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for Application of non-formal approaches through the principle of Youth Work in Cultural Sector

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The Melting Pot

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STATE OF THE GAME



When talking about young people in the Republic of Croatia there is no strict definition but a consensus that 'youth' in the Republic of Croatia refers to persons aged between 15 and 30 years old, as defined in the *National Youth Programme for the period 2014–2017* If we strive to describe the sociology of young people in Croatia, it is quite an impossible task due to nonexistent data and research on this specific topic at this time. However, taking into account the principle of "generation" or "generational cohort", a tool used in sociological research to analyze changes in views and context of a generation, we can presuppose that the formative experiences of youth in Croatia (cultural, technological and societal changes), as well as in most countries of the European environment, differ somewhat from the previous generation (referring here to the groups that are over 30).

Following the above-mentioned, national youth policy is regulated by the relatively newly established (2020) Central State Office for Demography and Youth and is in its scope of the Youth Department. The Central State Office for Demography and Youth is in charge of proposing and implementing strategic documents, laws, acts, programmes and projects in the youth policy field as well as their monitoring and evaluation. Even though youth policy is in theory recognized as a unique field, in practice it is still a shared domain across other ministries, predominantly the Ministry of Science and Education and The Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy. The needs, potentials and possibilities for young people in the past years were defined with the National Youth Programme 2014–2017, which was considered to be the focal point for youth policy in Croatia. In addition, the National Youth Programme is not part of a general national development policy, but it is envisioned as a separate strategy. At the moment, there are no active national youth policies or laws regarding youth. Nevertheless, the new National Youth Programme (2019–2025) has been in the drafting phase since 2019 and the only current normative act within the youth field is the Law on Youth Advisory Boards, which conceptualizes the basic aspects of local youth policy.

When talking about youth, it is inevitable to describe the state of youth work in Croatia. There is no official definition of youth work in Croatia. It was described for the first time in the National Youth Programme (2014–2017) as "...a set of activities which contribute to the personal and social development of young people (...) to the development of self-confidence and self-respect in young people, as well as the competences necessary for the creation and maintenance of quality personal and social relations. Youth work offers young people opportunities to learn and develop competencies across various fields. It also enables young people for active participation in society and decision-making processes". Correspondingly, although youth work has a long history in Croatia, youth work is not seen as a profession in Croatia. Youth work is delivered by youth organizations and

civil society organizations working for youth, who have through the years strengthened their role as advocates and partners in policy-making processes. As a result, youth work has been, for the past years, gaining a stronger place in the youth policy framework and is characterized by a strong orientation towards advocacy for the professionalization of youth work.

All of the above relates also to the youth work in culture and cultural institutions. The cultural sector does provide activities for youth, but due to the lack of official recognition and formal education in youth work on the state level (and, consequently, in public cultural institutions) and the lack of knowledge on the principles and methodologies of youth work, many institutions develop programmes that follow these principles and methodologies either intuitively or develop programmes that are based on other pedagogical principles, not necessarily in line with the youth work approach.

We can note that when discussing young people's participation in cultural activities, decision-makers usually address issues such as access of young people to culture or the cultural participation as "leisure activities" and therefore exclude them from policy planning. In Croatia, there are no current policies, laws or recommendations regarding young people and their access and/or participation in culture. On the other hand, it would be ungrateful to talk about young people in culture in Croatia without mentioning the national *Ministry of Culture and Media*. Promoting cultural participation and audience development is one of the goals in their implementation plan, which refers also to young people and particularly to young people with fewer opportunities. As an example, the Ministry implements the national programme "Ruksak pun kulture" to encourage audience development in culture and, since 2020, this programme has been part of regular programmes in educational institutions. Moreover, in the Strategic plan of the Ministry of Culture 2020–2022, young people are seen as active contributors to the development of cultural programmes, notably on local levels. This Strategy also aims to encourage reading among young people, encourages activities of youth clubs, cultural centres and organizations that implement cultural, educational and creative activities, just as it supports young artists through several programmes and/or open calls.

Young generations are a heterogeneous group who do share common values and cultural symbols, but are still very much related to its context. There are great differences between young people in urban and rural areas, and these differences should be observed through different perspectives and contexts. Most likely, cultural institutions do not reach their target goals because of the lack of information on the existing patterns of youth cultures and cultural necessities that young people have and the lack of communication between actors at different levels. It is necessary to strengthen the dialogue between the public and private sectors and to establish cross-sectoral cooperation with civil society and youth organizations. These might share the same or very similar objectives but are unaware of each other's actions or good practices. Such a cross-sectoral approach would reinforce collaboration between different sectors, allowing them to address the common challenges

they face and to find innovative new solutions. This could result in the promotion of sector-wide and even cross-border collaboration among professionals in youth work and culture, stimulate sharing of best practices for collaborative cultural transformation, and encourage the development of new quality standards, educational models, training programmes, funding schemes, and most importantly – establish policy cooperation.



NORTH MACEDONIA

In North North Macedonia, according to the Law on Youth Participation and Youth Policies¹ adopted in January 2020, young people are the people aged 15 to 29. In this law are given definitions about youth policy, youth participation, youth work and youth workers.

The National Youth Strategy is created by the Agency of Youth and Sport according to the Law for Youth policies and Youth participation. As we are writing this curriculum there is an ongoing process for developing a new strategy. As we are writing this curriculum there is an ongoing process for developing a new strategy, as it was required to be completed within 18 months of the law taking effect. The implementation of this Law is a divided task between the Agency of Youth and Sport and the municipalities.

The Union for Youth Work is one of the governmental partners for the implementation of the law, in the area of establishing youth centres. The Union for Youth Work was established in 2013 as a national network of organizations – providers of youth work services in North Macedonia. At the moment, the union consists of 19 member organizations with extensive experience in youth work, youth research, youth policy, youth participation, etc. from all over the country. The Union for Youth Work is active in the field of recognition, affirmation and quality improvement of youth work and its providers, systematization of youth work and support to youth workers in the country through creating a platform for networking, cooperation and increasing public recognition about the value of youth work. The organization's aim is to ensure a recognized youth work nationally and a solidified youth support system. The mission of UYW is to achieve recognized and standardized youth work, support youth workers and raised public awareness about the importance of youth work. Its vision is to support the recognition of youth work and to build a system for supporting young people and youth workers by monitoring, assessment, advancement and continuous development to ensure quality, efficient and effective support of young people.2

The National Youth Council of North Macedonia (NYCM) is a union of associations where associations and foundations from the Republic of North Macedonia are registered voluntarily. The NYCM was established on 29 June 2013 by 55 organizations.

The NYCM is a representative body for youth organizations in North Macedonia. NYCM unites 51 organizations, 17 youth organizations, 20 organizations for youth, 1 union, 7 youth wings of other organizations and 6 associate members, to promote and advocate for the rights of the North Macedonian youth.

¹ https://www.pravdiko.mk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Zakon-za-mladinsko-uchestvo-i-mladinski-politiki-16-01-2020.pdf

² https://smr.org.mk/

The membership of the NYCM is diverse, bringing together organizations working at the national and regional levels, rural and urban areas, student organizations, branches of international organizations and other types of organizations. In the process of achieving their goals, NYCM represents the interests of young people in the Republic of North Macedonia regardless of their social and economic status, gender, race, ethnic and cultural background, political and religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other type of difference.

From 29 November 2015, the NYCM is part of the European family of youth organizations called the European Youth Forum (EYF).³

YOUTH WORK IS AN ORGANIZED AND SYSTEMATIC PROCESS OF POUNCATION AND SUPPORT OF THE AUTHENTIC DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN AIM OF FULFILLING THEIR OVERALL PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND CIVIC POTENTIAL AND THEIR ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY.4

³ http://www.nms.org.mk/

⁴ https://www.pravdiko.mk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Zakon-za-mladinsko-uchestvo-i-mladinski-politiki-16-01-2020.pdf

Young people in North Macedonia spend the largest part of their spare time unproductively. They are either in front of a computer or with their peers on the social networks or they watch TV, hang out at cafés, go for walks or do sports.

Youth do not have enough financial power to go to cultural events, but the question is: even if they had, would they go to cultural events or cafés?

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- → Involvement of youth in the design of cultural institutions programmes
- → Decentralization of cultural events out of the capital city
- → Implementation of discounts or free entrance for youth at particular cultural events
- → Collaboration of schools and universities with cultural institutions in order to inform the youth about the cultural offer⁵
- → National Youth Strategy 2016–2025

The culture includes the measures and activities for improvement of cultural life and the cultural offer for the youth in North Macedonia, which consists of music, theatre, movies, literature, publishing, painting, contemporary dance, etc. In the field of culture, there are very few available data that are considering youth on the national level.⁶

http://www.progres.org.mk/progress-project/documents/5593aaabeff95_Analiza%20na%20mladin-skite%20potrebi%20i%20mladinskoto%20organiziranje%20vo%20Makedonija_%20SEGA%20(2010).pdf

⁶ https://www.sega.org.mk/images/E-Library/Strategies/NSMK.pdf

YOUTH WORK AND CULTURE

In terms of culture and youth work in North Macedonia it is important to mention the main documents that are created and are connecting these two sectors.⁷ Those are:

- → National Youth Strategy 2016–2025⁸
- → National Strategy for development of culture 2018–2022 (Национална стратегија за развој на културата во Република Македонија 2018–2022⁹
- → Education Strategy 2018–2025¹⁰
- → Entrepreneurial learning Strategy of North Macedonia 2014–2020 (Стратегија за претприемачко учење во Република Македонија 2014–2020)¹¹

All of these documents have relevant information on the development of youth involvement in culture.

This being said, these documents have been used to create projects that will help the participation of youth in culture. This was mainly done by introducing scholarships, ticket discounts for cultural events, financial support for students in the fields of arts coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, etc.

In October 2020, the Ministry of culture introduced a call for financing projects in the field of culture that goes beyond the municipalities and includes the CSO sector and the private sector, but also includes natural citizens. In the framework of the Ministry in 2018 an intrasectoral group is also formed for realization of youth policies in the field of culture. This group has held a single meeting and after that there is no information on other meetings or actions undertaken by it.

⁷ https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/chapters/republic-of-north-macedonia/8-creativity-and-culture

⁸ https://www.sega.org.mk/images/E-Library/Strategies/NSEN.pdf

⁹ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gfzA76RBOTS1_A00fNn62n352E3nr8kB/view

https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/macedonia-education-strategy-for-2018-2025-and-action-plan-strategija-za-obrazovanie-eng-web-1.pdf

¹¹ http://ncdiel.mk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Macedonian-EL-Strategy-2014-2020-ENG-version-1.pdf

All of this leads us to treating youth only as participants in the cultural offer and events, and, through the call for support of actions of the Ministry of culture, as creators of such events as projects. However, through the creation of the National Strategy for Development of Culture in Republic of North Macedonia 2018–2022 and the CSO's participation in consultations, there are no young people mentioned as creators of the policies or as contributors to the development of the Strategy itself.

So far, "There is no information on the existence of standardized mechanism for cross-sectorial cooperation between the stakeholders involved in policy-making in the field of culture and young people." - Youth Wiki - Creativity and Culture

¹² https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/chapters/republic-of-north-macedonia/82-administration-and-governance



In Serbia, young people are aged 15 to 30. This is regulated by the Law on Youth, adopted in 2014. However, there are different frameworks where this range has variety, such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, where they perceive young people as people up to 40 years of age. When talking about the medical system, free medical care is offered to young people up to 26 years of age.

Following the Law on Youth, the Government of the Republic of Serbia passed a Law on Volunteering in 2010, as one of the supportive mechanisms. The Law is dedicated to volunteering, but there are features regarding the volunteering of young people, their role in society as well regulation regarding the recompense of volunteers' dedicated time. The National Youth Strategy (2015–2025) adopted by the Ministry of Youth and Sport¹³ proposed 9 goals with the action plan, putting young people and supporting systems in focus. In addition to that, the Ministry of Youth and Sport offered financial support through open calls. In the Strategy Culture and active youth participation in creating cultural content were recognized as one of the specific objectives.

At the moment, there are three pillars supporting the development of youth policy and youth work in Serbia: the National Association of Youth Workers (NAPOR)¹⁴, the National Youth Council of Serbia (KOMS)¹⁵ and the National association of Youth Offices (NKZM)¹⁶. The National Youth Council of Serbia is also the most independent representative body of young people in Serbia. The work of the structures is in correlation with the National Youth Strategy (2015–2025) and the action plan. On the local level, there are youth offices that also support youth with creating local youth plans and implementation as well as the development of cross-sectoral cooperation.

As an additional support system, the Youth Council was established in 2014. The structure is gathering representatives of state bodies, representatives of the provincial body responsible for youth, joint representatives of the national councils of national minorities, representatives of youth offices, distinguished experts and youth representatives. The chairman is the current Minister of Youth and Sport – Vanja Udovičić. The main aim of the Council is to have an overall picture of development in youth policy and to harmonize activities and processes. One-third of the members are young people, which ensures that their voice is heard and that young people are perceived as associates rather than the target group only. Although there are documents, bodies and youth organizations, there is also a need for improvement as well as lobbying for more opportunities and funds for youth policy and youth work.

- 13 https://www.mos.gov.rs/
- 14 http://www.napor.net/sajt/index.php/sr-yu/
- 15 https://koms.rs/national-youth-council-of-serbia/
- 16 https://asocijacijakzm.org/

YOUTH WORK

YOUTH WORK SHALL MEAN SUCH YOUTH ACTIVITIES ORGANISED BY AND FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, BASED ON NON-FORMAL EDUCATION, CARRIED OUT IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S FREE TIME AND UNDERTAKEN WITH THE AIM OF IMPROVING THE CONDITIONS FOR PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR NEEDS AND ABILITIES, IN WHICH YOUNG PEOPLE VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATE. (NOTICE)

Youth work in Serbia is mostly practised in civil society organizations. The main actor to advocate youth work in Serbia is NAPOR – the National Association of Youth Workers. In the past 10 years, the NAPOR has advocated for vocation, recognition of youth work and youth workers, developed standards for quality assurance of youth programmes and put effort to be recognized on the national and European level as a crucial actor in developing youth work in Serbia.

Youth work involves different methods from the creative sector such as theatre techniques, animated movies, storytelling, drawings, etc. There is cooperation between youth sectors and individuals from cultural institutions through various projects.

On the other hand, when talking about the cultural sector and the recognition of youth within it, there is visible effort in the last years to involve young people as programme creators and to listen to their needs. However, there is still a gap between programmes and the involvement of young people. The cultural institutions' programmes do not fully respond to the needs of young people as desirable. The offered programmes do not fully support the active participation of young people and giving them the possibility to be cocreators of the programmes. Youth work, on the other hand, has a strong side in working with young people, which can fill the gap in cultural institutions. Working together they could open more spaces for youth, offer them space for the creation and development of critical thinking. This will strengthen cross-cultural cooperation and contribute to the systematic care of young people.

INTRO

The training programme is built as a result of the need for cross-sectoral cooperation, a better understanding of the principles of youth work and non-formal education and how to improve services for young people within the cultural sector. In the past years both sectors, youth and culture, put effort to address the needs of the youth and create programmes that will actively involve young people. The COVID-19 pandemic closes down many programmes implemented by cultural institutions and youth organizations, but, on the other side, fosters cooperation and enables both sectors to think outside the box. The training programme offers different approaches in working with young people between two fields and trying to combine it in order to get more young people involved.

The training programme aims to develop the capacities of youth workers and cultural workers who work with young people to understand different approaches and principles in working with young people and to increase cross-sectoral cooperation contributing to the creation of joint programmes and activities in order to support youth personal and professional development.

Youth work offers to young people interactive participation, development of critical thinking and supports their social and professional development. Youth work should be organized and continuous to be able to observe the changes and to support young people in their development and activity. Youth work should be beneficial for young people and community; therefore, all activities should be created in cooperation with young people and based on their needs.

Currently in Serbia, North North Macedonia and Croatia, youth work is in development and there are different initiatives. Although youth work is recognized as an occupation in Serbia and North North Macedonia, there are still steps to be completed towards reaching recognition. On the other hand, as youth work can be implemented in different fields involving young people, partners want to connect their expertise and offer the possibility for the development of skills and knowledge to improve the capacities of both sectors (youth and cultural sector).

There have been some relevant experiences where the cultural sector included young people in their activities in Serbia. As a part of their exhibitions, the cultural institutions offer different educational workshops. The disadvantage is that the programme is short-term and they are facing difficulties/challenges in finding the right tools in order to create a long-term programme for and with youth. The answer for creating such long-term programmes might be in youth work. Therefore, the cultural sector lacks knowledge and skills in creating long term programmes with youth which is the base of youth work. According to the examples from the cultural institutions that are partners in this project, they are showing willingness and strive to actively involve young people in creating the content, build the audience and be more open to the community, youth work can answer this issue. On the other side, youth workers will benefit from the information in the field of culture and art, reach young people from different backgrounds, different interests and support the development of esthetical competencies.

With youth in focus, cross-sectoral cooperation is important. In the end, both sectors strive to ensure quality youth services that are providing possibilities for the development of youth and, by working together, this can be improved and ensures continuous work. In this melting pot, youth and cultural sector, youth work is bringing continuous work on the personal and social development of young people; the cultural sector is bringing culture closer to youth and contributing to the development of esthetical competencies.

TRAINNING PROGRAMME

AIMS OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

The training programme aims to develop and increase the capacities of youth workers and cultural workers to understand different approaches and principles by intertwining their work. Such cross-sectoral cooperation will reinforce collaboration between different cultural and youth sectors, in order to help them address the common challenges they face and find innovative new solutions. In other words, we're seeing the rise of cross-sectoral collaboration that will implement the diversity of perspectives and resources to jointly solve a societal problem and achieve a shared goal: inspire young people to be active consumers of culture through a quality youth work approach.

In order to support the personal and social development of young people through cultural programmes and incorporate youth work methods and approaches in a cultural institution setting, this training offers different information and good practices that can be used in future work. Increased cross-sectoral cooperation and the creation of joint programmes and activities will address the need for collaboration in order to inspire young people to be active consumers of culture through a quality youth work approach.

The main aim of the training programme is to develop and increase the capacities of youth workers and cultural workers to understand different approaches and principles in both sectors and increase the cross-sectoral cooperation in the creation of joint programmes and activities that support young peoples' personal and social development and inspire them to be active consumers of culture, in order to promote active involvement and ownership of youth in planning and creation of cultural content for youth.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING

- → developing the knowledge and a better understanding of youth work and work with young people in cultural institutions cultural principles
- → developing the ability to recognize the needs of young people in the community in order to create joint actions based on non-formal education
- → developing the skills for assessment of young people's learning needs and objectives in terms of culture, designing and delivering cultural programmes that respond to those needs and objectives.
- → developing the capacity of youth workers and cultural workers to work with different fewer opportunities groups of young people, encouraging social inclusion, solidarity and cohesion
- → raising awareness of cross-sectoral cooperation and its importance for supporting young people in their personal development and their involvement in cultural programmes planning in order to create youth-friendly content.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- → Participants in the training will understand relevant cultural information (public culture, independent/underground cultural scene, consumer culture, leisure culture, musical culture, digital culture, etc.) and principles of working in the cultural sectors;
- → Participants in the training will understand the basic principles of youth work and will know how to carry a more proactive role in issues related to young people's active participation in cultural life;
- → Participants will develop skills to create joint actions based on non-formal education, learn new tools and methods for implementation and assessment of active participation in cultural life for youth;
- → Participants will learn how to address young people's specific interests in the field of culture;
- → Participants will develop the capacity to work with different fewer opportunities groups of young people, encouraging social inclusion, solidarity and cohesion;
- → Participants will be able to motivate young people to become active participants in the field of culture and to become creators of arts using different tools and methods;
- → Participants will increase their awareness of cross-sectoral cooperation and its importance.

ACHIEVING THE ABOVE-MENTIONED, WE EXPECT THE PARTICIPANTS TO ADVANCE AND DEVELOP THE FOLLOWING SKILLS:

- → Skills in applying the basic non-formal approaches and principles in order to offer a more interactive and engaging cultural life that promotes youth ownership of cultural content;
- → Facilitating individual and group learning in a cultural environment;
- → Designing and delivering cultural programmes that respond to the needs of young people, while choosing appropriate methods and assessing young people's learning needs and objectives;
- → Initiating and supporting self-reflection on the learning process and initiating critical thinking among young people;
- → Being able to identify the most appropriate evaluative approach with regard to the needs of the young people and to the objectives of the activity;
- → Creating safe, motivating and inclusive learning environments for individuals and groups, especially for young people with fewer opportunities;
- → Developing an inclusive, positive, non-judgemental relationships and learning environment, and supporting self-reflection within the process of the young people;
- → Developing cooperation, ethics, and reliability in the work of the main actors gained through the process of learning and a better understanding of youth work and cultural work for improving young peoples' involvement in processes and actions that provide them development.
- → Improving young people's involvement in processes and actions that provide them with personal and professional development.

METHODOLOGY

The training programme gives the possibility to the participants to gain knowledge, skills and attitudes from both sectors – youth and culture. During the implementation, the methodology should be developed and adopted by the trainers. The training contains theoretical and practical parts and the desire is to be done through the non-formal approach using different tools in order to actively involve the participants. Trainers should have experience in delivering educational training, following the learning process of participants and knowledge on current cross-sectoral cooperation.

Hours of training: 40 hours of residential work and 20 hours online work

TARGET GROUP

The target group are the people involved in youth work and cultural institutions working directly with young people. They should already have some experience in working with youth and willingness to develop their skills and knowledge. Generally, the target group are:

- → Youth workers
- → Cultural Institution employees working with youth

LITERATURE FOR TRAINING

(list of resource materials for participants)

- → A Competence Model for Participants to Work Internationally, JUGEND für Europa/ SALTO Training and Cooperation; Germany, 2016.
- → Youth work, Council of Europe, https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/youth-work
- → Youth work, EU-CoE youth partnership https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/youth-work, https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/90268
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- → Ethics in youth work, Code of an ethical issue, http://www.napor.net/sajt/images/
 Dokumenta/Etiki-kodeks-u-omladinskom-radu.pdf
- → Tools, a publication for working in the field of youth https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/publications
- → SALTO YOUTH Publications, https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/publications/
- → <u>Culturally-Competent Youth Work: Good Practice Guide</u>, Centre for Multicultural Youth; Australia, 2015., <u>https://www.cmy.net.au/resource/culturally-competent-youth-work/</u>
- → YouthWiki Creativity and Culture, The Republic of North North Macedonia, https:// national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/chapters/republic-of-north-North Macedonia/8-creativity-and-culture
- → Different tools for activities with young people https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/
- → <u>Culture and Youth Development</u>, United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, <u>https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-cultureasavector.pdf</u>

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 "Research on youth trends in Republic of North Macedonia", Coalition of youth organizations SEGA; Prilep, North North Macedonia 2010
- → ACCESS OF YOUNG PEOPLE TO CULTURE FINAL REPORT, EACEA/2008/01 (OJ 2008/S 91-122802), Interarts; Spain, 2008.
- → Cultural and creative sectors in post-COVID-19 Europe Crisis effects and policy recommendations, Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies Directorate-General for Internal Policies PE 652.242 – European Parlament, CULT Committee; Belgium, 2021.
- → Culturally-Competent Youth Work: Good Practice Guide, The Centre for Multicultural Youth, Australia; 2015.