the national objectives as a starting point, but are oriented in the implementation of the existing site conditions and accordingly find application.
- The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs (Ungdomsstyrelsen) supports municipalities in the development of local youth policy and provides funds for local projects.

Priorities in youth politics

- The Swedish youth policy is a cross-sectoral work area. The objectives of the Government's youth policy are: to ensure that all young people have genuine access to welfare, and to ensure that all young people have genuine access to influence. To achieve these overall goals, coordination and reporting take place in five main areas:

1. Education and learning
2. Work and means of support
3. Health and vulnerability
4. Influence and representation
5. Culture and leisure

- The aim of the youth policy of the government is that all young people have access to social services and real participation

Source: „<http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3781>“
<http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3781> (Swedish ministry of education and research)
 „<http://www.dija.de>“ www.dija.de (Database of international youth work)
 European Knowledge Center for Youth Policy (country information Sweden)





4. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS ❖❖❖

OPENING SEMINAR

List of Participants

**Opening seminar
European Peer Learning on Youth Policy
13.-14.6.2012 Berlin**

Germany**Nicole Ludwig**

German Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ)

Julia Hiller

German Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ)

Roland Mecklenburg

Regional Youth Council of North Rhine-Westphalia

Elke Böttger

Municipality of Cologne

Sandra Hildebrandt

Senator for Education, Youth and Science
Berlin, Youth Department

Jana Schröder

Child and Youth Welfare Association (AGJ)

Claudius Siebel

YOUTH for Europe – Transfer Agency for the Youth Policy Cooperation in Europe

France**Alexis Ridde**

Ministry for sports, youth, non formal education and voluntary organisations
Head of department “European and international affairs”

M. Yann Djermoun

Regional Council of Champagne-Ardenne
Head of cabinet of the President of the Regional Council

Jean Claude Richez

National Youth Institut

Head of department “Observation et evaluation”

Belgium (Flanders)**Maarten Caestecker**

Policy coordinator
Stad Antwerpen

Stefanie Veraghtert

Flemish Youth Council

The Netherlands**Bonita Kleefkens**

Managing director for the dept. for youth affairs

Jan van der Burg

Policy advisor international youth affairs

Loes van der Meijs

Alderman youth, culture and education of the local municipality of Doetinchem – member of the Committee of the Regions

Murat Altunbas

EU Coordinator for the City Council of Rotterdam

Marcel Bamberg

National Youth Council

Pink Hilverdink

Senior policy advisor international youth issues (NYI)

Richard Scalzo

Head of Department on Youth, Education and Society of the City of Rotterdam

Sweden

Elisabet Modée

Ministry of Education and Research
Desk officer at the Division for Youth Policy
and Civil Society

Jonas Larsson-Thörnberg

Desk officer at the National Board for Youth
affairs

Mia Norberg

Municipality of Malmö

André Hounsounou

Municipality of Malmö

Anna Sigurgeirsdottir

Municipality of Lund

Christel de Lange

General reporter

Helle Becker

General reporter

Bart Eigeman

Expert Speaker

Jochen Butt-Pošnik

Moderator

Dr. Frederike Hofmann-van de Poll

DJI – external evaluation

Barbara Rink

DJI – external evaluation

Lithuania

Laura Bačinskienė

Youth Affairs Department under the Ministry
of Social Security and Labour of the Republic
of Lithuania

Jonas Laniauskas

Vilnius city municipality, Youth Affairs Coor-
dinator

Julita Lopatiene

Ukmerges district municipality, Youth Affairs
Coordinator

Czech Republic

Michal Urban

Director, Youth Department – Ministry of
Education, Youth and Sports

Zdenka Maskova

Youth Department – Ministry of Education,
Youth and Sports

Petra Vymetalikova

Youth Department – Ministry of Education,
Youth and Sports

Katerina Petrasova

Youth Leisure Time Centre Luzanky (South
Bohemian Region)





5. AGENDA OF THE SEMINAR ❖❖❖

OPENING SEMINAR

Agenda of the Seminar**Designing Youth Policy in Europe
What is the role of the regions & municipalities?**

Opening seminar of the
European Peer Learning on Youth Policy

Date: 13./14.6.2012

Seminar venue:
Urania Berlin, An der Urania 17, 10787 Berlin

Agenda:**Day 1**

11:00

Welcome and official opening of the seminar

Presentation of the German concept for a new national youth policy (with discussion)
Lutz Stroppe, Head of the division for youth, German ministry for family affairs, senior citizens, women and youth (BMFSFJ)

12:00

Input:

„Active youth policy as important factor for making municipalities attractive“

Expert Input by Mr. Bart Eigeman, former alderman on Talent Development (youth, education and employment, participation of young people) in the city of Den Bosch (NL). Former chair of the Netherlands Committee on Education, Care and Welfare of the Netherlands Association of Dutch Municipalities.

13:00

Lunch

14:00

Local youth policy in Germany – main issues and challenges

14:30

Presentation of local youth policies by representatives of the other countries
(Presentation of the situation in each country and with focus on governance issues as well as on the main political challenges)

16:30

Coffee break

17:00
Formulating and gathering main questions/
challenges
Forming clusters, defining priorities and
plenary discussion

17:45 - 18:30
Reflecting the questions/challenges in „count-
ry tandems“

19:30 - 20:45
Dinner out at Beer Garden “Brachvogel”
Public viewing Euro 2012: Germany-Nether-
lands

Day 2

9:00
Plenary meeting

9:15
Workshops according to the identified questi-
ons/challenges

11:15
Presentation of the workshop results

11:45
Coffee break

12:00
Prospects for further cooperation

- Presentation of the European conferences
InterREGIO and InterCITY and exchange
about possible cooperation within these
conferences
- Discussion about prospects and ways of
further cooperation
- Next actions

12:45
Conclusions and end of the seminar

