Mobile Youth Work

Why? 😃

For whom? 😍

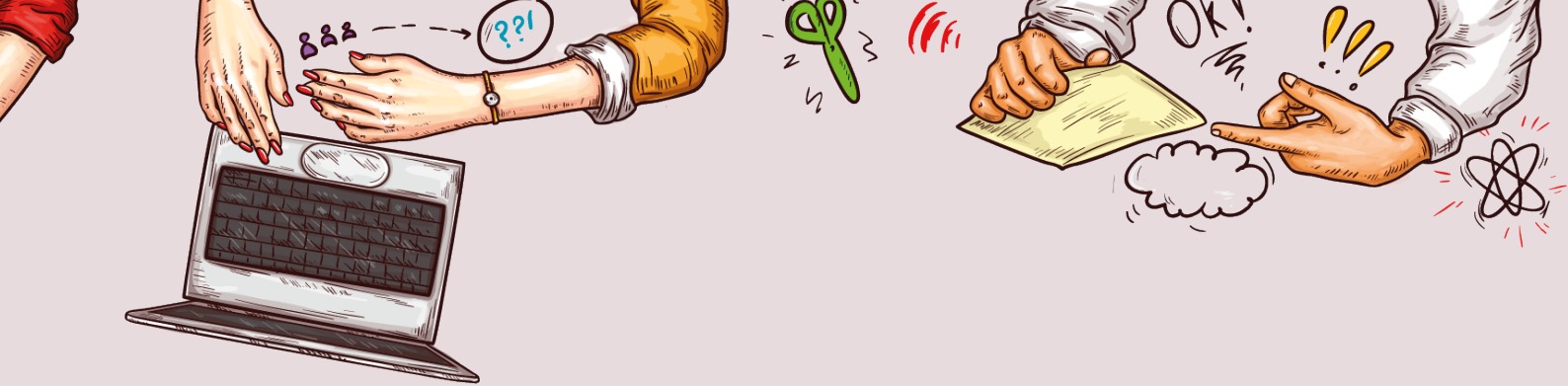How? 😆

Contents

01 Introduction, or instead of a preface

Probably the hardest thing is doing a job when you don't see the point... Writing this publication would also be very difficult if we didn't see the sense and didn't believe in what we were doing. "There is a constant need to prove the point of mobile youth work. Other people seem to work quietly with no one questioning if their work is needed. And here we are almost constantly trying to prove to politicians and everyone around us that this is very important to young people. Relatives and friends do not understand the essence of this job, you feel misunderstood, which is sometimes difficult to bear because you like it, while the environment presses you to start looking for a normal job" - shares one of mobile youth work practitioners, anxiously. It is this idea that encourages us to describe, in as much detail as possible, mobile work and the necessity and specificity of this form of youth work. This is why we feel the need to share the experience that we already have, with those who are just starting or planning to start. We tried to write and convey our emotions in a very simple and understandable way, so that it would not be complicated and difficult to read, and so that after reading, you would become infected with the mobile youth work virus that we want to spread for the sake of young people.

01

Introduction,
or instead of
a preface

Since mobile work started in Lithuania, some practices and insights have accumulated that can be conceptualized, written about and shared. This publication is the first attempt to sum up and describe the gained experience, especially since in foreign literature mobile youth work is treated a little bit differently.

Lately, mobile youth work has been expanding rapidly. It is also intensified by the forthcoming calls for applications to finance it. This situation is encouraging: the need for this form of youth work has finally been recognized and acknowledged. Many young people in Lithuania still experience exclusion, so we cannot stop our efforts and claim that all is well. Therefore, we believe that this publication will contribute to the emergence of mobile work where it is particularly needed (in small settlements, villages or even neighbourhoods of large cities) and where, for one reason or another, other forms of youth work cannot be carried out.

In the publications, you will find examples, evaluations, testimonials not only from our own experience, but also from other colleagues who carry out mobile youth work, from youth workers, young people and representatives of communities. In doing so, we sought to describe mobile work in as broad and detailed a manner as possible and to show its importance and benefits.

We would particularly like to thank the Belgian organization "Mobile School", the Greek ARSI social worker Tonya Macrynioti, the mobile youth work staff, regular visitors and partners - community chairpersons, social workers - from the Klaipėda region, the Šiauliai region, and Telšiai, for contributing their ideas and insights to this publication. The thoughts and reactions of each one of you have given a unique tone to mobile youth work.
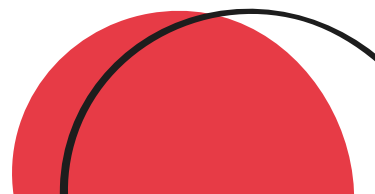
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Explanations of terms used in this publication

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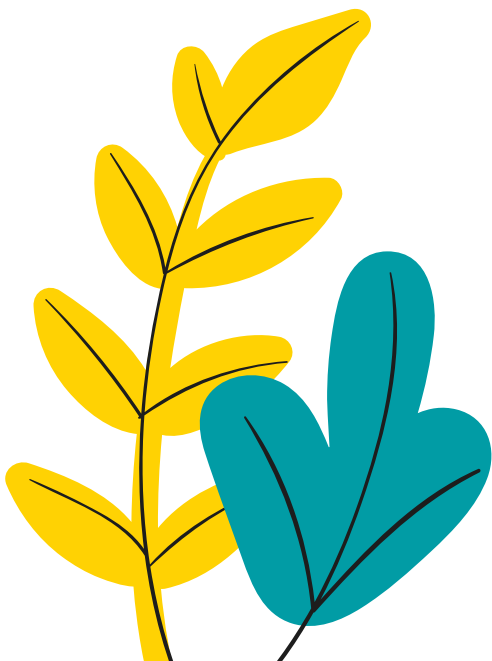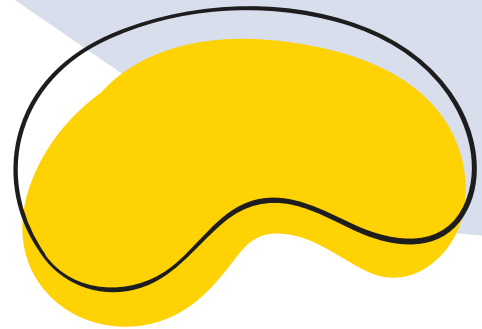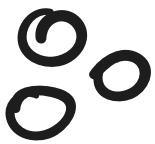
Open Youth Work – it is one of the forms of youth work that aims to provide opportunities for meaningful activity and safe leisure for young people who do not find space for self-actualization, and to facilitate their integration into the living environment. This educational / learning activity is open to all young people who live in a given area, participate voluntarily, and accept common ground rules, regardless of what organization, group, or religious community they belong to. The principle of openness also manifests itself in the sensitivity to relevant needs of young people and the flexibility of proposed activities.

Open Youth Centre (OYC) – a legal entity, other organization or a branch, a representative officewhich provides youth work that is based on voluntary participation of young people in the activities and ensures their involvement in these activities.

Open Youth Space (OYS) – a room that is managed by a legal entity providing cultural, educational, physical, sports or social services, where youth work, based on voluntary participation of young people and ensuring their involvement in these activities, is provided.

Work with the community is targeted work, carried out by an organization that provides mobile youth work, aimed at strengthening cooperation between members of the community of residence (hereafter 'the community') in solving the problems of young people. Work with the community consists of cross-sectoral cooperation, youth representation, joint projects and events for young people, organized in collaboration between mobile youth work organizations and communities, support for youth initiatives, and more.

Detached Youth Work (DYW) – youth work which is provided outside institutional spaces and directly in informal gathering places of young people (public spaces, streets, parks, cafes, sports fields, clubs, etc.).

Coordinator for Youth Affairs (CYA) – a municipal coordinator for youth affairs develops and implements youth policy programs and measures implemented in the municipality, analyses the situation of youth, youth organizations and youth work organizations in the municipality, develops cooperation between municipal institutions and institutions working in the field of youth policy, maintains relations with Lithuanian youth organizations working abroad, and carries out other functions defined in the coordinator's job description.

Young People with Fewer Opportunities (YFO) – young people who do not have the same opportunities as their peers to develop their competences and activities because they live in unfavourable circumstances or experience social, economic, educational, cultural, geographical difficulties, disabilities and / or health problems.

Mobile Youth Work (MYW) – youth work that is brought to an area where youth work infrastructure does not exist, and that is based on the individual needs of the young people who live in that territory.

Municipal Council for Youth Affairs (MCYA) – a public advisory body that is set up according to the principle of parity from representatives of the municipal council and (or) the municipal administration as well as representatives of young people living / delegates from youth organizations working in the territory of the municipality.

03

The context of mobile youth work in Europe

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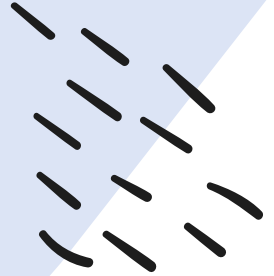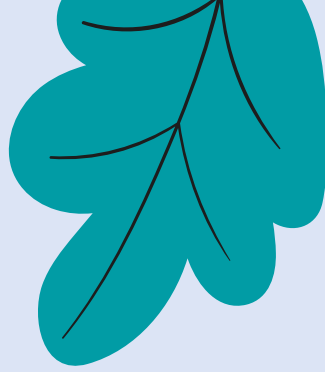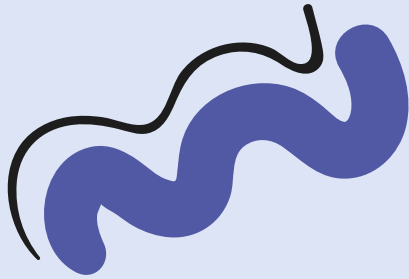
There are a number of mobile youth work practices and terminologies in Europe, because youth work is directly dependent on the social policy, economic situation and cultural, legal environment of the countries. Despite this diversity, the main ideas behind mobile work are the following:

It is important to reach all the young people.

The opportunities given to all young people should be as equal as possible.

Mobile work can be aimed at different goals (informing, leisure activities, educating, consulting, mobilizing, etc.), and the choice of methods (hanging around, structured activity, individual work, interactive presentation, etc.) depends on this.

Because of the different purposes of mobile youth work, it can be carried out in different places: specialised or non-specialised premises, outdoors, in public gathering places (on the street) and so on.

The process must be based on commonly agreed principles: accessibility, voluntary participation, relationship building, and so on.

We will briefly introduce the city of Stuttgart, Germany, which has the longest mobile youth work experience in Europe. To give you a clearer context, we'll also give you some prehistory. The United States is the country of origin and development of mobile youth work. The strong economic growth of the beginning of the 20th century influenced not only the situation of the country, the growth of population, but also the behaviour of young people: they started to join different cliques, groups that did not always conform to the norms of society. This way, mobile work with young people has emerged as a form of social work that can help in the process of de-stigmatising young people.

In 1967, mobile youth work came to Germany, where it was successfully initiated on the basis of a common concept of two forms of work: youth work and social work. In Stuttgart, the local church parishes (ecumenical community) have come together to create contacts with visible, problematic youth groups in order to build their relationships with the community and reintegrate young people into it. This way, the mobile youth work was started as a complementary form to open youth work, targeting vulnerable young people who were difficult to reach through open work. In 1970, this form of youth work spread from Stuttgart to the rest of Germany.

THESE ARE THE MOBILE YOUTH WORK METHODS USED IN STUTTGART:

METHOD 1 Detached work: young people are sought in the locations on the street where they usually spend their time. It aims to create contact, council, and provide assistance (it needs to be noted that in Lithuania, detached work is a separate form of youth work).

METHOD 2 Working with groups: a variety of groups that are accessible through schools, through single young people and "cliques".

METHOD 3 Individual work: council, helping young people solve problems in critical situations.

METHOD 4 Community based work: a cross-sectoral network of all those working in a particular neighbourhood with children and young people, such as youth centres, schools, police, various clubs and other entities that may in some way involve young people.

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ANOTHER MOBILE YOUTH WORK EXPERIENCE IS THE MOBILE YOUTH CENTRE. IN A TOWN OF SEELOW IN BRANDENBURG, GERMANY, IN THE REGION OF MARKISCH-ODERLAND IN 2002, A MOBILE YOUTH CENTRE ON WHEELS HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED IN A BUS.

Six days a week, this youth centre on wheels rides around the area, at the distance of about 20–25 km. It works with children and young people in order to fill the social "hole" created by the division of Germany: the neglect of young people, and the prevailing radicalism in the region of Oderbruch. The region is specific for having had the atheist attitude imposed for a long time, and churches with barely maintained communities had much less possibilities to work and take care of children and young people. So working with young people in a mobile youth centre was aimed not only at teaching them to live in the community, but also at passing on Christian values. The success of the mobile youth centre is that its former visitors become motivated youth workers who continue working with youth, and a stationary youth centre has been established in one of the towns.

One more experience comes from Athens and an organisation called ARSIS, which since 2015 implements the idea of Mobile School. A mobile school is an extendable blackboard on wheels equipped with a variety of learning materials (you can find an example of a mobile school here: https://www.mobileschool.org/en; in Lithuania, such school is run by public institution The Blessed J. Matulaitis Social Centre). It can be placed anywhere: in city squares, parks, streets, etc. The organization helps teaching the children who have no access to the education system. It is an alternative space for children to learn. It goes without saying that it does not replace the formal education system, but it helps children to engage in learning activities and to accept the idea of learning through creativity and engagement.

By describing these three experiences of mobile youth work, we wanted to highlight the importance of finding ever more diverse ways to reach as many different young people as possible. One can only enjoy the variety of mobile youth work, as it is the variety that creates possibilities to search for the best practices, to analyse them and to apply them here in Lithuania for working with young people.

04

The situation of mobile youth work in Lithuania

In the previous part, we briefly reviewed the context of mobile youth work in Europe, and this section will present the history and causes for developing mobile youth work in Lithuania.

BEFORE THE RESTORATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

Prior to World War II, youth activities were also carried out in Lithuania through various youth organizations such as the Scouts, the Riflemen's Association, youth organization "Ateitis" (future) and others. Youth work was mainly carried out in the form of extracurricular activities, when young people were involved in various activities by their schools or with the help of non-governmental organizations.

FROM RESTORATION OF INDEPENDENCE TO 2006.

After the restoration of Independence, the earlier mentioned youth organizations were restored. Many other youth organizations (international, political, etc.) were formed during the rise of the national civic society spirit. Such youth activities, youth involvement in organizations formed the basis for further development of youth policy. However, youth leaders were still lacking, and youth workers were almost non-existent. After the restoration of independence, the economy grew rapidly, the new technologies came and the socio-cultural environment changed, which implied not only wider opportunities but also threats and problems for society, and especially for young people, who were already considered to a be more sensitive part of society because of their age. In this context, previous approaches to youth work were no longer enough, and initiatives based on the experience of youth work in other countries began to emerge.

YEARS 2006 TO 2009.

Years 2006 to 2009 can be considered a time when youth work practice with social work elements begins to form. This is when two lines begin to take shape in youth policy: youth activities (youth organizations, clubs, etc.) and youth work. In addition to talking about work with young people who face various difficulties, are unwilling or unable to get involved in organizations, action is also taken: open youth centres or open youth spaces (OYC / OYS) begin to be established intensively; they are often seen as the only form of youth work. More youth workers are being recruited and the need for a youth worker profession is being discussed. OYC / OYS have reached a number of young people who had never been involved in activities before, and contributed to addressing youth participation, early school leaving and social exclusion. However, young people living in rural, remote areas were still poorly accessible to youth policy makers and practitioners. For them, this situation was worrying. The search for ways and means of reaching such a large proportion of young people and enabling their full-fledged socialisation has begun.

YEARS 2009 TO 2011.

2009 can be considered the year of the emergence of conceptual mobile youth work in Lithuania. That year, the Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour launched a project called "Promoting partnerships between public and non-governmental sectors through integrated youth policy". The project introduced mobile youth work, and the concept of a mobile youth centre that foresaw providing mobile services for young people living in areas that are located far from the municipal centre. In 2011, on the initiative of the Telšiai District Municipality, a big yellow bus - a youth centre on wheels - rolled out to rural settlements. During the summer, the bus drove around these locations with equipment and various board games, trying to reach the young people living there. Maintaining an agreed schedule, the bus visited 10 rural settlements. There were 2 volunteers on the bus, they worked with young people 4-5 hours.

Such an initiative came about because the need was clearly recognized and refined:

A survey was conducted in 5 districts to find out what services were available for children, young people and their families, as well as what their quality was. When analysing the research data it was noticed that one of the most necessary services was the organization of leisure activities for children and youth. Young people in rural areas had fewer opportunities and / or no opportunities to fulfil their needs for expression. Most often the main services were provided in schools, sometimes in cultural centres, libraries and day-care centres. And the activities here were limited to sports, dance, and handcrafts or similar, although sometimes young people would not want to do that – just to relax, gather in a place that is attractive for them, communicate on topics that are relevant to them, or even do nothing.

Similar experiences in Germany that have been observed and analysed, and a well established practice of open youth work: an open youth centre and an open youth space the activity of which is based on the principles of open youth work, gave results which were attractive not only to young people but also to local politicians. Undoubtedly, everyone was excited about the uniqueness and innovation of the idea in Lithuania.

Analysis of the results, successes and failures of the youth centre on wheels, first of all confirmed the great need of children and young people to gather, to be involved, to be together. It has also been understood that local communities are contributing in good will, meaning that the mobile youth work team is not alone: it has allies interested in local youth.

Some limitations have also been observed: largely the group that was reached was not the intended target group. Mostly only children were gathering; young people came but didn't stay for long. This was because the chosen working time was not suitable, as the bus stayed in a location from 2 p.m. until 6 p.m. It has also been confirmed that where children gather, young people will not stay for long. However, the key point is that if we want quality of youth work and professionalism, it is not enough to have a large bus and a variety of tools, it requires content that can only be offered by regular, professional youth workers.

2011 TO TODAY.

In 2012-2013, practices of detached youth work are starting to form in Lithuania, and at the same time they promote the development of mobile youth work, as youth work is now perceived as more than open work. The legal basis, legal regulation of different forms of work (guidelines, descriptions) is being developed. A major contributor to the spread of mobile youth work and detached youth work was a call for project applications, opened by the Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. And perhaps the most important step and breakthrough in youth work practice is the newly approved Law on Youth Policy Framework, which came into force from 1 January 2019, and which defines such key definitions as youth work, open youth work, mobile work and detached youth work. This Law presupposes excellent conditions for the development of youth work practices in Lithuania, as it is likely that municipalities will be encouraged and committed to take concrete steps in seeking financial resources.

It is great that at the moment there are about 15 MYW and DYW teams in Lithuania that involve young people with fewer opportunities and socially excluded youths; they also become involved in voluntary activities and youth organizations. There is a tendency for joint projects and events with local communities dedicated to young people, and young families; young people are being consulted, there is mediation among different organizations, institutions and individuals. At the same time, however, it should be noted that only a few municipalities have foreseen funding for mobile youth work in their budgets. So, apparently, in the future everyone will have to focus on the quality of youth work, in this case mobile youth work, and how to ensure it.

05

The need for mobile youth work

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Mobile youth work focuses on the young people, their needs, expectations, and learning when there are no other educational / leisure offers or the young people do not use other offers. Mobile youth work occurs where other forms of youth work do not reach. It reaches out to young people who have fewer opportunities because of where they live, because they lack the motivation to search for activities that meet their needs, and sometimes they do not even know what to look for. This is evidenced by one of the regular visitors of mobile youth work. *He says that until mobile workers came to their town, he didn't even realize that he could look for activities elsewhere, for example, at the youth centre, and had never heard of such a youth centre or of the possibility to visit it without any obligations. His choices were limited to hobby education activities organized by the school.*

In this case, mobile youth work becomes the only way to identify, respond to, and represent young people's needs. In the areas where they work, the mobile youth work team becomes a "loudspeaker" to local communities, district administrations, politicians, pushing for a change in youth policy and social environment, making the young person feel important and needed here.

The necessity of mobile youth work is described by Jurgita, a social pedagogue at Kaunatava school (in Telšiai municipality, Lithuania). She says: *"There are really few opportunities for young people in our village. Mobile work gives them that, they don't have to have anything, just come. Most of the young people do not have the opportunity to be taken to the city, there is not even a direct bus, they have to get to the highway to get to Telšiai. I think they are more relaxed with you than at school or anywhere else. The needs of young people are taken into great consideration, activities are adapted to them and their wishes are fulfilled. It provides opportunities for different communication. Those who do not participate in school activities, who are very passive, participate in mobile work. That is good."*

Mobile work complements other forms of youth work, creating opportunities to attract more young people. Open youth work already has its own traditions in Lithuania, so new forms of youth work are being successfully developed next to it. Here is an example from the Klaipėda region. The head of the youth centre shares her experience: *"Mobile work derived from the open spaces. A number of youth spaces were set up in the Klaipėda region where volunteers "spent time" with young people. When a youth centre was created, considerations have arisen as to how to help ensure the continuity of the [open youth work] spaces that young people had become accustomed to. There was not enough funding to recruit a youth worker for each of the spaces, so mobile youth work started: once a week, the youth worker would go to existing spaces and work with youth."*

As we can see, when there is the necessary infrastructure to attract young people, there is a need for purposeful development and application of other forms of youth work: mobile youth work and / or detached youth work. If the OYC / OYS is easy to reach (having in mind its location and the local transport infrastructure), open youth work can be combined perfectly with detached work and other forms of youth work. In other cases, a solution is mobile youth work which is implemented in the young person's living area using the existing infrastructure, it can also be successfully combined with detached work. For example, work at bus stops, stadiums or other locations with the purpose of guiding or accompanying young people to existing organizations, to a mobile youth work meeting location.

Hence, all forms of youth work are in some way linked, complementary, mutually reinforcing, and their consolidation and implementation of all of them can be one of the most important quality indicators for youth services. Complex integration and implementation of all forms of work would have tangible effects on the learning and socialization of young people.

IN CONCLUSION, IT IS POSSIBLE TO DISTINGUISH FEATURES OF MOBILE YOUTH WORK THAT DEFINE ITS IMPORTANCE AND NECESSITY:

1 Mobile youth work provides educational / learning opportunities for young people.

2 Mobile youth work reduces geographical exclusion of young people.

3 Mobile youth work responds to the different needs of young people and contributes to creating a level playing field for all.

4 Mobile youth work can complement other forms of youth work.

06 The principles of mobile youth work

Employees of organizations that start implementing mobile youth work often ask the following question when they want to learn from our experience: what activities do you do in mobile youth work? We understand that we should not start giving them a straightforward answer, such as, how to organize games tournaments, quizzes, sports activities or conversations. All the activities that we do are just a means to an end. There are no good or bad activities. Therefore, a very important role here is played by the principles of mobile youth work, which the youth worker can act upon. These principles will help a youth worker stay on the correct path, because they can be used as indicators of work quality: how much activity is really accessible to young people, whether we take into account their needs, are we open and in line with agreements and confidentiality, do we educate young people by example or by words only, and so on. The following table provides an explanation of the principles and examples of how they may be breached.

PRINCIPLE	COMPONENTS OF THE PRINCIPLE	EXAMPLES OF INFRINGEMENT
Accessibility	• There is no membership, young people can come whenever they want. • There is no participation / membership fee. • There is no requirement to know something, to have special skills or abilities. • The offered activities are "low-threshold", which means accessibility to every young person. • Working time is adapted to the needs of young people. • The meeting location is chosen according to the recommendations of the young people, youth workers go to the usual meeting points of young people. • Supportive attitude of youth workers towards young people.	When a meeting location becomes inaccessible to other groups or singular young people due to the attendance of a particular "clique", when some of the visitors are more important.
Voluntary participation	• Every young person comes at his / her own free will, without being forced by anyone. • Young people may or may not engage in activities, they have the freedom to choose.	When young people are "pressured" to come to an event, they are promised something ("social hours"[1] at school, exceptional conditions).
Focusing on young people's needs	• It is important to take an interest in the young persons and their life. This should be a key condition for the selection of activities. • Different young people's needs are coordinated keeping every individual in mind.	The youth worker imposes activities on visitors based on what is acceptable to him / her, what he / she knows, likes, even though it is not relevant to the youth; or he / she does not support the ideas and initiatives offered by the youth.

1 | Social-civic activities are compulsory for every Lithuanian pupil starting from the 5th grade. It is an allocated time for each pupil when they carry out activities that are beneficial for the society (for example, helping in a social care centre, participating in environmental activities, etc.). Each person has to "collect" at least 10 hours each school year, a school can decide to raise this number and allocate more hours. The schools are advised to organise the social-civic activities in cooperation with social partners (translator's note).

PRINCIPLE	COMPONENTS OF THE PRINCIPLE	EXAMPLES OF INFRINGEMENT
Collaboration	• Youth workers collaborate with institutions and entities to represent the young person's best interests. • Youth workers direct and accompany young people to other specialists in cases when they do not have enough competence to work with the current situation, when council or an intervention of a specialist of a different area is needed. • Youth workers mediate when a problem occurs between young people and other institutions.	When young people would like to go to the gym and the staff does not respond to this need and does not help to negotiate with the school community.
Building a relationship	• A relationship built on trust is a key tool in youth work. • A true relationship can be recognized when a young person trusts the youth worker and seeks help when needed or openly talks about his / her situation.	A youth worker applies the same conditions to all regardless of individual young people or is hostile to a young person, cannot / does not want to understand his / her world, cannot accept a young person as he / she is, due to different views, and so on.
Mutual respect	• Youth workers respect the way of life that the young people choose, even though it might differ from the youth workers' personal values. • Youth workers withdraw from situations which violate their dignity.	The youth worker does not accept, ignores, and lectures the young person whose behaviour is contrary to his / her own beliefs.

PRINCIPLE	COMPONENTS OF THE PRINCIPLE	EXAMPLES OF INFRINGEMENT
Active participation	• Youth workers empower young people to act and express their position. • Young people participate in discussing and making common agreements, decisions. *IMPORTANT. Involvement of young people in the decision-making process helps indicate the result of youth work (young people's active involvement is one of the indicators of the quality of mobile youth work).*	Youth workers make decisions for young people in their absence, i.e. they decide that a young person will have to attend an event without asking his / her opinion; drawing up the program of an event and instructing the young people to implement it; adopting common rules without first discussing them with the young people.
Confidentiality	• Information about young people is not shared with the third parties without the consent from the young people. • Personal information about young people is not publicised. *IMPORTANT! It might be very difficult to recreate trust if this principle is breached.*	A youth worker "chats" to other young people about what a young person entrusted him / her with, or shares information with professionals from collaborating institution without asking the young people first.

In conclusion we can state that the presented principles shape the youth worker's posture and can help solve a specific situation. We would also like to emphasize that these are not indisputable rules or instructions on how youth workers should behave, but are an important part of professional competence.

07 Mobile youth work locations

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Mobile youth work locations

Mobile youth work in its essence is not an exclusive and luxurious offer for young people. Unfortunately, we have to acknowledge that in some cases it is the only offer that gives young people the opportunity for full-fledged socialization. So it goes without saying that spaces for mobile youth work occur where no other youth work infrastructure exists or it is inaccessible to young people. For example, a young person who is seeking the services he needs and doesn't live within a walking distance from the centre (of a city, or a district) is usually dependent on his parents or other relatives who can drive him. There is also another trend: today's young people, who have the ability to be more mobile thanks to the developed transport infrastructure, are reluctant to move in search of the services, for example, a youth living at one end of a city might not visit the youth centre located at the other end because getting there is simply too difficult and too time-consuming. And we are not even talking about big cities here. This is why mobile youth work service becomes particularly important as it is the service that comes to the customer, instead of the customer looking for the service.

When analysing the locations where mobile youth work is carried out, it is worth noting that every settlement, every area is different and no two settlements are the same. These differences are often due to both external and internal conditions: seasonality, relationships among the members of local community, etc. For example, young people living in rural areas usually work and cannot attend meetings in the summer, so during this period mobile youth workers should look for other methods that meet the needs of young people: organizing joint activities (camps, hikes, weekend events, sports activities) and combine young people from all mobile work meeting locations.

Internal community relationships also give some tone to the area, and here we don't have in mind the place, but the process, i.e. youth work. Conflicts within the community (for example, one part of the community supports the head of the district, while the other opposes) are often transferred to work with local youth. Young people come with the same relationship, attitude towards each other as their parents or relatives. This is how the settlements become specific and those are the conditions that the youth workers have to work in.

It is clear that internal and external factors affect not only mobile work locations, but also affect the target groups that are sought by mobile work. So in each area the locations will be different and affected by the social environments in one way or another. Therefore, the goals of mobile youth work can and must vary from place to place. For example, in a village where only about ten young people live and no leisure infrastructure is left, the goal will be to help those few young people and to engage them in a full-fledged life that meets the needs of the young person. Also, there is no need to be frightened that the young people will grow and that then there will be no others that are of the target age. In this case, you can always switch from one mobile youth work location to another. This is where the advantages of mobile work come to the fore: the youth workers are mobile, and there is no specific infrastructure that is difficult to leave behind. Meanwhile the purpose of working in a larger village will probably be slightly different: to reach those young people who are not involved in activities proposed by the local school, community, non-formal educators, etc.
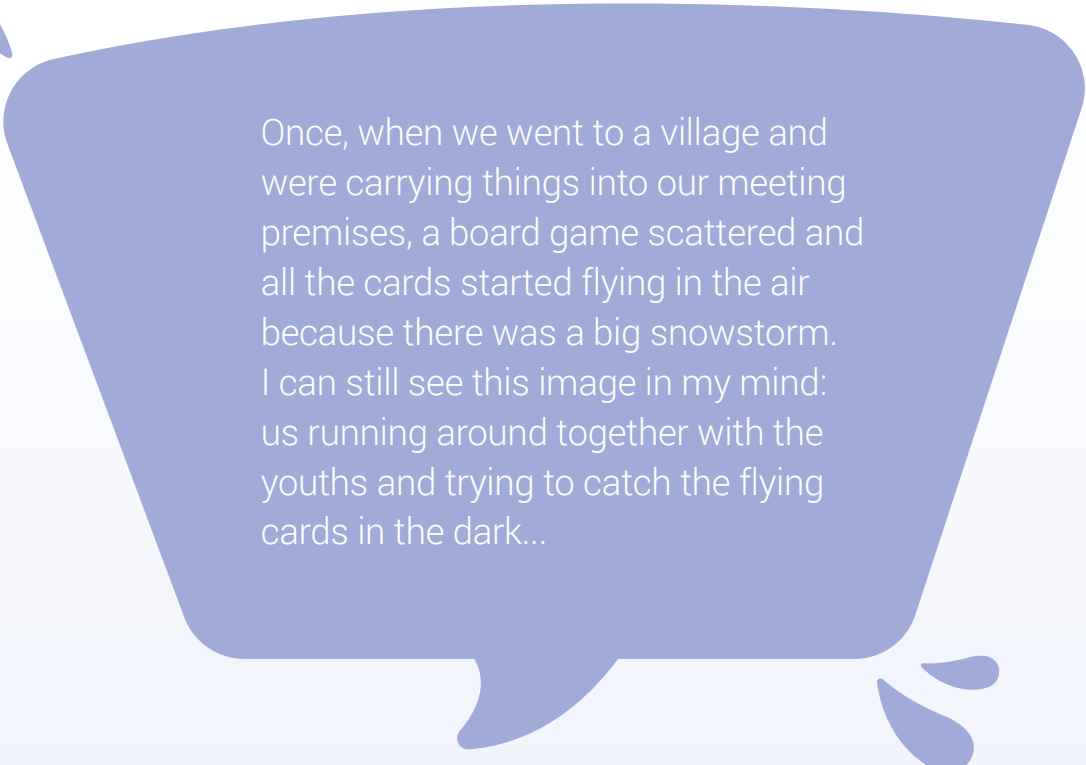
To provide a clearer idea of where mobile youth work can take place, we will discuss some features of various locations in order to give some examples where such youth work can be carried out:

- Larger rural settlements (that might also be centres of districts) that are located more than 30 km away from the centre of the municipality, where the infrastructure for leisure activities is sufficiently developed, e.g. there is a secondary school, a cultural centre, a day care centre or the like.

- Settlements that no longer have a school, and there is only a cultural specialist that visits once a week and organizes events for the community.

- Settlements located very close (4 or 5 km) to the municipal centre, in other words, a residential area with no leisure infrastructure other than a kindergarten and local community facilities. Why here, you might ask. After all, young people can access infrastructure that is very close in the city. Yes, they can, but we are talking about less motivated young people, and as we mentioned, young people do not like to go to territories of others.

- A small and remote village with only the local community that organizes the annual holiday festivities and the local youth amounts to maybe about 10.

- A residential area in a large city where the services for young people are insufficiently developed.

- And everywhere else where we want to reach specific youth work goals, for instance, alcohol or drug abuse prevention, or to reach out to a specific youth "clique", but other forms of youth work do not succeed.

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**Mobile
youth work
locations**

By describing these locations suitable for mobile youth work we want to show the diversity of situations that the youth workers face, the different goals you need to reach, and how important it is to feel, know, observe the environment, and to be flexible, able to respond quickly to the situation and to act differently. Here, the principle of having one template and applying it in the same way in different situations will not work.

Once, when we went to a village and were carrying things into our meeting premises, a board game scattered and all the cards started flying in the air because there was a big snowstorm. I can still see this image in my mind: us running around together with the youths and trying to catch the flying cards in the dark...

08

The visitor to mobile youth work

TO BE INTERESTED IN THE LIVES OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE, BUT NOT TO JUST "FLOAT" ON THE SURFACE. ALWAYS ASK, AND ASK AGAIN "HOW ARE YOU NOW / HOW ARE YOU TODAY?" ALWAYS BE ON THE "MODE" TO BE INTERESTED IN THEM.

In this section we will try to describe the target group of mobile work as comprehensively as possible so that you could better understand the needs and preferences of young people. When describing different young people, we do not want to label them as either good or bad, eligible or ineligible. Here are just some more prominent, common, repetitive features of their behaviour that are only an outline of a portrait of a young person / visitor; the description might be helpful for you to be more prepared to work with these young people.

- **A young person** who attends school, studies quite diligently, does not skip classes, does homework after school, has domestic responsibilities, is interested in various things, attends a sports / arts club because he / she needs to attend something, helps organize school events.

- **A young person** who attends school because he / she has to, but doesn't feel much sense in attending it. Has friends at school and enjoys spending time with them, and thinks of all kinds of activities that brighten the monotony of the school. Does not do homework, but helps the parents at home and has domestic responsibilities.

- **A young person** who attends school diligently, is always present at classes and is usually silent during them, never transgresses, is usually left in peace, and does no harm to anyone. When they come home, they have tasks that they also do without contradiction, and just exist in peace and quiet.

- **A young person** who has dropped out of school at the age of 16 or after finishing basic education. Is constantly looking for a job, but usually quits quite soon. As a result, these jobs are mostly seasonal or illegal, treated as help to neighbours and relatives. Work is considered the best thing to happen in his / her life.

- **A young person** from a large family that experiences constant deprivation; because of that he / she lacks adequate clothing, footwear and money, and does not have the opportunities to engage in the same activities as his / her peers.

- **A young person** whose behaviour is a problem not only at school, but he / she is also known to the entire community of the village as the "villain" who breaks things, wreaks havoc, hurts the weaker ones, often appears in public places intoxicated.

When we talk about the specifics of mobile youth work, especially in rural settlements, it is important to draw attention to the circumstances in which young people live, and their families. In one way or another, those circumstances affect not only the young people, but also the way mobile youth work is carried out in a particular settlement. So the young people living in rural areas might:

- Live economically, have tasks to help their parents on the farm, help neighbours in order to "make some money" for their own needs, and are more motivated to work. This develops young people's working skills but does not fulfil other needs or broaden horizons, etc.

- Live in poverty because their parents do not have a job, and try to make a living on a small farm that brings little income. Young people in such families, when they reach the age of adulthood, remain with the family, subsist on their grandparents' pension that only covers minimum needs, but are hesitant to change their family traditions.

- Live quite well, go to a school in a city, attend a non-formal education institution, such as a sports or art school. From time to time, parents drive them to events at school or in the city, but it poses a problem every time. These youths might have greater needs for self-realization, but because they rarely interact with strangers or people of differing points of view or ages, they have a narrower worldview, are timid, and less confident. They find it difficult to find new activities, interests, projects.

- Live in families experiencing difficulties, everybody "knows" them, they are prone to criminal activities, often "written off" by others, out of school or work, looking to make an easy living. They need help, but it is difficult to provide it for them because these young people distrust the environment.

YOU CAN TELL EVERYTHING, THEY NOTICE YOU'RE IN A BAD MOOD, ASK YOU WHAT HAPPENED, AND LET YOU CHOOSE WHETHER TO TELL THEM OR NOT.

All of these young people, with their own experiences and circumstances of life, are living in the same settlement. They know each other, i.e., their peers, more or less in the way that we have just described them; they are seen in a similar way by their local communities, the schools and the parents. What do you think is the relationship and communication among them? They are all united by the same things: most of them attend the same school, are neighbours, use the same bus, go to the same store, etc. They are bound to meet. Is there a place where they can meet and spend time together? The answer would probably be: why would they need to spend time together, they have their own "clique". What happens when all of these young people meet in the mobile work meeting location? There is a lot of friction, discontent, someone might say "What brought him/her here?" "It is all nonsense, you won't do anything serious, with them around." The young people themselves say that they do not meet all together, they only see, hear one about the other and dislike each other.

What is the challenge facing youth workers in a mobile team when such a group visits them, and what steps to take first?

TO ACCOMMODATE

To accommodate the different young people under one roof, create common rules (let's not be afraid of this word) for being together and have a shared attitude among the youth workers. Young people, especially those from small settlements, come to mobile work meetings with a lot of "baggage" and "bring" these relationships, unresolved situations, stereotypical views of each other. It is often even difficult to understand where the tension comes from, why there's so much resistance, and conflict situations. This is why mobile youth work is the place for learning to deal with conflict situations, give feedback to one another, accept what has been said and respond appropriately. The mobile youth work team should initiate activities that foster openness, acceptance of different people, understanding, and ability to empathize with one another. What problem are we solving? The youths that we described earlier will learn to accept each other, resulting in fewer conflict situations, less fighting, and feeling better at school and other places where they meet.

TO KNOW

To know every young person and to create a relationship through simple, accessible, stress-free activities (there is already enough tension between them, so you don't need to create more of it by proposing to do something complex, and unknown). Simple and well known card games, board games, drinking tea, and sports activities are helpful for this purpose.

TO ASSIST

To assist young people in their personal lives by strengthening their positive qualities, seeking inner motivation for certain activities, self-realization, helping to resolve tensions in their families, romantic relationships, and other dilemmas a young person experiences. Here, individual work with each young person would help. Going even deeper, this could be called individual council. In order for council to take place, you need to go a long way in building a relationship of trust and authority, otherwise those will just be formal meetings that will end soon.

We can say that the tasks of mobile youth work depend on what kind of young people meet at the mobile meeting locations: for example, in some cases it may be necessary to develop their social skills, and in others to introduce young people to positive forms of leisure, or learning opportunities through out-of-school activities (e.g. trainings, camps, seminars), to involve them in intercultural education, prevention (e.g. of bullying, substance abuse, etc.) activities.

09 Organizing mobile youth work

ANALYSIS OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mobile work doesn't just start "right here and now". Before starting, it is especially important to know the situation of the area where it is planned to take place, as well as to be aware of the real need for it. It would be appropriate at this point to talk about the situation analysis and mobile workplace identification from different angles. It is one situation if the municipalities, coordinators for youth affairs have strategic plans for the implementation of youth policy; it is likely that these plans also contain an analysis of the situation and the defined need for tools and services for young people, as well as the locations where they are needed. With this information at hand, mobile youth work teams only have to pack their tools, go to those places and start mobile work.
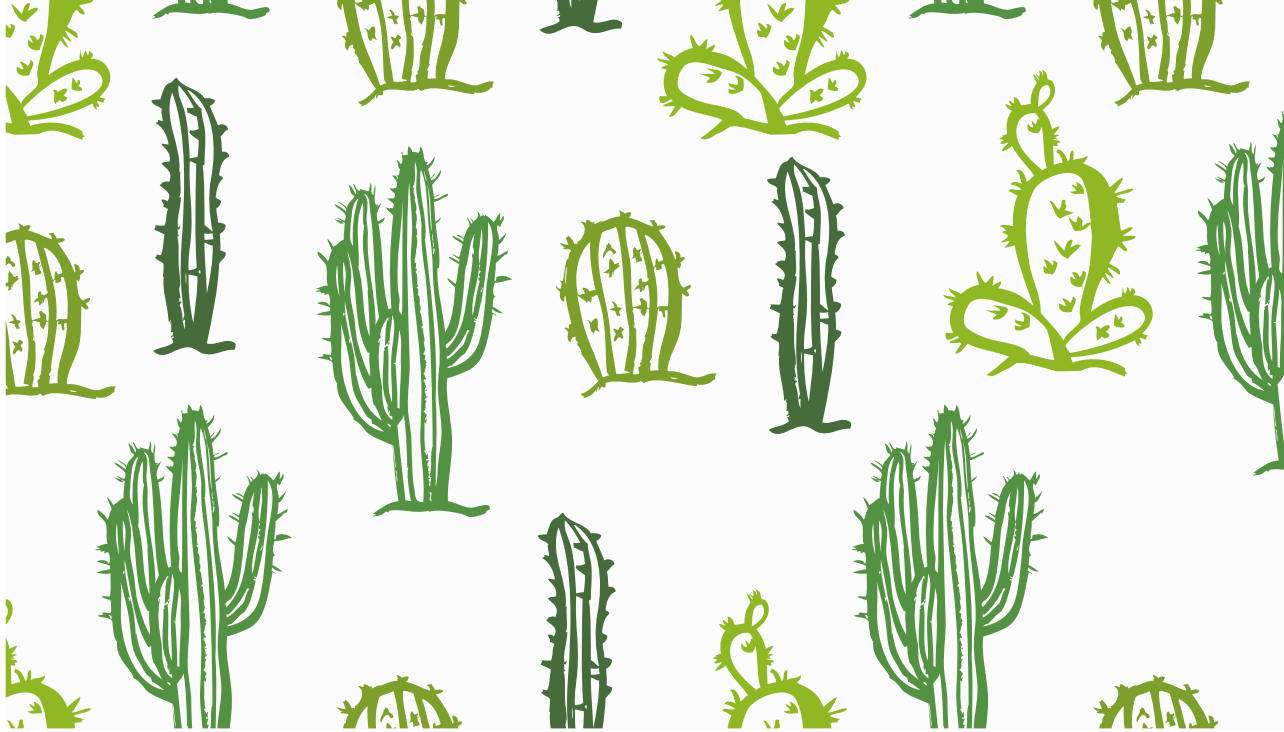
Another situation is where there are no such plans, and the idea to solve the problem comes from the grassroots level: organizations or youth workers see the need for mobile youth work to be implemented in one place or another. In this case, it is appropriate to collect as much information as possible about the current situation, and a detailed analysis will only be carried out once the youth work has started. This would be the very first and most important phase of MYW.

We would like to take a closer look at situations where the youth worker or the CYA knows the head of the district or the chairperson of the community very well, and they agree that mobile work will be carried out in that area, just because funding is "available". It is great that they agree and that they know each other, but in this case, no one has looked into the local situation: maybe young people here live well without these services and are occupied already. Therefore, such a start is very risky.

In any case, knowledge of the situation makes it easier to support arguments when talking to funders (local politicians, other potential sponsors) trying to convince them that mobile youth work is needed and requires certain conditions, support, continuity. Therefore, it is particularly important to carry out a cross-sectional analysis of the situation of the area where mobile youth work is planned. A specific residential area is sampled, e.g. a small village or one of urban neighbourhoods, and it is analysed from various angles: how many young people live there, what other service providers (both private and public or non-governmental) are active in that area, what they offer, what services are used by young people, what is the infrastructure: schools, leisure, entertainment facilities, etc., what kind of transport exists, what is the accessibility (whether it is possible to walk or cycle to the centre of the village) and so on. Or maybe young people only stay in the area for classes or other hobbies and then split up and go to their smaller settlements.

Annex 1 provides an example of a description that can be used to clarify the situation of a particular area.
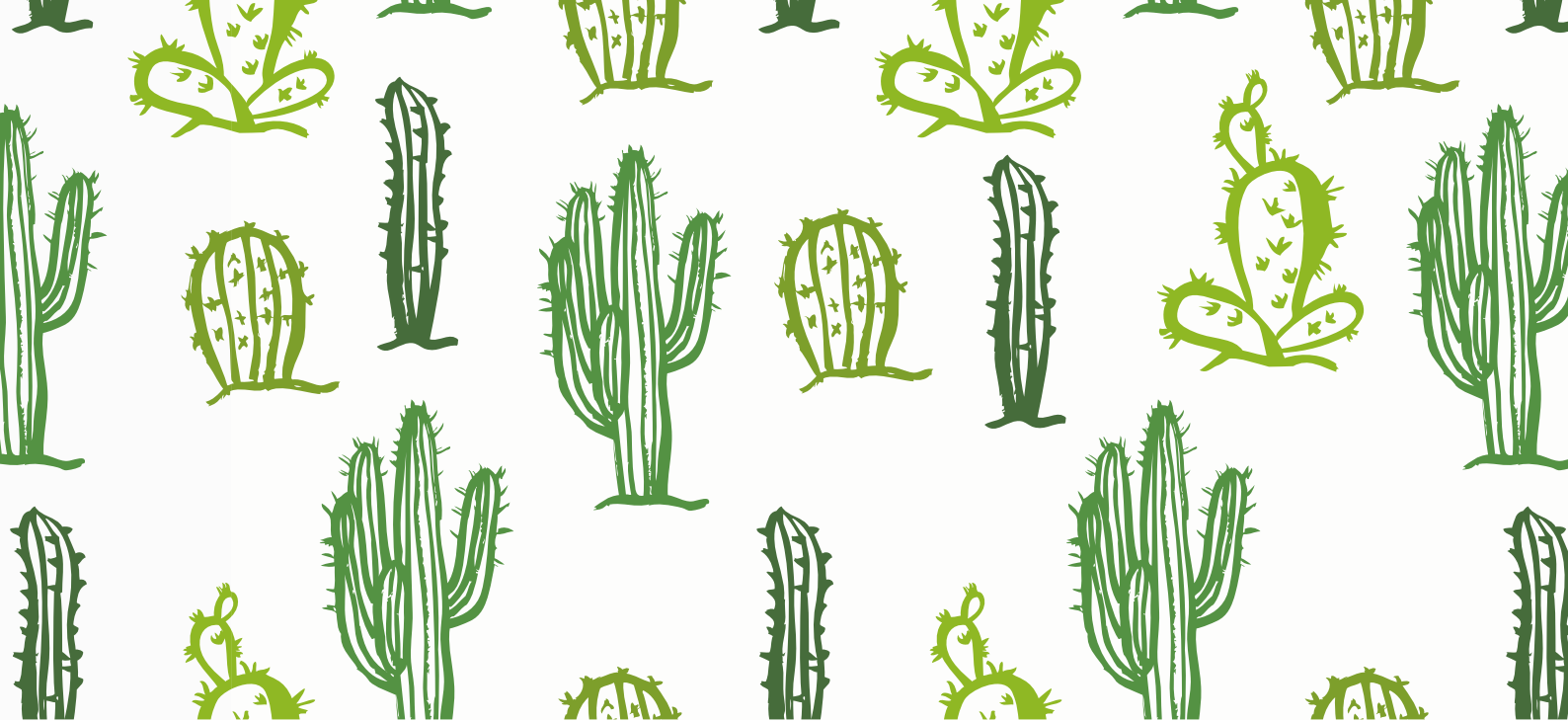
Situation analysis can be carried out in different ways, by summarizing information from various sources: document analysis, research data, statistical information, interviews with young people, etc. In other words, it is important to take into account objective factors (transport system, mobility) and subjective factors (identification of needs, interviews with young people, parents, professionals / experts). We will briefly introduce the possible stages of situation analysis:

• Collecting information by analysing various documents of the municipality, district, research data, statistical information, etc. Information is also collected on youth services in the area: which of them young people use, how often or why they are not used, what is missing, etc. You can find out about services, learning opportunities for young people in a particular area through meetings, discussions with local youth and community members (e.g. shop personnel, medical professionals, representatives of organizations, companies, etc.), specialists, experts, working directly and / or indirectly with young people. These meetings can be organised by the coordinator of youth affairs, the mobile youth work team, the coordinator of cross-sectoral cooperation or other interested persons.

• When data and information on a specific area and relevant content (services, needs, etc.) is collected, the situation can be summarised, and the need for, as well as potential for, mobile youth work can be identified; one of possible outcomes is that there is no need for that form of youth work in the settlement, but rather a more attractive infrastructure for young people.

• Presenting the analysis of the current situation, the insights to all stakeholders of the specific area using various methods and tools (meetings, conferences, etc.).

It is impossible to imagine the situation analysis phase without participation of the CYA and other partners (youth workers, local community representatives, etc.). In each municipality, the CYA is the person who knows the situation best, holds the information and is able to plan the necessary measures. Only by seeing and knowing the need can one plan and "order" quality services in one area or another.

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INDICATORS NEEDED TO BEGIN MOBILE YOUTH WORK

Three indicators are essential for quality mobile youth work: conditions, support and continuity. It is particularly important to ensure them right from the start.

As far as **conditions** are concerned, it is first and foremost important that both the staff and infrastructure meet the objective of mobile youth work. Initially, it is important to ensure that at least the minimum conditions necessary to start mobile work with young people are met. This requires a team of at least two people. Another important condition is the technical base, the infrastructure. It is important to find a room for young people to gather in, where both the young people and youth workers can be free from certain limitations and restrictions. Mobile youth workers who come to premises of "others" always feel a certain amount of tension (as opposed to working in an open youth centre or space when you are the owner of the premises) about security, young people's safety, creating an unconstrained environment. *Here is an example. In a settlement where it is difficult to find a place to work with young people, out of necessity, mobile youth work is being started in the library - a room with bookshelves, lots of trinkets, and kids' handcrafts. As if intentionally, here come the teenagers who at first find it difficult to set boundaries, and with whom it is not easy to talk about being together because they are not used to it, and the relationship with the young people is not yet fully established, as mobile youth work is only starting. What success and support can you expect here? None, because the environment poses too much of a challenge for youth workers and young people right from the start. The responsibility for the library is too big, and it is difficult to start developing relationships with young people naturally. The result is this: the library employee is dissatisfied, spreads information about youth workers that cannot manage young people, keeps asking young people how they are doing, and so on. The conclusion is that it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to establish mobile youth work in this environment. So you should pay attention, analyse all the possible risks and choose the best place to work.*

When it comes to conditions, it is also important to ensure that the working room can be accessed regularly on schedule. Regularity and stability (of both time and place) are very important when developing relationships with young people, so without setting a schedule for the use of the premises with the hosts, it will be difficult to develop a routine, so care should be taken to ensure that young people always find the mobile youth work team when they come to the agreed place at the agreed time. In most cases, it is difficult to ensure such regularity in the common rooms - for example, in the hall of the cultural centre, where other events also take place, when because of the event there is no space left for youth work. There is prevalent perception that youth work is not that important, and nothing bad is going to happen if you miss a couple of meetings, but the mobile youth workers' position towards this issue must be different.

When talking about **support**, we have in mind both external support (the public, the politicians, etc.) and internal (understanding within the organization, in the team). External support is earned. It might be that initially, the politicians, communities and young people themselves will look at the newly emerged youth service, mobile work, with little confidence, therefore support will be minimal. It is important to inform all those active in the youth field very clearly, concretely and regularly about the added value of mobile work. Later, when mobile work with young people will start to take off and young people, their parents, community representatives, teachers will experience a positive change in young people's behaviour, their relationship towards each other, more support and better conditions can also be expected. It is also important to support the employees of the organization internally, to create conditions and opportunities for them to consult with other mobile youth work teams, to organize supervisions, to develop competencies and so on.

We would also like to highlight **continuity**. It is particularly important for the quality and outcome of mobile youth work. It is advisable to avoid "momentary" or "episodic" mobile youth work and launch it after receiving project financing for a year or six months. It is tried in one village for a month, then if that fails, another village for another month, and after six months it is all over because there is no more funding. In this case, it would probably be wiser to do nothing, because it will cause more harm than good (overworked, unbalanced, insecure youth workers, etc.). Or to do it, but under a certain condition: to ensure other sources of funding, to oblige municipalities to contribute. And in this way, to guarantee the activity, its continuity for at least two years. Before planning to start mobile youth work, it is especially important to understand and make others aware that the results will not be visible quickly: it takes

time, you will need at least a couple of years to start making insights into whether it pays off, what are the successes or failures.

Furthermore, young people are often involved in planning new measures and services: their voice could more easily convince local politicians and "push" them to make the needed decisions. However, when it comes to mobile youth work, the opinion of young people is very important, but not when it comes to deciding whether to carry it out or not in a certain location. It is probable that the young people will not identify the need for mobile youth work themselves, and it would be highly inappropriate to manipulate young people's opinions when introducing the idea of mobile youth work to local politicians. Here, the opinion of experts (youth workers, social workers) should be very important and emphasized.

For those who want to start mobile work with young people, we want to emphasize that it is planned, long-term, and continuous. We should not rely solely on one-off project financing, as we do not see the results of such work immediately, but only after a long period of time. Also, mobile work is working with young people through a relationship. It is difficult to build a relationship of trust when youth workers who come do not know how long they would work with the youth, and even worse, disappear without warning. It does not provide security, a young person is not ready to entrust his / her story to someone who does not know how long they would be there.

So before you start mobile youth work, you need to be prepared: you need to have funding for a few years ahead, a team of youth workers, foreseen locations where there is a need for mobile youth work, minimum space for activities, transport, and ideas for other necessary measures.

PLANNING MOBILE YOUTH WORK

We have already talked about the importance of situation analysis and preparation as the first stages of organizing mobile youth work. Planning is based on the situation analysis and the needs of the local youth. Both the situation analysis and the mobile youth work plan are routine, regular and continuous stages of work organization that help to achieve continuity and quality.

We have come to an understanding that planning is not an additional bureaucratic burden, but a necessity that helps to ensure consistency of work. So we want to offer some tools that you can apply in mobile youth work.

TOOL NO. 1
A SEMI-ANNUAL PLAN.

A six month plan is needed for us to know what we want to achieve, to predict the ways how we will do it, and to see the achieved results. The semi-annual plan briefly describes the current situation and sets out one or two objectives to be pursued: e.g. in one location it is necessary to attract more young people, so in what ways will we do that and what number of young people will we consider a good result; the other task is to find new premises or to encourage young people to take action, as they seem to be able to do more than just spend time there; establish cooperation with the social worker of the district. In Annex 3, we present an example of a semi-annual plan, which consists of two main parts: the first is the analysis of the current situation and the second is the description of specific actions / measures.

It should be emphasized that different settlements in the same area have their own specificity, so it is not appropriate to apply the same plan to all of them.

TOOL NO. 2
AN ANNUAL ACTIVITY PLAN.

For those who are engaged in mobile youth work for more than a year, we recommend an annual activity plan for each mobile work location, and to review its results every six months.

Using both a semi-annual and an annual plan, we recommend that at the end of the year you evaluate the results for the whole year, focusing on identifying the positive aspects, so that you can have something to be glad about: that motivates you to work and strive for more. Of course, it is also important to discuss the challenges, the difficulties encountered and, having them in mind, plan for the next year.

It is welcomed if the head of the organization / institution can also be involved in the planning and evaluation, as, looking from the outside, they sometimes see the situation better than the employees themselves. However, in large organizations, it may happen that the head may not be able to take part in the whole planning process, so it is important that he / she is informed properly and on time. This job requires finding the time that is always lacking, so it is important to set deadlines and work hard to keep them in order to make it a tradition.

These tools help to carry out regular analysis of the situation of the location where mobile youth work takes place.

Keeping track of changes in both young people and local communities is important, as any positive change or longer-term reassurance that everything is going well can give false reassurance and have a profound impact on the quality of mobile youth work. *For example, mobile work was launched in one location, many young people who wanted to actively engage in activities were coming in, and various outdoor and indoor activities were organized. The available facilities did not cause any inconvenience either. Youth workers did direct youth work. But after a while the numbers of the young people started to decline, the room that the youth workers used, was not always unlocked on time, and they had to wait for it to be unlocked. After some time, the local community began organizing discos for young people in the same room, that started to coincide with the working hours of mobile youth workers. However, still being affected by the initial success, the youth workers didn't notice it. The result was that they had to start all over again: to arrange a meeting of people working with local youth, to organize an evening for the local young people and to invite them by going to the local school, as well as by disseminating information on social sites, bringing an international volunteer, and so on.*

Regular analysis provides timely and very useful information when making a decision. *For example, in one place,*

mobile youth work had been successfully run for several years. An analysis of the local situation revealed that from the following year the vast majority of young people would leave for study, work or other reasons to other cities, and they would need to wait for a couple of years for a new potential target group in that area. This analysis led to a rational decision to move mobile youth work to another location from the following year.

We also want to encourage you to not be afraid to name and acknowledge failures. A failed experience is also an experience that we learn from and make corresponding decisions, for example, when the youth of a village that had been coming frequently, started missing the meetings. In this case, it is important to analyse what happened, why it happened, whether the youth workers used all the possible measures. There might be a discussion organized with the local community, the heads of districts, where the situation can be presented very clearly, also stating that the mobile youth work team does not see the reason to come to that area any more, and their services are more needed in another area. The goal of changing the area is to ensure that youth work is effective. Let us give you an example of a situation when mobile youth work was discontinued in an area after two years. *The main reason was that young people were reluctant to attend it. Various measures were taken: the meeting location was changed, other premises were found: we moved from school to the day centre, where*

we had ideal conditions to spend time; we were visiting the school, and walked around the town talking to young people that we met, we attended various events with our presentations, live chats, games. However, the work did not take off in any way, so, considering that everything was done and young people had activities available (most of them were active in sports, going to the city, participating in various non-formal education activities) we decided not to go there anymore. Then we had to choose another location. The other location was a settlement where youth work was being carried out, but there was a need to reinforce it (a lot of young people, mostly young boys from families with difficulties, came there, as well as young people with behavioural and other problems). Another important aspect is that there is no recreational infrastructure in the village as it is a residential settlement in the centre of a district. It has a small library, a kindergarten where the local community centre is also located. Seeing the need, we started driving to this place every week, although we go to other locations only every other week.

In conclusion we would like to say that it is important to stay constantly alert and vigilant, and to review your activity, as any given area is "alive", influenced by various external and internal factors, subject to frequent changes, and seeing all the actors in that area and knowing their services, can help to successfully cooperate with them and represent the interests of young people.

ELEMENTS OF MOBILE YOUTH WORK

It would be very difficult to describe a mobile youth work meeting or activity because the nature, situations, tasks and opportunities of the organizations that carry out this work can be very different. Therefore, we will highlight a few essential elements of each meeting.

WORKING HOURS. The organization that carries out mobile youth work takes into account the needs of the youth and the situation analysis, and decides on the timing of the meetings. Experience shows that evenings are most suitable, approximately between 4 pm and 9 pm. This is the time when young people, usually after work or school, want to meet friends, pursue their hobbies, go to the gym, listen to music, etc. This is why it's important to understand and respond to this need, especially in rural areas where young people have fewer activities available. Giving them the opportunity to meet indoors where it's safer, more comfortable, and warmer than at a store, bus stop, or other place they usually spend time at. This working time is probably not the most convenient and acceptable option for the workers, as it is usual to work until 5 pm. Therefore, it is very important to find youth workers who find such hours acceptable. It is possible that local community,

school or other institutions will suggest another meeting time out of their own interest, e.g. right after class, while students wait for the bus to take them home. It is important to correctly assess the situation, to talk to young people and find the optimal time for both young people and youth workers. The recommended duration of the meeting is at least 3 hours.

BOUNDARIES. The team members first have to agree among themselves and later with the young people what rules will be followed during the meetings. They can be very different depending on the place you choose for mobile youth work (whether it is in a public space, indoors, etc.), the rules of the youth group, the goals you are pursuing and other aspects. For example, agreements can be made regarding the working time, behaviour, etc. It is important for everyone to agree on the principles that had been discussed and to foresee possible consequences if the agreements are violated.

ACTIVITY PROPOSAL. Depending on the goals set in a particular area, the relationship with the young people, the meeting space, the working phase, the team of mobile workers can select the activities that seem appropriate at that moment. It can be:

- A more "open" offer. In an agreed place / space which does not change and is constant, conditions are created to meet, come, spend time. There are no specific goals for this time-spending, it's just important to provide young people with space that is safe both physically and emotionally and where they can act depending on their needs: play table or sports games (foosball, table tennis, snooker table), listen to music, drink tea, chat, surf the internet and so on.

- A more structured proposal. Seeing that the open space principles work and their quality is self-sustainable, i.e. the young people know each other, adhere to the common agreements, accept new people, trust the youth workers better and start to get a little bored, the youth workers encourage the young people to engage in activities that match their needs. This gives rise to youth initiatives, although small but very important to them. These may include cooking nights (pies, pizzas, burgers, etc.), game tournaments, sports evenings at the gym, sports grounds, orientation games, game nights, quizzes, dance parties, furnishing a youth-friendly room, movie evenings, interactive lectures, etc.

In both of these cases, it is important to maintain a balance spending time freely and being structured. This requires the competence of the staff to see the group's dynamics and needs, and to balance them in order to reach the maximum goals.

All three of these elements (working hours, boundaries, activity proposal) are included in every mobile youth work meeting. However, there are other elements that are important but will not necessarily be present in every meeting with young people:

- **Working with young people in the virtual world** goes in two directions: communication with young people and publicity. Through the use of various social networks and the organization's website, the team of youth workers provides the public with information about mobile work and all the related information: mobile work locations, working hours, activities planned, results achieved, etc. The target is to reach as many young people as possible through the social networks in which young people "live". A mobile youth worker says: "It is important to remind constantly and to encourage young people to come. Every time before going to a meeting location, we remind of our arrival on our Facebook account. Nowadays we are more and more starting to communicate in groups (for each village separately), where we write down what we will do, plan and discuss." It is also important to create personal contact with young people in the virtual space, as they are often more open there than in person. Depending on the current relationship with the young person and their individual situation, a youth worker can provide them with consultations
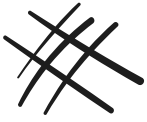
online by asking them how they are doing, especially if they are going through a difficult time and need help. When consulting, both the youth workers and the young people should determine in which cases young people can contact, when the youth workers respond to messages or consult, otherwise there may be difficulties and misunderstandings, such as: the young person may become angry and may not communicate if the youth worker does not immediately respond to the message, or may constantly write to the youth worker at night.

- **Activities outside the settlement** are suitable when young people acquire self-confidence, become motivated for activities, already possess some self-regulation and reflection skills. In this case, mobile youth work team members can suggest activities outside the young people's living environment, such as meetings, tournaments, camps, trainings, seminars, international exchanges. Here young people are faced with a new challenge: new participants, an environment that is unfamiliar

and not the one in which they were able to talk or felt safe. It is therefore particularly important that young people are accompanied by the youth workers, as they provide a feeling of security. When going out, young people develop their communication and social competences, broaden their horizons, become more curious, in other words, motivated for organized, useful activities. This way, step by step, by travelling it is possible to nurture young people finding activities that match their needs and opportunities. In parallel, individual work with young people also takes place when accompanying them on their often difficult journey to the adult world.

- **Individual council of young people**. It is a time devoted to individual young people and their personal stories of life. When should it happen? The answer to this question is not straightforward and will require additional time and resources. From our open youth work experiences we know that young people share their problems with a youth worker who spends time with them. It is difficult to refer them to psychologists or other
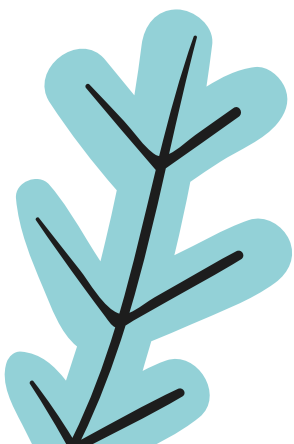
professionals; the most accessible to them is a person working in an open youth centre or space. In mobile work, when we want to work individually, we need to spend extra time on it, because the conversation requires security, to be sure that no one will interrupt by coming in, and so on. This means that once you have a strong relationship with the young people, you can negotiate extra time for individual interviews. The most appropriate time is before the mobile working time, specifically agreed with the young person: e.g. we know that the young person needs council, so we agree beforehand (by phone, online or during a previous mobile meeting) that we will meet with him / her before the mobile work activities take place at a specific location. It should be noted that the need for council may also occur unexpectedly during mobile youth work activities. Therefore, it is important to make an agreement among the team members in advance in which cases one of the youth workers can retreat and talk to the young person individually. It is also recommended that the team consider whether it is in all cases that the spontaneous situation of having to communicate with the young person individually is a priority over the other activities. This requires extra effort, but could be possible in order to achieve quality work and help for young people.

- **Working with young people in their favourite meeting points**. You need to reach to young people where they are, because when working indoors we do not really reach all young people: there are those who just do not come to the open space because they are uncomfortable or unaware of it. Therefore, it is useful to constantly go outside, to the street and tell the young people about ourselves, leaving the information that we are here for them, pointing out the time and place where they can come if they need to. This work is more challenging and requires a little more competence because we go to young people, to the places where they spend their time. We are guests there, so their rules apply: we cannot tell young people how not to behave, try to change the way they communicate and spend time together. This is the attitude of a detached worker.
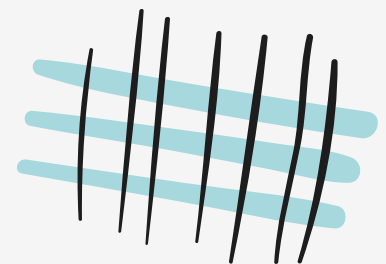
10 Work with the community: a part of mobile youth work

We want to talk about this area of youth work separately because it is very important. It should be included in the agendas of mobile youth workers.

Why is it so important to work with the community? First of all, those people, that environment is one of the closest to young people. Therefore, the way the youth workers interact with community members, communicate, or collaborate with them, will also heavily influence the results they will reach working with young people. It is also important that the way of working with the local community, the time spent on that, can also determine the relationship between young people and the community.

Therefore, we will go through the steps of working with the community.

I. INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY IN THE PROCESS OF PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING MOBILE YOUTH WORK.

During the stages of situation analysis and planning, which we described earlier, community involvement is very important: it helps not only to recognise the need, but also to reach certain mutual agreements and commitments.

We have found that one of the more effective ways to come to specific decisions or commitments is to organize a meeting that involves representatives from all youth-related institutions of the settlement (community councils, district administrations, schools, NGOs, businesses, churches, etc.). It goes without saying that members of the municipal council for youth affairs, the coordinator for youth affairs participate in such meetings. The purpose of those meetings is to present mobile youth work and to give reasons and facts about why it is useful and needed in that particular location. It is recommended to take minutes of such meetings and to

afterwards send them out to all those who were present so that they could see and comply with the agreements and commitments they have made. It is typical that cooperation is offered during those meetings: the local community has ideal conditions for young people, but does not have the human resources to work professionally with them, while mobile youth workers have no facilities but have the skills and competences to work with young people. That is a great combination which allows reaching quality youth work outcomes that are mutually beneficial: when the local community welcomes mobile youth work and helps create the conditions needed to work, then the youth workers become intermediaries between the community and the youth. Youth workers, knowing how to be with young people and respond to their needs, build relationships with community members, the chairperson and even the rest of the environment.

II. COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP.

In the context of mobile youth work, in order to represent the interests of young people in a qualitative and effective way, it is meaningful to maximise cooperation between all institutions and organizations active in a particular area. The result of a successful partnership is when the cooperating parties are able to share not only resources and tasks, but also the risk of failure. By cooperating, we not only represent the interests of young people, but also empower the local community to take responsibility for those young people. How does it work? You will probably agree that the most perfect and wanted place to carry out mobile youth work, especially in a rural area, is the community house / centre, because many of them are equipped with comfortable facilities and attractive equipment. So the place and means for activity are already there, and you only need to gather the people who want to engage in the activities and the participants. This is a perfect combination of collaboration. Another example is a day care centre that has ideal infrastructure but does not have the opportunity to work with young people in the evenings, so there is great space for cooperation between youth workers and the day care centre staff.

How do you cooperate in task sharing? In many locations where mobile youth work is carried out, the meeting places become, in one way or another, "youth spaces". The young people set them up, the necessary means are bought with the help from the local community, so it makes sense and is effective to "employ" such spaces more. Young people could come here more often, for shorter periods, for example, twice a week. However, this requires human resources: adults in the community, professionals, volunteers who can be there together with the young people.

Probably one of the most difficult things to carry out in a successful partnership is sharing of the risk of failure. When the community is able to accept and understand failure not only as a failure of the mobile workers, but also as its own, then one can say that work with the community has reached a "high level", which allows the young people to feel important and needed in their immediate environment. For example, in a situation when after a meeting with young people in a mobile workplace, cigarette ends are scattered at the entrance, but the community does not blame the youth workers for failing to maintain order; on the contrary, the community looks for the reasons for that together with the youth workers (perhaps there is no adapted or dedicated space for smoking), look for a solution to the problem (planning and adapting a suitable space, if one did not exist), as well as take part in the development of rules, agreements with young people.

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Work with the
community: a
part of mobile
youth work

III. SEARCH FOR RESOURCES.

It is also an important part of work with the community, which can directly contribute to the quality of mobile youth work. It is the search for professionals, organizations or institutions that can help. For example, in order to help a young person in a certain situation, the youth workers collaborate with the local social worker, business owners, representatives of other services or other organizations.

IV. EVALUATION / REFLECTION.

is one of the parts of work with the community which also greatly influences quality of youth work. By properly discussing, evaluating and assessing with the local community what is being done and what is happening with young people in the area, the growth and development of both mobile youth workers and the local community can be ensured. This creates the conditions not only for high-quality cooperation but also for successful work with young people. It is recommended that such meetings take place at least once a year at each of the mobile youth work locations. Of course, if the situation at the location is problematic and tense, meetings can be organized more frequently depending on the need.

We would like to share some impressions of community chairpersons in rural areas to show how they see mobile youth work in their communities. *"After the mobile work began to take place in community premises, a better relationship with the young people developed. Those who visit*

are different, it is possible to find common grounds with them, I feel connected, and if you ask for something, they help and are more willing to contribute. […] [Do you regret letting them into the community premises?] I never regretted it, but at first there was a lot of resentment about why I let them in. At first, there were many complaints about trash being left behind by young people, about it not being completely cleaned up, not as it should be, but now I no longer hear any complains. Anyway, I went to the youth myself (to mobile work meetings) and explained to them that we don't have a cleaner and that they should leave no trash and clean up. So it has all changed, no one around or in the community is complaining anymore, and the young people have grown here as well."
Asta, community chairwoman.

"You know, the youths have changed, especially those coming from the socially deprived families, have begun to communicate in a different way, they are attentive and more willing to help. In the past, if you would ask someone to help, tidy something up, when they were standing over

there somewhere at the store, they would laugh at you, and do nothing. And now they are just constantly spending time near the community home, and when I ask for help, they come straight away to help. I think they also communicate with each other in a different way, it is very useful, mostly they are taught that other way of communication. I see that my daughter is also different. She is very eager to visit, and that Friday night, when mobile work arrives, we can't plan anything else because she wants to go. I feel calm when she goes there, I know where she is, it's safe. Another big advantage is the international volunteers and the ability to communicate in English, which is what our youths really need, what they see here, to broaden their horizons." Aušra, community chairwoman and a mother of a visitor.

"I am very happy that mobile youth work comes to our village. This is a great opportunity for the children of our village and surrounding villages to come together every other week and have a more enriching free time. Last summer, a few children from the village had a great opportunity to go to Germany, all thanks to mobile work. Often, when asked to contribute to community activities, mobile workers and young people contribute as much as they can. Mobile work is very beneficial to our village. Young people have their own corner where they can gather and socialize. Here you will always be understood, supported and listened to. Children have full confidence in the youth workers, even share their problems with them, receive comfort and encouragement, which is very important for a young person." Lina, community chairwoman.

To summarise all of the observations, it can be stated that work with the community has both direct and indirect benefits as young people begin to identify with the place where they are, become more involved in community activities, help the community look after the environment, contribute to the organization of events, represent their community in other districts. And yet, the essential purpose of work with the community is to build a relationship between the community and young people that will improve communication between them: foster communication, solidarity, and sensitivity towards one another.

11 The staff carrying out mobile youth work

When preparing materials for this publication, we spoke to the youths who visit the mobile meeting locations. What do the mobile youth work meetings give to them? Asked that, they first talk about having a good time with friends, just having fun, hanging out, and so on. Then we tried to provoke them by asking who needs that organized meetings, whether they can't meet friends, spend time, play board games, listen to music and just have a good time? It is obviously difficult for young people to name what is different here.

But everyone mentions the youth workers, who organize a process that doesn't seem to be organized, because what kind of organization does it take to play games, and talk? That sounds weird. But that is the talent of the staff (competence is too weak a word) to be able to be with young people and build a relationship that, according to young people, is very similar to the one of:

- a friend, because you can openly tell them whatever is happening in your life. Other good friends, when you tell them about serious problems, laugh them off, while the youth worker listens, knows how to ask questions, responds and takes it as a serious matter.

- a family member, because it feels safe and good. If you tell something to your mother, she becomes very upset, she lectures, and sometimes she doesn't even understand the problem. The youth workers always understand, you tell them, and it feels as if a weight has been lifted off your shoulders, it becomes easier.

We would like to quote some of the visitors' thoughts about the youth workers: *"You communicate with them on the same level, it doesn't feel official, and you have boundaries. To cross those boundaries would be the same as to mock the [youth] workers. The [youth] workers are not moms, don't do this, don't do that, they can give you advice, but they don't forbid." What kind of people are YW like? "Like friends. You can tell them everything, they notice your bad mood, ask you what happened, they let you choose whether to tell them or not." What do you usually talk about with the YW? "Partnership, relationship with the other sex. I did not talk to anyone about that. I'm not scared that they might be overwhelmed. There is no pressure that they would not be interested."*

"Youth workers are friends, acquaintances, almost family. You tell them stuff, they ask you about it. They know how to ask you and how to listen, the friends, they laugh it off, goof around, but here it is serious, it looks real. You do stuff, and you are too afraid to tell the parents, but when you talk to the youth worker, it's like a weight has been lifted off your shoulders. The parents… it's lecture after lecture… The parents find out from others, but to the YW I tell myself."

After hearing the young people talk about what mobile youth workers are to them, it seems that it is important for the youth workers:

- to have a positive attitude towards a young person: you cannot go to young people if you think that they are "this and that" these days.

- to have the ability to refrain from trying to solve all emerging problems, situations for young people. It can also be called patience to wait, to get them to talk about themselves and to let them decide for themselves.

- to not identify with young people, but to remain themselves. Young people still need an adult; they need to learn how to build a relationship with an adult, because often for them a relationship with an adult is a relationship of obligatory respect: you have to be respectful because it has been formed that way; if you are impolite and disrespectful you will suffer because he / she is your superior. So learning and being able to maintain an equal relationship with a young person is an experience beneficial for both sides.

The things that we have mentioned here are all a matter of the youth workers' attitude. In addition, one needs to have a full range of competences gained through experience while working with young people, reflecting on that experience and participating in trainings. Many authors, who have written about other forms of youth work, have already talked about YW's competencies, so we will not discuss them separately in this publication. Instead, we want to list some arguments that will be helpful when you face the community's opinion that they do not need incoming people to work with their youth, they need to use the human resources that they already have in the community; for example, the teachers are free and can engage with young people, there is also cultural and sports staff, so why needlessly waste money on travel. These observations are heard very often and you need to "withstand" them, sometimes you even need to give a lot of time, to make the community aware that not everyone can work with young people.

First of all, youth workers coming to work with youth in a rural area do not know the local youth, they do not know their life stories and the environment in which they live. In this case, the unawareness is beneficial because right from the beginning, the information is gathered from young people directly, without any preconceived notions about the young person. A local working with young people might find it difficult to distance him/herself from the experiences and knowledge that one has about the people living nearby. Even for the worker him/herself, it is easier to work outside their own place of residence, and it is not just our idea, but the shared experience from Germany, because in Germany there are youth spaces in every small village, to which workers come from other places for the same reasons: preconceptions, mutual trust, and so on.

Secondly, the roles can "overlap": if I am a teacher at school and teach half of the young people visiting the mobile meeting location, then the school experiences and a different relationship will hinder work and building a new relationship based on trust, there will always be topics that are "taboo". It will be difficult for both the teacher / mobile youth worker and the young student / visitor to maintain different roles in mobile work and at school.

Third, a youth worker does not aim for a result in mobile work (to produce a performance, to organize an exhibition, etc.). The result of youth work is not quantitative, but qualitative: it is the personal growth of every young person, which is hard to measure; it is not achieved in a month and often is not even noticeable to others. Even the smallest thing done together with young people helps them grow if we have such a goal. For example, to bake a pie you have to answer the following questions: What is the recipe for a pie? Where do we get the products from? How much of the products will we need? What cooking tools will we need? These are questions that are discussed when an idea arises, these are preparatory questions. Let's say there are 10 young people involved in planning a pie. Everyone has different tastes, different cake baking experiences (usually none, only heard of it), and different motivation to contribute. It is therefore necessary to help young people reach an agreement, share responsibilities and discuss the whole process. We know from experience that very often young people are not used to answering any questions in the group themselves, but wait for guidance from adults. This requires a youth worker who does not give clear instructions on what to do, but becomes a moderator to help a group of young people plan and execute the initiative themselves from start to finish. If the youth worker

follows these principles, after a while you will hear that the young people themselves start calling for "sitting in a circle", "talking one person at a time" "listening to everyone" - a great result of all our small activities. We empower young people to deal with situations themselves, to respond to others, to offer their own ideas and to solve issues by talking together, instead of saying "nonsense", "what are you talking about", and so on. Here, we can see the qualitative result of youth work, not quantitative. This is the specificity of working with young people, where patience and continuous work can make it possible to achieve and see results. This can be difficult for professionals working in a field where results are displayed, e.g. by

a performance, exhibition, event, competition, etc.

In conclusion we would like to say that it is extremely important to first understand for yourselves and then to explain to others that mobile workers are not organizers of events or entertainment for youth. Yes, of course it is possible to organize entertainment or events if the young people want it, and if the entertainment or event is merely a means to an end. However, when it comes to youth work, and not youth activity, the youth worker, spending time with young people, helps them grow in ways that are not always evident, and takes care not only of the physical, but also of the emotional wellbeing of each young person.

It's weird. They were total strangers to me before, and now I got attached to them.

12

## The team of youth workers and their support
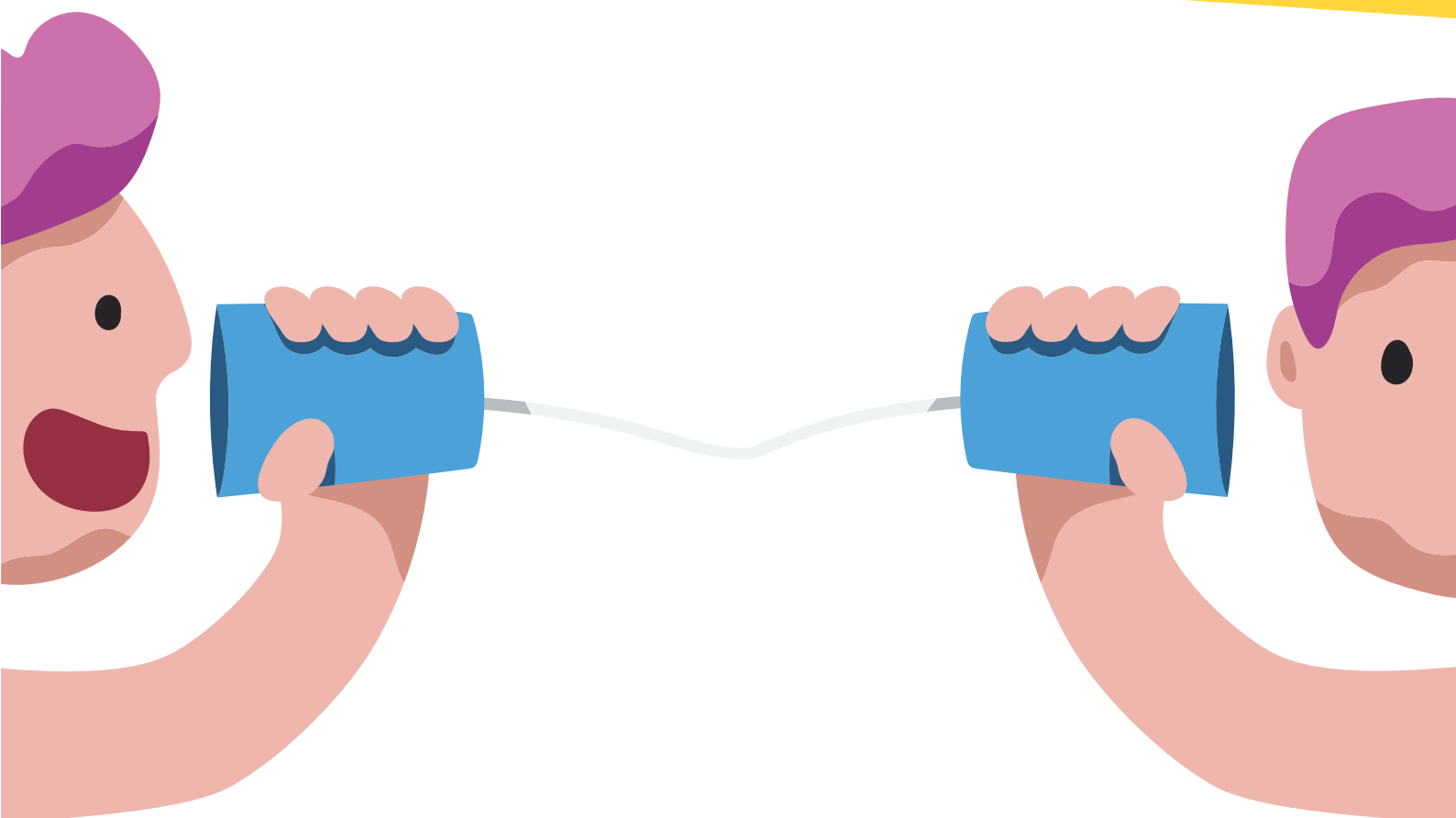
The experience of various organizations carrying out mobile youth work shows that mobile work will not be successful if there is no youth worker support system thought-out and implemented. We do not know of any successful story where a youth worker would be successful at mobile work for an extended period of time working without a colleague. The important thing is that mobile work cannot be carried out by one worker, a colleague is necessary. Preferably, the youth workers should be of both genders, and at least one of them must be a social worker and have at least one year's experience of open youth work. Youth workers of different genders are "accessible" for the young people of both genders. There are topics on which only women can work with girls and only men can work with boys. Mobile youth work is a field of social work, not leisure, entertainment or other. Therefore, work with individual, complex cases of individuals or groups of young people need the skills of a social worker to help young people deal with their difficulties, not just to organize their free time.

Before starting to work with young people in different areas, staff members agree on rules for working with young people, which are the basis for subsequent agreements with the young people. Both youth workers must take the same position on different issues. There is also a need to discuss and document every day of direct work with young people. The way home from a meeting is full of conversations about what happened that evening. It is important that mobile workers work in a team and all reflections are not just in the mind of one person, they need to be shared with a colleague. Mobile work is characterized by the fact that it is carried out in not one, but at least in 3–5 or even 10 locations, going there once every two weeks, so you need to remember what happened where, what was planned for the next meeting, what situation was left unresolved and will require coming back to, etc. It also handles a large number of visitors, e.g. unique visitors can reach up to 300. How do you remember each young person's situation? Talking when coming back from a mobile work location is also important emotionally when you just want to talk it out after a lot of things happen, enjoy a change that has been achieved, share your anxiety, name your current insecurity, etc.

When impressions and situations are over, emotions are down, you can calmly fill in the protocols of the day. Such reflections are
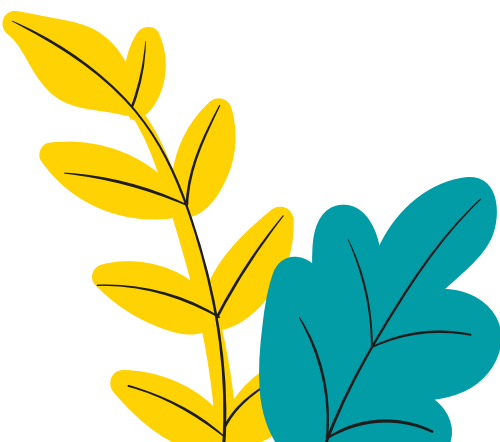
needed to allow the team to discuss different visions, as it is not always possible to be with the same group of young people; for example, in one location we have two groups of young people, based on their age: younger and elder. The younger ones are keener on playing board games, the elder ones prefer to talk, socialize, and drink tea. So the youth workers have an agreement which of them works with which group. It often happens that girls want closer contact, talks, while guys need more movement, sometimes even a gym, and then the youth workers also split. During reflection it is important to exchange information about activities in the different groups of young people. An example of the protocol is attached in Annex 2.

When reflecting, the youth workers remember the situation of the time spent in contact with the youths, maybe there is a need to prepare in advance, bring some materials, send reminders to the youths, and so on.

Equally important is the team - the staff of the organization / institution, from the manager to the volunteers (there may also be no volunteers). It is a team of professionals with common goals, working in different places and possibly performing different functions, but all those people are united by a shared vision of the institution / organization, the pursuit of common goals, the equal attitude towards youth work. The team has a tradition of regularly organizing joint meetings of various kinds: planning, self-assessment, situation analysis, case

studies, review of plans, etc. Without this organizational structure, team support, mobile workers would probably feel confused and lonely. The role of the head of the team in supporting the youth workers is equally important. Each head chooses how to help the staff: it can be individual, continuous work with staff members on a regular (semi-annual or yearly) basis, meeting and discussing professional growth, setting individual goals, identifying difficulties, support, encouragement, feedback. The head of the team sees the situation from the outside and can reflect their situations back to the youth workers, protect against burnout, help them get out of the comfort zone, take on challenges, and so on.

In addition to all the internal measures of the organization, external support measures for youth workers are also recommended: case studies with professionals of various fields, thematic trainings, seminars, supervisions, etc. It's important not to get stuck in the routine of your organization, but to be open and look for the most appropriate ways to help and support yourself. Sharing experience with other mobile youth work teams also helps. We know of cases where youth workers from different municipalities meet regularly for case studies, sharing experience, and so on. All the measures are right, it is important to understand that this work needs support, and in the absence of it we cannot expect professionalism.
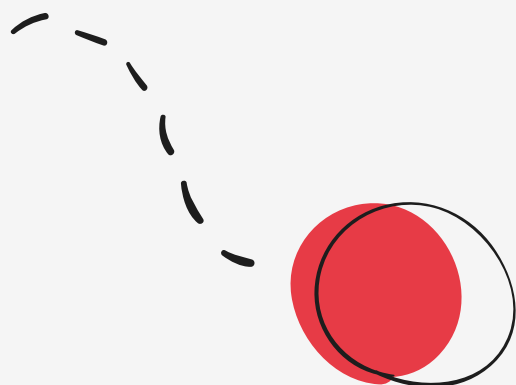
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Annexes
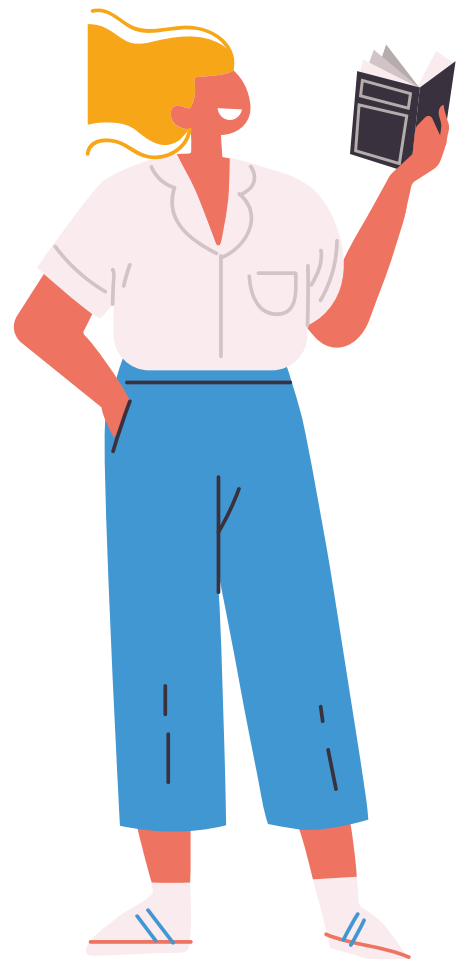
ANNEX 1

AN EXAMPLE OF A DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT SITUATION

THE NAME OF THE SETTLEMENT:...

I. THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT:
- Demographic situation *(as accurately as possible collect demographic information about your specific location).*

- Transport system *(collect information about the public transport and other accessibility possibilities in the specific area).*

- Operating businesses *(collect information about the businesses operating in the area and the services they provide).*

II. THE PROPOSALS FOR ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM ORGANIZATIONS ON INSTITUTIONS THAT WORK THERE:
- Education *(collect information and describe existing educational institutions (kindergartens, schools) and the non-formal education services they offer to young people).*

- Health *(local medical dispensaries or other medical facilities).*

- Church *(the organizations that function at the church, as well as the services they provide for young people).*

- Leisure and culture *(identify and describe the institutions and organizations, as well as the services they provide for young people).*

- NGOs/non-formal groups *(identify existing NGOs, the services they provide, how many young people are involved in these organizations, and so on.)*

III. HUMAN RESOURCES *(Identify all those who work with young people in one way or another, and identify the areas in which they work).*

ANNEX 2

AN EXAMPLE OF A DAILY REPORT

THE NAME OF THE SETTLEMENT:..

PROTOCOL OF MOBILE YOUTH WORK

DATE: ....

SETTLEMENT: ....

The age of young people who attended.	
Activities that were organized and their flow.	
Topics of conversations with the young people.	
Topics raised by the youth workers.	Topics raised by the young people.
Conclusions: what were the strengths, what were the challenges, what would we like to change?	
What should we remember for the next meeting?	
Agreements among the team members.	

ANNEX 3

AN EXAMPLE OF A SEMI-ANNUAL / ANNUAL ACTIVITY PLAN

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION OF MOBILE YOUTH WORK IN THE SETTLEMENT OF

....

PREMISES	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
E.g.: **COMMUNITY CENTRE**	E.g.: the premises are comfortable for young people, there is a large space, where various activities can be carried out.	E.g.: not all the premises are heated.
VISITORS	E.g.: - there are 15-20 young people living in this village. There is a girls group called "The Youth Corner", where one of the girls is a leader. The members of the group sometimes organize activities by themselves. Other young people are not interested in activities, do not participate, or 6-10 youths come; - the age of the young people who visit is 14-18 years; - it is difficult to get the young people involved into activities that take place outside the settlement. The young people are keener on spending time in their own environment and not getting involved in activities.	
COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMUNITY, OTHER ORGANIZATIONS	E.g.: - we work particularly closely with the community chairperson. We exchange calls, and coordinate the issues that arise. We carried out a joint project, through which a foosball table was bought for young people in this community, t-shirts for dancers, activities were carried out; - there is no collaboration with the social worker.	
DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION. PUBLICITY	E.g.: - hanging posters in the local shop; - participating in the events organized by the community wearing jumpers with logos and inscriptions.	

SEMI-ANNUAL ACTIVITY PLAN			
	GOALS	**MEASURES**	**CHANGES**
YOUTH WORK	Take 2-4 young people to activities outside the settlement.	Offer activities with one-night sleepover only to young people in this town.	It is difficult to get young people involved in activities. The goal was to involve them in activities outside the town, but it failed. Taking into account the needs of young people, we suggested doing the activities on the spot without leaving our premises. The young people didn't feel the need for such an activity, either.
PREMISES	Look for opportunities for heating the premises.	Talk to the community chairperson about the possibility to use the furnace.	
DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION	Activate the dissemination of information to young people.	When possible, participate in community events wearing promotional jumpers.	
WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY	To seek to establish a relationship with the social worker of the district.	Organize a meeting.	The social worker is informed about mobile work in the district, is sharing information with young people he meets in families. 2 youths from those families have become mobile work visitors.

14

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"They encouraged us to cooperate with one another, to know one another, to learn something new. Mobile youth work provided an opportunity to grow, to learn to not be afraid to tell about ourselves, to challenge ourselves, to achieve our goals. We all felt like family when we met. It is also great that volunteers from other countries are brought to such small villages, which allows us to get to know people of another nation (country) better, to get to know their traditions. I can 100% admit that it is worth to do such a job because you give us so much. You give us both experience and practice."

Kristina

For your notes:

I spent a lot of my free time coming to mobile youth work meetings. What is mobile youth work for me? First of all, it is a space where I was able to discover myself, have a great time, make great friends and gain some certain experience. I used to ask myself very often: what does MYW give me? Now I can answer with certainty. First, it helps make your mind up on a profession, change your lifestyle, rethink your goals, build a career path or change your daily activities in general. Second, it helps you find new friends or even get to know other cultures. Because I had the opportunity to meet foreigners and I am very happy about that. Third, it helped build the confidence I always lacked, but with the help of youth workers I succeeded! For this I am very pleased and grateful to them. I very much hope that their work will not be discontinued, as there are certainly many young people who need a space where they can feel at home.

Viktorija

For your notes:

"...I can tell my opinion, from what I have seen and what experience I have taken from it. For as long as I have been involved with you, I have never felt sorry, all the time it felt like what was going on, it was "wow!", because everything was very simple. I like simplicity, I mean, you don't have to spend much anywhere, if we go somewhere, we all do everything by ourselves, and everyone does what they can. I can even give an example: you need to start a fire; some are carrying firewood, some are chopping it, some are preparing food, others are already starting games, everything was done very effectively. I liked that effectiveness; all the time I was aware of the youth workers that it is not easy for them to guard all the teenagers, every one of the teenagers wanting to be cooler than the others, so at least I tried to put some sense in those who didn't feel the limits, at least I think that they felt too much at ease with the adults. I personally look at the Telšiai Youth Centre with respect, I have myself learned more respect, and what is more, they helped me a lot in the field of music with just this positive support. Not all people understand how patient Youth Workers need to be. As far as I was able to see and understand how much effort the Telšiai Youth Centre put, and its visitors are all positive and it's a good place to make friends..... Going to the Telšiai Youth Centre all the time I was met with such positivity and respect, I went there like it was home, and it was an honour to talk to the director of the Telšiai Youth Centre, she's down to earth, will always help however she can, she's effective, always moving, never stands still, is always organizing something with people and getting involved in projects. It seems I'm not able to put down everything I want here, I feel I could write and write, it's kind of a strange feeling, something seems to be stuck somewhere, I haven't said everything.

Is Mobile Youth Work for you the same as the Youth Centre?

Well I don't know, in my opinion, mobile work is related to TYC because the same workers are doing the same thing, just make it easier for the districts to have the TYC staff come to the villages and engage with people because the teens don't have the cars, they can't get together at, for example, the Telšiai Youth Centre. So the TYC staff has to make the effort and to commute, but there are fewer people because of emigration / migration or going to study, people aren't coming. I discovered myself in organizing; I always supported those who were doing things, engaging with us. I was smarter than my peers, I wanted to organize and not be involved as a participant, I can give examples with music: I started buying equipment, I started doing discos, making music, I can't afford to organize music gatherings yet so I am still a participant. All the time, I was advised by TYC staff because they knew better than me, so I got a big kick in the ass from TYC staff, and I made a good step forward. Practically, I can even say that I found myself a bit in music and got the experience of organizing something because I saw how TYC staff did things, they didn't just do something randomly, but how they organized it. Personally, I say, I was more attentive, watching how things were done."

Gintaras

For your notes: