

YOUTH WORK IN REGIONAL CONTEXT

Katarína HAVIERNIKOVÁ, Silvia ŠTEFÁNIKOVÁ, Mária PETRÍKOVÁ

Abstract

The term youth development as a way of defining the efforts of youth workers and youth service organization and their acceptance in practice is relatively new. In the past two decades there has been a great deal of interest and attention focused on development principles and strategies to be used in the practice of youth work. The main aim of the paper is focused on the evaluation of the system of youth work development in Trenčín self-governing region. Therefore, we offer a brief overview of the system of youth work, stating the basic characteristics and emphasis on the activities of the Regional Leisure Centre in Trenčín - the Regional Youth Centre.

Key words

youth, youth work, participation, regional and youth policy, cooperation

JEL Classification: J13, I20, I28

Introduction

The term “youth work” has become popular in policy discourses in many countries including the Slovak Republic as well as international organizations. The main goals of youth work are determined in many European Union and European Council politics documents, for instance, Conclusions of European Council about the contribution of quality youth work, development, contentment and social integration of youth (213/C 168/03) Agenda 2020, Resolution CM/Res (2008) 23 about politics of European Council in the youth area, Recommendations of European Council about youth work (CM/Rec(2017)4), to integrate and join youth, strengthen their status. The new strategy of European union for youth COM/2018/269. On the one hand the youth work is based on a dual focus, on individual psychosocial development and collective critical consciousness and the promotion of social justice on the other (Watts & Flanagan, 2007; Lavie-Ajayi & Krumer-Nevo, 2013). Youth work represents an opportunity to bring young people and adults together – collaborative efforts that provide meaningful and insightful experiences for both groups. The youth work represents the process of learning not only for youth, but for the whole society. It is a bilateral good convenient investment. An important attribute of youth work according to Mortimer (2003) is not only the youth work, but the quality

of the work. The term “youth work development” and the ideas and practices associated with it have emerged from the field of youth work, but they have extended beyond practice to influence local, state, and national decision-makers in the public and private sectors (Edginton et al., 2005).

Currently there are big demands on youth regarding the area of qualification, enforcement in life and free-time activities. The obstacles that youth experience is a socialization of youth, school and spending free time. In principle young people are interested in support of democracy, but they do not trust institutional structures. (European Commission, 2007, p. 14). Right now, the main goals of organizations and institutions for youth work are to create bridges between distrust of youth and their big desire to express their opinion.

Youth is a priority of the European Union's social vision (Európska komisia, 2009). Youth workers and youth service organizations also have begun to play an important role in the Slovak republic. As well, in this field we can observe the shift in practice from comprehensive strategies that provide broad supports in youth work with focusing on their needs and competencies to programs elaborated at the regional level. The Trenčín region having a big impact for youth work. The Trenčín region creates conditions for education of students via 41 organizations in its founding competence, of

which 39 are secondary schools out of a total 55 secondary schools in the region, 1 language school and 1 school facility – Regional Youth Centre in Trenčín. Within the Trenčín region, there is a focus on versatile, continual and systematic support of youth development, improvement of their life, spending the free time, education, increasing employability youth and information access.

This paper brings together the theory and practice of youth work development and utilizes the real experiences. The text below is organized as follows: the section “literature review” provides a brief view on theoretical issues related to youth work development; the section “methodology” describes the way of realized research focuses on findings toward assessment of the effectiveness of youth work in Trenčín region; the section “results” provide except the results of realized research also the overview of youth work in the observed region and the last section of the paper is a conclusion.

1. Literature review

Youth reflects and mirrors many of our most cherished beliefs, values and ideals. Yet, at the same time, today’s youth creates and advances fresh new perspectives that dramatically influence our culture (Edginton et al., 2005). Young people are and have been working alongside adults for decades as change agents in cutting edge of community development and organizing efforts around the world (Yohalem & Martin, 2007). Although young people are major stakeholders in the society, their voices are absent from community building processes, deepening the gaps of miscommunication and contributing to community exclusion (Blanchet-Cohen & Salazar, 2009). The role of practitioners and principles of participation goes to the forefront.

Youth work has undergone a continual evolution, rearranging and shaping its services to form the body of knowledge and practitioners that currently exists. Youth work is a way of working with young people that has been thought up and practiced by human beings – in all their diversity (Batsleer & Davies, 2010). Nowadays, there are thousands of people involved in youth work, in both paid positions and in voluntary roles. Youth work, a value and

relationship based practice, that relies on young people’s voluntary engagement in such relationships, is an international phenomenon with diverse roots (Nolas, 2014). According to Delgado (2004), youth development in urban areas of the country may look different (programs and use of activities) than it does in suburban, exurbia and rural areas. The principles guiding youth development in these four geographical areas may be similar, but the activities may look dramatically different and so will the sociodemographic characteristics of their youth and employees. Youth work ensures ‘complementary communication’ which allows the development of a relationship because youth workers consistently and reliably engage with the young person in an adult to adult way. Importantly other professionals do not ensure an ‘adult to adult’ relationship, because they often either treat young people as if they were children (for example in assuming that they are without the capacity for autonomous decision making) or operate in such a way that a young person will perceive them as authority figures which inevitably results in young people feeling as if they are being treated like children (Ord, 2009).

As Hope et al. (2011) stated, participation is a categorical term for citizen power. He adopted Arnstein’s (1969) ladder of citizen participation as a framework for exploring young people’s participation. The participation in the redistribution of power that enables them to be included presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to deliberately include in the future. It is a strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are located, programs are operated and benefits like contracts and patronage are parceled out. According to Mahoney et al. (2006), participation in organized activities is a common developmental experience for young people. Youth development theory and research in organized activities suggest the increasing of participation is linked to the incremental benefits in a variety of positive developmental experiences such as physical and psychological safety, supportive relationships with peers and adults, opportunities for belonging, positive social norms, support for efficacy and mattering, opportunities for skill-building, and integration of family, school, and community experiences.

Borden et al. (2006) pointed on fact that a variety of factors, including community conditions, family and peer influences, culture, and the availability of programs influences a young person's choice to participate in youth programs. Barriers to involvement in youth programs may vary depending on such characteristics as age, family structure, ethnicity, and cultural and socioeconomic background.

Another aspect of youth work is youth workers and agencies focused on youth work development. Understanding of agency as the exercise of direct control through an opportunity for individuals to make their own free choices, the decision to make such choices, and finally the achievement of the desired result when doing so, constructs young people as rational social actors. Other aspects of agency that affect decision making such as feelings, past knowledge and skills, and prospective thinking are underplayed (Tsekoura, 2016). Those involved in the development of youth work came from a range of religious, philosophical and political traditions. These traditions shaped the practice of organizations and individuals but above all melded to bestow upon youth work unique essence. Five overlapping responses to industrialization, percolated practice creating a discrete entity - youth work (Jeffs & Smith, 2002). All youth organizations must navigate an institutional setting defined by organizational structures, funding arrangements, local, political economy, and the other agencies and interests that work with youth, such as schools, justice, and health. The institutional landscape of youth organizations contains fundamental challenges to a youth development agenda (Deschenes et al., 2004).

The body of knowledge related to youth work development in Slovakia comes to the forefront in the last decades. The integrative research focused on youth work development has been conducted. Young people under the age of 30 belong to a substantial part of the population of the Slovak Republic. At the same time, they are a very valuable source of development for the society. They have specific goals and needs that need to be taken into account in the process of preparing for social and working life. It is also one of the most vulnerable groups and these reasons considered we place great emphasis on youth work in the self-governing Trenčín region. The regional policy aims to create conditions and opportunities for children and young people to improve the quality of life for young people living and working in the Trenčín self-governing region. In the next section of the paper we provide general information about the youth work system in the self-governing Trenčín region.

2. Research methodology

This paper is based on an evaluation of case study of youth work development in Trenčín region. The study evaluation consists of analysis of basic documents and qualitative data collection to conceptualize the system of youth work. The research procedure consists of the description of institutional ensuring of youth work, the description of regional documents ensuring youth work and the results of the survey. The survey was conducted among three groups of respondents in Trenčín region: (1) 89 youth, (2) 33 professional youth workers and (3) 12 local politicians responsible for policy creation and realizations. The structure of respondents presents Figure 1.

Figure 1 The structure of respondents



Source: own research

3. Results and discussion

There is a description of the institutional ensuring of youth work, the strategic document that is necessary for the future development of youth work in Trenčín region and the results of research.

The youth represents 37,4% of the whole Slovak population, which is about 2 million people up to age 30. It is a community with specific needs, which requires to prepare for life and labor market. On average, a young person in Slovakia ends the education process as 17 years old. In comparison to different European Union members in Slovakia, there are fewer young people (only 5%) who have not finished mandatory school attendance. However, there is an absence of competition for youth to be able to apply on labor market, so often they ensure competitions with the help of foreign study mobility for which they mainly pay from their resources (57%). The state grant covers only 13% and European Union resources cover only

15% from whole expenses. The rest 15% is covered by employers. To be able to use youth potential for economic and social growth of the country, it is needed to expend more resources for developing political area, which influences youth in daily life, improving quality of youth life, contributing the decreasing youth social dependence and for supporting autonomy of youth. Only with the help of matters mentioned above Slovakia would be able to be a country where the youth wants to live. Currently, more than 70% of youth in Slovakia prefers life in a different country. One of the tasks of European youth policy is strengthening position of youth reflected in the Strategy of the Slovak Republic for the years 2014 – 2020. There were determined 3 general goals: 1. to create more opportunities for youth in education and employment, 2. to improve the approach of youth to the decision processes and improve their participation, 3. to support mutual solidarity. The stated above is summarized in the Figure 2 that presents the essence of a unified youth policy.

Figure 2 The unified youth policy



Source: Európske centrum mládeže (2004)

3.1 Institutional ensuring of youth work in Trenčín region

The Regional Leisure Time Centre in Trenčín – Regional Youth Centre is the bridge for developing the key competencies for youth and workers with youth, for developing cooperation between all institutions, organizations, informal groups and youth. The Regional Youth Center in

Trenčín became a specialized school facility in the founding competence of Trenčín region in 2002 after its extending of Regional Leisure Time Centre. Regional Leisure Time Centre in Trenčín is separated into sections of knowledge, spare-art and sports competitions and Regional Youth Center. Regional Youth Centre was founded in 2005. Generally, the main goal of the Regional Youth Center is to work with youth

policy on different levels in the Trenčín region, Slovakia and abroad.

There is big cooperation between Regional Youth Centre in Trenčín and Regional government of Trenčín region, mayor of cities and villages in the Trenčín region area. The main tasks of the Regional Youth Centre:

- to coordinate the leading of state policy into a relationship with children and youth in the region,
- to act like an interface between Trenčín region and other parts, which meet the conception of state policy,
- to focus on educational activities in relationship of voluntary and professional workers with children and youth,
- to create an information database of leisure time centers and further subjects focused on unformal youth education,
- to map the needs of youth in Trenčín region,
- to create conditions for cooperation with the subjects focused on children and youth problems in the region,
- to support the active participation of youth in the preparation and realization of activities.

Since January 2016, there exists a coordinator of youth work in Trenčín region who works in the Regional Centre in Trenčín in the

section of Regional Youth Centre. His main tasks are:

- to coordinate the development of youth work in Trenčín region,
- to coordinate goals keeping according to the conception of youth work development in the Trenčín region,
- to map the needs and interests of youth in the city,
- to submit suggestions and proposals defending the interests of youth – their needs and to prepare materials for decision,
- to create analyses for needs concerning the youth of Trenčín region
- to help to develop the activities and events in the Trenčín region and others.

The activity of the Regional Youth Centre also consists of looking up the organizations, unformal groups, institutions working with children and youth. The Regional Youth Center also proposes, coordinates and maps city partnerships with various institutions, private sector, civil associations, unformal groups and helps to develop these relationships. The next tasks of the Regional Youth Centre are actively looking up the possibilities of project realizations focused on children and youth, youth financing and many other activities.

Table 1 The overview of activities provided by the Regional Youth Centre

Activity/project	The aim of activity/project	Number of participants	Year of realization
Region and cities together for youth/young people	activation and involvement of young people to the city life, support, and development of structured dialogue and cooperation of self - governments on the local level	880	2018 – 2019
AKTIV	to create a main sustainable system of support for youth work on the territory of Trenčín region and Zlín region from Czech republic, to motivate the youth to volunteer and active involvement in the community life, create cooperation between youth workers from youth organizations, Leisure Time Centres with personal responsibility for youth politics in cities and communities as well as in the region level	884	2017 – 2019
Participation on practice	long term active cooperation of the target group (orphans and youth with fewer	611	2018 – 2019

	opportunities) with the representatives of public institutions, where they will be inserted to the activities in communities and the city		
With the craft to the world	aim of this project for selected young people from special primary schools from Czech and Slovak Republic were to learn and show how to sell their art, how to visualize their work, to know to reach and ask for the possibility to realize themselves in public events	38	2019
Interculturality in action	to direct children from orphanage to more independent decision making, more healthy self-confidence and to stand by their origin	36	2019
Democracy school	the project came from the initiative and needs of the students, who have identified the main topics such as democracy, functioning and increasing the competences in the school councils, volunteering or civil participation	66	2018

Source: own research based on the documents of Regional Youth Centre

3.2 School boards

The school board is an important, but especially appropriate means, as at a young age can create awareness of democratic society in pupils. It is a representative body of a secondary or elementary schools and represents their interests concerning the headmaster and the school management. It promotes the development of a free and civil society in which individuals become active and participate in public life and have an overview of what is happening around them. In Slovakia, the functioning of the School Board is governed by Section 26 of Act No. 177/2017 Coll. Of Laws amending and supplementing Act no. 596/2003 Coll. on state administration in the education and school self-government.

Another stage of the development of pupil school councils is their mutual association at the local, regional or even national level. The Trenčín self-governing region revived the idea of the Secondary Parliament as an advisory body to the President of TSK. Twice a year, the representatives of the pupils' school councils meet with the president of the region in the discussion forum of the Secondary Parliament. It should also encourage young people to participate in public affairs, to activate and encourage them to learn to think critically and to participate in activities that help develop their personality

The Youth Council of the Trenčín Region, through support from the national level through the subsidy schemes of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic - Youth Programs 2014 - 2020. The instrument to support the implementation of the Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Youth; 282/2008 Coll. on promoting youth work and the European Youth Strategy. The implementing body of the programs is IUVENTA - Slovak Youth Institute. The Trenčín Region has signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with this civic association and within this cooperation, they jointly plan and implement support activities in the territory of the Trenčín Region, which at the same time fulfill the objectives of the "Strategy of Youth Work Development in the Trenčín Region 2020".

One of the support tools is the development of coordinators of pupil school councils through training and meetings. Coordinators of pupil school councils are teachers who help develop pupil school councils at their school. The coordinator's activities include overseeing the election process, assisting in the first contact with school management, teaching staff, directing the school board to act following legislation, etc. In the case of a fully developed school board with rich competences, he is in the position of a coach, leaving as much responsibility and work as possible to the pupils. In the case of a new school board or new

members, it interferes with its activities in a more significant way. (Štefániková, 2018, p. 17)

3.3 Cross-sectoral Youth Working Group of the Trenčín Self-Governing Region

To open up the cooperation of several actors in the area and to more effectively fulfill the goals set in the Concept of Development of Youth Work in the Trenčín Self-Governing Region, an Inter-Sectoral Working Group for Youth in the Trenčín Self-Governing Region was established. Cross-sectoral cooperation in youth policy is a relatively new topic in Slovakia, but it has been gaining ground in the European Union since the 1990s. (Juventa, 2010, p. 3)

The initiator of the establishment of the inter-sectoral working group for youth at the regional level was the Trenčín self-governing region. The cross-sectoral group has 50 members in total. The intersectoral working group meets twice a year in round tables. At the beginning of the year, it approves the evaluation of the action plan for the previous year as well as the draft action plan for the next year. Subsequently, for the second time in June, round tables are held for each key area. These meetings discuss in depth the situation and development of individual areas in the lives of young people and propose further support activities and solutions.

The Trenčín self-governing region realizes that the future and development of young people must be synergistically in cooperation with all actors. This is the importance of the Inter-sectoral Youth Working Group of the Trenčín Region.

3.4 Strategy of Youth Work Development in Trenčín Region by 2020

Youth work within the Trenčín region is defined in the document entitled "Strategy for the development of youth work in the Trenčín region by 2020". It is a strategic document that specifies the main areas of youth work, defines the starting points, principles, objectives and priorities of the region and other entities in the key areas of development of youth work in the Trenčín region. However, it is not only a formal document but a living document, fully applicable in practice. It was approved in 2016 at XXI. meeting of the Trenčín Region Assembly and

consists of three main parts: (1) strategic framework, (2) key areas of youth work development, (3) implementation.

The strategic framework sets out the foundations, principles and objectives of regional policy concerning children and youth. The key areas of youth work development are divided into thematic areas:

- education,
- employment,
- creativity and entrepreneurship,
- participation,
- youth work,
- volunteering,
- mobility,
- environment,
- health and a healthy lifestyle.

The "*need to foster diverse learning opportunities*" in the field of education is confirmed by the adoption of the Declaration on Recognition of the Benefits of Non-formal Education in Youth Work (Trenčín self-governing region, 2016, p. 9). This declaration was signed by more than 40 employers and representatives of educational institutions. Creating a unified lifelong learning system, linking formal and non-formal youth education, is both a great need and a challenge for the future.

In the area of *employment*, the concept presents a challenge for improving the quality of vocational education, the dual education system and, in particular, the issue of professional practice, which would enable young people to be better prepared for entering their first job (Trenčín self-governing region, 2016, p. 10). Equally important is the improvement of the quality of career guidance - cooperation between actors involved in preparing and educating young people for entry into the labor market. Creativity and entrepreneurship are among the key competences of young people. They should learn independence, correct values and *creative thinking* during school.

Participation, namely the involvement of young people in public decision-making on all areas of the city's life that affect the quality of life of young people, is of great importance for the life of the municipality or city. Their participation increases the visibility of young people and their concerns, as well as the

visibility of decision-making bodies in youth policy in the eyes of young people (Official Journal of the European Union, 2018, p. 6). The availability of up-to-date and relevant information to young people is a prerequisite for participation. "Schools and school facilities, non-governmental organizations and other entities are a place where young people have suitable and natural conditions to acquire and apply the corresponding competences." (Trenčín Self-governing Region, 2016, p. 12).

Youth work is a learning process not only for young people but also for society as a whole. In essence, it is a two-way and very profitable investment. The basic objectives of youth work are set out in many policy documents of the European Union and the Council of Europe, such as the Council Conclusions on the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people (213 C 168/03) Agenda 2020, Resolution CM/Res (2008) 23 on the Council of Europe Youth Policy, Council of Europe Recommendation on Youth Work (CM / Rec (2017) 4), Engaging, Connecting and Empowering Young People: A New EU Strategy for Youth COM / 2018 / 269th. The Trenčín self-governing region is fully aware that young people should not only be the engine of their own lives, but should also contribute to a positive change in society.

Volunteering has a great benefit to society. It is a form of social participation, educational experience and a factor of employability and integration. (European Commission, 2007, p. 25) It is essentially a 'multidimensional dynamic social phenomenon that is present in every society. It is closely linked to the social structure of society, its morality and culture, which co-create the form of volunteer participation and give it a specific character and social significance.'"(Brozmanová - Gregorová, Šolcová, Siekelová, 2018, p. 4. Activities are regulated in Slovakia by Act No. 406/2011 Coll. on volunteering and amending certain acts.

The *mobility* of young people motivates them to gain intercultural experience. Well-designed and implemented action in the field of youth mobility reinforces values such as knowledge of human rights, suppression of intolerance, racism and xenophobia, development of solidarity,

recognition and understanding of the values of different cultures.

In the field of the *environment*, it is important that young people learn to use important skills that will enable them to actively participate in decisions that also concern nature conservation. The concept of the development of youth work includes the intention to increase the environmental awareness of young people through both formal and non-formal education. At the same time, TSK is also called the "Green County". This relates to the direction and support of many activities in the area, such as cycle paths, or the Green Eyes grant program, which can be used by anyone for educational or direct activities to support environmental protection.

The last area is a *health and a healthy lifestyle*. This area is one of the most important values for the future. "The lifestyle of children and youth has changed in recent years. Today's young generation does not give him much respect. The basics of a healthy lifestyle should be laid in the family. However, the family does not always have enough information, resources and possibilities for its implementation. That is why schools and facilities where children spend a substantial part of their time must be devoted to this issue." (Trenčín Self-Governing Region, 2016, p. 14)

The concept was developed in a participatory way with the broad involvement of all actors. The Trenčín self-governing region commissioned the Regional Leisure Center in Trenčín - the Regional Youth Center to implement some specific measures aimed at fulfilling this concept. Other stakeholders such as local government, non-governmental organizations, employers, schools and school facilities, student school boards, the student parliament, and other institutions have been involved as well.

3.5 The results of implemented survey

The survey was focused on findings related to youth work development in Trenčín region. The core of youth work development is the participation of youth on development of region where they live. Three groups of respondents answered on following questions: Q1-Are young people informed about events realized in the region? Q2-Are young people interested in

participating in activities done by region? Q3- Are young people interested in participating in volunteer activities? Q4- Are young people interested in creating a space for youth activities

in the region? Q5- Are young people interested in youth policy of the region? Table 2 provides percentage of answers of three groups of respondents.

Table 2 The opinion of target groups towards development of youth work in region (%)

Question	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			Q5		
	Y	PW	LP	Y	PW	LP	Y	PW	LP	Y	PW	LP	Y	PW	LP
Target group															
yes	49	72	80	60	53	56	59	50	30	80	77	78	35	42	0
no	51	28	20	40	47	44	41	50	70	20	23	22	65	58	100

Source: Own research , Y-youth, PW-professional workers , LA-local politicians

The results showed: Q1- While 51% of youth thinks that young people are not informed about important events realized in the region, the professional workers and local politicians have opposite opinions. Q2- In this case, 60% of youth thinks, that young people are interested in participating in realized activities. The positive view of this type of participation is confirmed by 53% of professionals and 56% of local politicians as well. Q3 - 70% of local politicians think that young people are not interested in volunteering, but 59% of young people surveyed want to participate and benefit the society through volunteering. Q4- This question was focused on findings related to the interest of young people related to the creation of space for their activities. The positive answers among the three groups of respondents are very similar. Q5- In this question, respondents should provide their opinion, if they are familiar with a statement related to the participation of young people on youth policy in the region. The most answers within three groups of respondents were negative. According to them, young people are not interested in youth policy in the region.

The results clearly show the lack of information of local politicians about the needs and opinions of young people. For example, less than half of young people feel uninformed about what is happening in the region, and conversely, up to 80% of local politicians think they are informing young people well enough. This fact is also due to the way by which the local government informs its citizens in general. The way of communication is clearly incomprehensible and unattractive for young people. The agreement of all 3 groups of respondents that it is necessary to create a space for work with youth is also interesting. Another

interesting fact that the research found was also in terms of volunteering activities. Young people in general have an interest in benefiting the society through voluntary activities.

The results of this research also point to the fact that representatives of cities in the region are fully aware of the need to develop cooperation in the field of youth work. This is also supported by the fact that they participated in the research and approved the results of the analysis and its recommendations at the council as a basis for the development of youth work. Overall, the research in the Trenčín Region reflects and also confirms the results of research at the national level in Slovakia and European level. If a system of support for youth work is created at the local level, a quality and positive benefit and impact on all those involved in the area is a prerequisite. Investing in youth work has an impact not only on a positive change in the environment, but also on a significant impact on increasing young people's competences and on improving community life and activating young people in the future.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion we can say that the youth work in Trenčín region is characterized by diversity – not only by the way how is realized, but also how it is organized and controlled. The system of development of youth work in Trenčín region is based on undoubtedly close cooperation between Trenčín region and other organizations. Big emphasis lays not only in cooperation development, but also on permanent reflecting of the needs and on development of youth competences. The current findings of youth needs are subsequently transferred to action

plans of youth work development, which are validated by the Intersectional workgroup for Trenčín region youth.

The same focus is on coordinating all actors in the area of youth work and on increasing the awareness for all areas which are included in "Strategy of development of youth work in Trenčín region". With the intensive problem reflecting which youth meets in their environment and with the follow-up analyses, the Regional Youth Centre in Trenčín informs The Ministry of education, science, research and sport of the Slovak Republic and the Department of Children and Youth about the needs of youth on the national level.

There exists a lot of areas where a youth needs support from the state side, self-government side or other institutions and organizations to be able to fully develop their potential and key competences. The youth has a lot of problems, they live in a society which is still changing and has bigger demands. Right now, the Regional Youth Centre of Trenčín region is trying to prepare them for life, to open opportunities for them, to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes towards values. By coordination of all actors, it is trying to reach a multidisciplinary approach to issues of youth work development and to create a space for the cooperation of all actors in the determined area. Only by common cooperation of all actors and by knowing the real needs of youth living and operating in our region, we are able to create support activities and regional policy which can contribute to the improvement of the situation, can support youth development and can prepare youth for future life.

References

Batsleer, J. R., & Davies, B. (Eds.). (2010). *What is youth work?*. SAGE.

Blanchet-Cohen, N., & Salazar, J. (2009). Empowering practices for working with marginalized youth. *Relational Child & Youth Care Practice*, 22(4)

Borden, L. M., Perkins, D. F., Villarruel, F. A., Carleton-Hug, A., Stone, M. R., & Keith, J. G. (2006). Challenges and opportunities to Latino youth development: Increasing meaningful participation in youth development programs. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 28(2), 187-208.

Brozmanová Gregorová, A., Šolcová, J., Siekelová, M. (2018) *Dobrovoľníctvo mládeže na Slovensku – aktuálny stav a trendy*. Stupava: Platforma dobrovoľníckych centier a organizácií, 148 s.

Delgado, M. (2004). *Social youth entrepreneurship: The potential for youth and community transformation*. Greenwood Publishing Group.

Deschenes, S., McDonald, M., & McLaughlin, M. (2004). Youth Organizations. *The youth development handbook: Coming of age in American communities*, 25.

Edginton, C. R., Kowalski, C. L., & Randall, S. W. (2005). *Youth work: Emerging perspectives in youth development*. Champaign, IL: Sagamore.

Európska komisia. (2007) *Nový impulz pre európsku mládež. Biele kniha Európskej komisie*. Bratislava: IUVENTA, 99 p.

Európska komisia. (2009). *Stratégia EÚ pre mládež, investovanie a posinenie postavenia mládeže. Obnovená otvorená metóda koordinácie s cieľom riešiť výzvy a príležitosti týkajúce sa mládeže*.

Európske centrum mládeže. (2004). *Európsky rámec mládežníckej politiky*. Európsky riadiaci výbor pre mládež (European Steering Committee for Youth) (CDEJ) 2004/13. Štrasburg, 17. 09. 2004. 33. zasadanie. Európske centrum mládeže. Lasse Siurala.

Hope, M., Russell, K., & Cooper, C. (2011). *Empowerment and participation in youth work* (Vol. 1426). SAGE.

IUVENTA. *Tvorba medzirezortnej mládežníckej politiky na úrovni regiónov (VÚC). Záverečná správa*. (2010) Bratislava : IUVENTA, 100 p.

Jeffs, T., & Smith, M. (2002). Individualism and youth work. *Youth and policy.*, (76), 39-65.

Lavie-Ajayi, M., & Krumer-Nevo, M. (2013). In a different mindset: Critical youth work with marginalized youth. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 35(10), pp. 1698-1704.

Mahoney, J. L., Harris, A. L., & Eccles, J. S. (2006). Organized activity participation, positive youth development, and the over-scheduling hypothesis. *Social policy report*, 20(4), 1-32.

Mortimer, J. T. (2003). *Working and growing up in America* (Vol. 2). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

- Nolas, S. M. (2014). Exploring young people's and youth workers' experiences of spaces for 'youth development': creating cultures of participation. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 17(1), 26-41.
- Ord, J. (2009). Thinking the unthinkable: youth work without voluntary participation?. *Youth & Policy*, (103).
- Štefániková, S. (2018) *Žiacke školské rady – Škola demokracie*. Trenčín: IUVENTA, 19 p.
- Trenčiansky samosprávny kraj. (2016) *Koncepcia rozvoja práce s mládežou v Trenčianskom samosprávnom kraji do roku 2020*. [on-line] [cit.: 2019-12-02]. available at: <https://www.tsk.sk/buxus/docs/Koncepcia%20mladeze%202020.pdf>
- Tsekoura, M. (2016). Spaces for youth participation and youth empowerment: Case studies from the UK and Greece. *Young*, 24(4), 326-341.
- Úrad pre vydávanie publikácií EÚ. (2018). *Úradný vestník Európskej únie C 456*. Luxembursko: Úrad pre vydávanie publikácií Európskej únie, 29 s.
- Watts, R. J., & Flanagan, C. (2007). Pushing the envelope on youth civic engagement: A developmental and liberation psychology perspective. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 35, pp. 779–792
- Yohalem, N., & Martin, S. (2007). Building the evidence base for youth engagement: Reflections on youth and democracy. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 35(6), 807-810.

Contact

Ing. Katarína Havierniková, PhD.
Faculty of Social and Economic Relations
Alexander Dubček University of Trenčín
Študentská 3
911 50 Trenčín, Slovakia
e-mail: katarina.haviernikova@tnuni.sk

Ing. Silvia Štefániková
Regional Youth Centre
Pod Sokolice 14, 911 01 Trenčín, Slovakia
e-mail: silvia.stefanikova@tsk.sk

Mgr. Mária Petriková
Regional Youth Centre
Pod Sokolice 14, 911 01 Trenčín, Slovakia
e-mail: maria.petrikova@kcvc.sk