



Constructing AcTive CitizensHip with European Youth: Policies, Practices, Challenges and Solutions.

D3.1 Policy analysis: cross-national reports

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1. Introduction

Today's youths, tomorrow's citizens and decision-makers, are the bearers of future generations' democratic ideals and values. Or as concluded by the Commission Communication on the 'Renewed Social Agenda': "Europe's future depends on its youth" (Com, 2008, p.7). Yet, there are conflicting opinions on the political role and influence of young people in contemporary democratic societies. On the one hand, young people are often blamed for being politically disinterested and disengaged, for expressing dissatisfaction with the workings of democracy, and for being disillusioned about major political institutions and their elected governments. Worse still, they are considered the primary source of declining social capital, civic disengagement, low election turnouts, and declining membership of political parties (Macedo et al., 2005; Mycock & Tonge, 2012; Putnam, 2000). For these reasons, young people have often been viewed as a 'doofus' or 'invisible' generation, who poses a potential threat to the functioning and legitimacy of democracy (Hay, 2007; Stoker, 2006).

On the other hand, it has been claimed that they are pioneers in embracing new citizenship norms and orientations. They are said to be politically independent and seeking personal freedom, intellectual satisfaction, and social equality (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005, 2010). It is also argued that young people explore alternative and innovative ways of acting politically, which are elite-challenging and take place outside the traditional arenas of party politics (Dalton, 2011; Norris, 2003). On this account, young people are often described as politically devoted and critical citizens, who remain supportive of fundamental democratic principles and constitute a significant social and political force in the development and functioning of democracies (Norris, 1999b; Nye, Zelikow, & King, 1997; Amnå & Ekman, 2014). When considering these two perspectives, it may therefore be said that the scholarly debate over how best to describe and understand the role of young people in democratic societies are not conclusive and settled.

Apparently, not all youths fit into either of the asset and threat categories as described above. Even it is hard to neglect that the share of politically active among young people is remarkably small, it is likely that many young people lie between the two extreme positions, and are neither an obvious asset to the functioning of democracy nor a politically passive

and threatening mass. However, regardless of which of the competing perspectives one subscribes to, it is important to recall that young people are at a unique phase of life. For some of them, it is a phase during which they are restricted by societal regulations, such as rules on voting age and eligibility for political office. For others, it is a phase during which they obtain extended political rights and duties, such as the rights to vote, to run for various political positions, and to join political organizations. At the same time, young people are at a developmental stage of their lives where society traditionally attempts to teach them about politics, government and citizen participation - simply to be a responsible and democratic citizen. Thus, young people are living through a period of many changes and challenges that are significant, not only for the development of their political attitudes and identity, but also for their social, cultural and labour market integration.

Consequently, a successful integration of young people in society is not only dependent on young people themselves, but also on national government's policies and practices to overcome some of the challenges and obstacles young people face in their transition from childhood to adulthood. The challenges facing young people in European societies are many and demanding, but seem to not vary so much across different national contexts. Therefore, many national policies in Europe share objectives like promoting youth participation, providing fair and equal opportunities all young people in education, labour market and other policies areas, improving conditions for independent life, supporting cultural diversity and integration of ethnic youth. Nevertheless, young people constitute a heterogeneous group of individuals with dissimilar interest, options, values, norms, attitudes, and opportunities in different aspects of life. Thus, any attempt to improve the living conditions of young people should not only take into account the various trends in and changes surrounding the political and social contexts in which young people operate, but it should also consider them as a diverse group.

In the light of what have been discussed up to now, there is a need to take a closer look on how young people in different national contexts are conceptualised, how they are spoken of and described, what roles they are ascribed, what challenges they face, and what kind of solutions are suggested by responsible actors to particularly promote political equality. The current deliverable attempts to address these and other related questions by analysing a large number of national youth policy documents in eight countries around the Europe.

1.1 The overall aim of WP3

The overarching ambition of work package 3 is to characterize contemporary European Union policy discourses and in the prolonging to examine the extent to which these policies are decided upon and implemented in reality. Alongside the aims within this project to better understand youth active citizenship from the view of the youths themselves, the policy analysis gives a complementing view on youth active citizenship that recognizes how public authorities perceive youths and how they, based on that perception, generate official policy in accordance. The policy analysis will increase the understanding of how the construction of youth's opportunity structures is preceded by the perceptions and structures that are present when a policy is created.

More specifically, the overall objectives of WP 3 are:

1. To identify and analyse key policy discourses on youth active citizenship at EU, national and regional level.

2. To investigate the extent to which there is coherence or tension between relevant policies on youth active citizenship at EU, national and regional level.

3. To investigate the extent to which formal written policy in this area is congruent with the espoused views of policymakers and members of relevant policy networks at EU, national and regional level.

One of the first tasks (task 3.1) of this work package (September 2015 – February 2016) involves collating and analysing written public documents at European, national and local levels produced during a three years period, 2012-2014. The second task (3.2) involves collection and analysis of individual interviews about how public European, national and local political authorities conceptualize and engage with youth.

The current deliverable is concerned with the first task of the WP 3. Following the "Guidelines for WP3 interviews and document analysis" (v. 3.2), provided by the WP3Coordinator (ORU), at least 5 national, regional and local policy documents should be collected by principal scientists in each country represented in the Consortium. More specifically, this report describes the policy analysis reports conducted in each country according to the instructions provided by the Coordinator.

1.2 Outline of the report

The current report is structured as the following. After a methodological section, where the methods for analysing youth's policy documents in the countries under study are outlined, follows a section that provides an overview of the national reports and some of the key findings. The final section includes the national reports from each of the countries represented in the Consortium.

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Selection of policy documents

In order to analyse the policy documents, each country was asked to select minimum 5 authoritative/official documents totally with at least one at each of the following levels in which the youth policy of the a) national government, b) a local government, and c) the national coordinating youth organization. In total 58 policy documents at different levels have been selected for analysis. The documents were selected on the according to following criteria:

1. National institutions: government, national agencies, national youth leagues.
    a. National report to EU on the country's youth policy.
    b. Government Bill on Youth Policy (i.e. National policy document).
    c. National Board of Youth Affairs Strategies (Strategy document or similar from national authority/agency/board responsible for youth issues).
    d. Strategy document from national youth umbrella organization
2. Local institutions such as the city/municipal assembly and youth parliament/council:
    a. Documents on local youth policy.

2.2 Methods

The current report employed a multi-step methodological process for selection, categorisation and analysis of youth policy documents. The first stage followed guidelines established by the WP3 Coordinator, which identified the parameters of the work package task in establishing a minimum number of policy documents across national, regional and local levels, and the preferred nature of the documents (youth policies or strategies available between 2012 and 2014).

In a second step the policy documents were analysed used two distinct types of methods. The first method was quantitatively oriented and aimed at getting an overall picture of the volumes of the documents as well as of proportional use of words describing various characteristics of the youths. In order to study how frequently young people were described in terms of being active or passive citizens, we analysed phrases/sentences where young people's activity was described. To identify these phrases the WP3 Coordinator provided a short list of various concepts describing young people's roles. These included, among others, the following: participants, engaged, interested, active, passive, apathetic, uninterested, and unengaged.

In a final step, a qualitative discourse analysis was used to analyse the national policy documents. According to the guidelines given to the partners in each country, the discourse analysis was aiming at answering seven key questions, which also form the structure of the national reports:

1) *Overarching aim*: short description of the documents and overall aim of youth policy.

2) *Conceptualization of young people*: How are young people spoken of, presented and described?

3) *Issues related to youths*: Young people's problems in society - society´s problems with young people

4) *Solutions*: What solutions appear to be wise and reasonable, and what are left out of the agenda?

5) *Responsible actors:* What actors appear to be authorities and problem solvers?

6) *The role(s) of young people*: What roles are young people ascribed?

Furthermore, in the instructions outlined by the WP3 Coordinator it was underlined that, when answering the key questions above, it was important to:

a) Carefully *go through the texts several times*, while having our overall research questions in mind.

b) Look for both *manifest* and *latent* messages in your material. While manifest messages include obvious, observable or explicitly shown things, the latent messages are indirect and beneath the surface and consequently often implicitly escape our immediate attention. The

question you have to ask yourself is: what is not being said overtly, but is still assumed to be known or inferable.

c) Try to *categorize* and *thematically organize* the manifest and latent content of the texts highlighting the youth policy discourse among politicians, public officials, and youth organisation representatives.

3. An overview: National youth policy reports

In the following section an overview of the national youth policy reports and some key findings are presented. The overview shows some of the similarities and dissimilates that exists among the countries in regard to youth policies.

3.1 A general overview

The first table shows how young people are defined in each country in terms of age. As shown, there are some variations among the countries. For example, while the Swedish national youth policy is directed at the approximately 1.6 million Swedish inhabitants (about 16 % of the total population), who are between the ages of 13–25, the Estonian youth policy is aiming at youths from 7 to 26 years of age. In addition, in the case of Italy, there is no fixed definition of youth; age categories vary according to the aims of different youth initiatives.

Table 3.1 Definitions of youths in terms of age.

Country	Definition of youths
Czech Republic	15 – 30 years
Estonia	7 - 26 years
Germany	14-26 years
Greece	15-35 years. In some cases this is extended to 40 years.
Italy	There is no fixed definition of youth, age categories varying according to the aims of different youth initiatives.
Portugal	There is no clear definition of youth
Sweden	13-25 years
United Kingdom	13 -19 years

Table 3.2 below shows whether the country has an overall national youth policy or not. As can be seen in the table, three out of eighth countries under study do not have a national youth policy. Greece, Italy and Portugal belong to these countries that have do not have a national youth policy. For example, in the case of Greece, the youth policy is considered "cross-sectoral" with issues being legislated across various governmental institutions and covered by numerous laws.

Table 3.2 National youth policy.

Country	Is there a national youth policy?
Czech Republic	Yes
Estonia	Yes
Germany	Yes
Greece	No
Italy	No
Portugal	No
Sweden	Yes
United Kingdom	Yes

Although all countries do not have a national youth policy, they have a governmental authority, department or office that is primarily responsible for youth issues. All counties have also at least one national youth organisation/association dealing specifically with issues related to young people and their living conditions (see, Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Main responsible governmental authorities.

Country	Main responsible governmental authority	Main national youth organisation / association
Czech Republic	The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS)	The Czech Council of Children and Youth (CRDM)
Estonia	Ministry of Education and Research (Youth Affairs office & Estonian Youth Work Centre)	The Estonian National Youth Council (ENL)
Germany	The Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth	German Federal Youth Council
Greece	The Ministry of Education & Religious Affairs (The General Secretariat for	The National Youth Council of Greece

	Youth (GSfY))	
Italy	The Department of Youth and National Civic Service	The National Youth Forum
Portugal	The Interministerial Commission for Youth Policies	The National Youth Council (CNJ)
Sweden	Ministry of Education and Research (The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society)	The National Council of Swedish Youth Organizations (LSU)
United Kingdom	Cabinet Office	The British Youth Council (BYC)

In sum, there are quite different definitions of young people in terms of age among the countries. At the same time, not all countries have an overarching national youth policy, but all have governmental authorities that are primarily responsible for youth and a national youth associations dealing with youth issues.

3.2 Some key findings

In what follows, we will highlight some of the key findings, which are organised according to the key questions described above.

The first questions concerns if there is an overarching youth policy goal in the countries under study. As also shown in the national reports below, not all countries have such a goal. Italy and Greece do not have any overarching youth policy goal. For example, while Italy the aims of the policies is quite heterogeneous, in Sweden there is a very specific youth policy goal: "All young people are to have good living conditions, power to shape their lives and influence over social development" (Government Bill 2013/14:191, p.16).

In regard to the question on how young people are spoken of, presented and described, we found very similar patterns. In all most all countries young people are presented as simultaneously a vulnerable group and a resource for societal development. This description of young people is sometimes more implicit and indirect; sometimes it is expressed more explicitly. There are also some interesting differences. For example, in Italy young people are presented nor as causing problems nor offering solutions, but as a reserve of potentials and competences that is ignored/underestimated by the society. While, in the case of Greece, young people are presented as a vulnerable group and at high risk for

poverty and social exclusion, as well as for becoming NEETs (i.e., not in employment, education or training).

Furthermore, related to the question how young people spoken of, there is also a discrepancy in how young people are viewed as group. For example, in Sweden it is clearly and repeatedly stated in the policy documents that young people should be viewed as a heterogeneous group with dissimilar identities, desires, and interests. And, that government initiatives and measures in different policy areas should aim to create opportunities for all young people to develop according to their own individual interests and preferences. While, in the case of UK, words which connote the heterogeneity of young people such as social class, socio-economic, race, ethnicity and gender/girls/boys are rare or absent, suggesting that differentiated approaches are not systematically written into policy across the UK currently, or only rarely so, whatever the actual practices on the ground.

The fourth question of focus for the policy analyses concerned young people's problems in society. In all most all countries youth unemployment and issues related to education are highlighted as the challenges facing young people. The group of young people who seems to gain a lot of attention in the policy documents are the NEETs, that is, young people who are neither in employment, education or training. But also young people's mental health and well-being belong to the challenges that young people face. In some cases also young people's opportunities in regard to participation in decision-making processes are mentioned. For example, it is argued that young women and men who are minors have limited formal opportunities to influence issues that concern them. But also young people who have full formal rights to influence have still difficulties to be heard. Young people remain underrepresented in decision-making assemblies and, compared to the overall population, fewer young people choose to become members of political parties and participate in elections.

A related question to the previous one concerned the solutions that appear to be wise and reasonable to overcome the challenges facing young people in different countries round Europe. When comparing the suggested solutions, some interesting similarities apparent. First and foremost, in many cases, more cross-sectoral partnerships and collaboration is requested as a part of the solution. For example, in Czech Republic cooperation between ministries and other state administration bodies is pointed out as one main solution for creation and

implementation of effective youth policy in the country. Providing equal opportunities and involving young people in decision-making processes are presented as additional solutions to overcome some of the challenges. Notably, there are no or few references to Europe or to European citizenship as part of a solution to young people's development and participation in society. However, a number of national governmental and public authorities at different levels are appeared to be problem solvers.

Another key question was concerned what roles young people were ascribed in the policy documents. In almost all cases, young people are both conceptualised as passive recipients and active agents. Passive recipients in the sense that they are in need of various governmental services and support of adults and educational contexts to overcome this transitional and developmental period of life successfully. Put differently, the society should create favourable conditions for young people to become adults. From that perspective, youth is viewed as a transitional phase, from childhood to adulthood. In some cases, not least in Sweden, young people are viewed as active agents in changing their lives and influencing their society through partaking in various democratic activities.

All in all, not all countries have a national youth policy nor an overarching youth policy goal. The youth policies are both opportunity focused (young people are viewed as resources), and sometimes also problem oriented (young people are viewed as problematic). NEETs are described in all most all countries as one of the biggest problems/ challenges. The solutions include, among other things, a more integrated youth policy, equal opportunities, and involvement in of young people in decision-making processes. Finally, young people are conceptualized as simultaneously passive recipients of services and active partners in changing society.

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4. National youth policy report - Czech Republic

List of selected policy documents

a) National level:

In the Czech Republic, on the national level we have firstly chosen documents connected to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and Youth Department. A document dealing with youth policy in general is *National Youth Strategy for Years 2014-2020*; it was created in 2014 by the ministry and a working group (that included representatives from several organizations). This conception helped to direct us to other relevant documents dealing (solely or partially) with youth. Documents that entering our analysis are mostly of conceptual or strategic (plan of actions) nature, any legislation wasn't created in this period.

1) Czech Report to EU on the Youth Policy – First Cooperation Cycle

Report to EU on the youth policy in the Czech Republic 2010-2012, divided into several parts (according to form): general youth policy; employment and entrepreneurship; volunteering; health and wellbeing; social inclusion; creativity and culture; youth and world; structured dialogue – evaluation of policies in these areas.

National level document:
Report on youth policy to EU – first cooperation cycle
Created in 2012 by ministry
On general youth policy
49 pages, 17130 words
Young people presented as active, unengaged, talented and also disadvantaged

2) National Youth report 2013 – Basic information about youth in the Czech Republic (Zpráva o mládeži 2013 – Základní informace o situaci mladých lidí v České republice)

The report was created by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in 2013. Its content and thematic structure are based on *EU Youth Report 2012* and the report contains Czech (secondary) data. This report covers

priority areas of youth policy in EU (the EU Youth Strategy), i.e. employment and business, health and healthy life style, education, social inclusion, participation, volunteering, creativity and culture, youth and world. The report overviews basic information (from researches) on situation of youth in these areas and it is also one of the basic documents for creating the *National Youth Strategy for Years 2014-2018*.

National level document:
Report on general situation of youth in the Czech Republic
Created in 2013 by ministry (government)
85 pages, 21731 words
Young people presented as engaged, active, passive, uninterested, unengaged, lacking experience, not-active, lacking work habits, dependent, cultural

3) *National Youth Strategy for Years 2014-2020 (Koncepce podpory mládeže na období 2014-2020)*

The most important document on youth policy – basic strategical/conceptual document created in 2014 (by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports). The Strategy 2020 is drawing a two-years expert work in thematic working groups and on extensive round tables consultations that took place between 2011-2013; the Strategy 2020 also includes inputs from active discussion with youths organized by the Czech Council of Children and by the Youth Project "Kecejme do toho – Have your say". And last but not least, the Strategy draws on conclusions from a meeting of the Youth Chamber.[1] The Strategy 2020 explicitly refers to the EU Youth Strategy and its priorities and to the National Youth Report 2013. Aim of this strategy is to formulate priorities for youth (youth as young people aged 13-30) policies in several areas and to set up a structure of the main responsible actors on governmental level (ministries) in these areas. The strategy articulates strategic goals for national policies in relation to young people. It reflects the needs of the youth, especially in the areas of education and mobility, employment of young people and their entrepreneurship, culture and creativity, their participation, health and a healthy lifestyle, young people with fewer opportunities and volunteering. It also addresses environmental and global development problems, including young people's access to rights and information. The Strategy 2020 works with terms *pillars* (determining

[1] On international level the partners were IUVENTA and Youth Department and Community Programs in Slovakia

the set principles upon which the expected impact of Strategy 2020 on young people is based), *horizontal priorities* (taking into the account priority areas of intervention across all strategic and operational goals), *strategic goals* (referring to a defined idea of how the Strategy 2020 should contribute in specific areas of youth policy in the long-term period, i.e. until 2020), *operational goals and measures* (special working groups responsible for monitoring of single area were created).

National level document setting up priorities
(strategic/conceptual/general plan of actions)
Created in 2014 by ministry (government)
On general youth policy
31 pages, 10534 words
Young people presented as active, inspirational, vulnerable, dependent, critically thinking, idealistic, reflexive, organised and non-organised

4) *Strategy for Education Policy in the Czech Republic until 2020 (Strategie vzdělávací politiky České republiky do roku 2020)*

Strategy for education policy was created in 2014 by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The strategy document aims to replace the previous conception – White Paper (2001) – because many its objectives have not been fulfilled or have not been approached in a systematic manner and the level of awareness of interconnectedness between various parts of the education system has gradually decreased over this period. The strategy is conceived as general foundation for policy-making in the field of education in the Czech Republic in subsequent years. Rather than being a set of specific measures, the strategy delineates priorities for further development of the education system. The most important and general priorities setting up by this strategy are: reducing inequalities in education, supporting high-quality teaching and teachers as a prerequisite for such teaching and governing the system in a responsible and efficient manner. Specifically the first aim is relevant for us.

National level document
Created in 2014 by ministry (government)
On education
52 pages, 16854 words
Young people presented especially as students (pupils), talented, motivated, disadvantaged or lagging

5) *National strategy for primary prevention of risky behaviour in the years 2013-2018 (Národní strategie primární prevence rizikového chování dětí a mládeže na období 2013-2018)*

The strategic document on primary prevention was created by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in 2013 (in cooperation with working groups) and it covers the period of 2013-2018. The strategy is one of the key documents of ministry focused on children and youth; formulated policies are based on horizontal (interdepartmental) and vertical (with regions) cooperation. The main aim of the policy is to reduce emergence and occurrence of risk behaviour of children and youth. The targeted population are children and youth in age 3-26. The document is of a conceptual character; however, concrete plan of action for this strategy should be also created. The aim of this document is to formulate general goals in the area of risk behaviour, to develop a system of coordination and to define responsible actors, to unify terminology and to deliver information about risk behaviour to public.

National level document
Created in 2013 by ministry (government)
On prevention of risk behaviour
25 pages, 8591 words

6) *Implementation plan of program "Guarantees for Youth in the Czech Republic" (Realizační plán programu "Záruky pro mládež České republiky")*

Plan of actions for program "Guarantees for Youth", created in 2014 by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The aim of the program "Guarantees for Youth" is to reduce youth unemployment and to ensure job or trainings/courses/internships or other informal education for unemployed young people that finished formal education process. Program has started in 2014.

National level document – plan of actions
Created in 2014 by ministry (government)
On labor market
29 pages, 8537 words
Young people presented as unqualified, lacking experience, non-active (but only economically)

7) CRDM Strategy for years 2012-2020 (Strategie ČRDM pro léta 2012-2020)

This strategic document was created in 2012 by The Czech Council of Children and Youth (CRDM). It is conceived not conceived as a policy document but rather as a general conception or strategy of this organization setting up its role and priorities (and focusing more on the organisation than on youth). According to the document, the mission of CRDM is to promote conditions for quality life and overall development of children and young people – (1) CRDM should be partner of the state (in a working group, in creating documents etc.); and also a partner for other organisation of civic society; (2) CRDM should represent interests of its members towards domestic and foreign bodies, organisations and institutions. CRDM fulfils its mission by supporting non-formal education and activities of its members, especially by creating legal, economic, social and cultural conditions suitable for their activities.

National level document – conception/ strategy
Created in 2012 by umbrella youth organization
General policy – the role of the organization
5 pages, 807 words

b) Regional level

The Czech Republic consists of thirteen regions and Prague, the capital. Institutional structure of the regions is very similar to national level and ministries – however, there are not any youth departments in the regions. The departments focused on youth are mostly those dealing with education and sports; because of this, there are not complex youth policies on the regional level (and therefore there are not documents either). The regions (and bigger cities) mostly employ conceptions and documents formulated on the national level (specifically the National Youth Strategy for years 2014-2020) and they try to implement national priorities into their policies. Children and young people are rather just one of the groups taken into account in various policies than a specific group targeted by specific policies. The most important policies (with respect to the existing documents in the thirteen regions) are evidently those dealing with education, prevention and sports (these types of documents are present almost in every regions; in few regions there are also documents focused on unemployment). For the analysis, we have choses three documents from two regions:[2]

[2] These two regions were chosen on the basis of the recommendations of authorities in interviews.

8) *Long-term plan of education and development of educational system in the Zlín Region 2012 (Dlouhodobý záměr vzdělávání a rozvoje vzdělávací soustavy Zlínského kraje 2012)*

The document was created in 2012 by Zlín regional government. The document is focused on educational system in general (*young people* are mentioned just marginally, most frequently they are mentioned as *pupils* or *students*). The document has mostly technical character (analysis, numbers of pupils/students, schools in region etc.). Besides the school system the document – with respect to aims, funding and monitoring of all areas – also deals with lifelong learning, further education, teachers, and leisure activities.

Regional level document
Plan of actions – long-term
Created in 2012 by regional government
On education
Young people presented as disadvantaged, handicapped, talented
82 pages, 34539 words

9) *Regional plan of primary prevention of risky behaviour in Olomouc Region for 2013-2014 (Plán primární prevence rizikového chování v Olomouckém kraji na léta 2013-2014)*

The document was created in 2012 by Olomouc regional government. The brief plan consists of an analysis of situation in the region, of SWOT analysis, of articulation of priorities, of funding and of identification of responsible actors. Youth are not explicitly defined as the only target group (also the children are included) but the policy is mostly oriented at primary prevention at schools.

Regional level document
Plan of actions
Created in 2012 by regional government
On prevention
Young people presented as drug-using, risk group
20 pages, 4577 words

10) *Conception of development physical education and sports in Olomouc Region (Koncepce rozvoje tělovýchovy a sportu v Olomouckém kraji 2014-2018)*

The document was created by NGO Sport a věda o.s. (Sports and science) for the Olomouc Region in 2014. This complex document is divided into

several parts: an analytical (situation/legislation/financing of sports in Olomouc Region), a synthetic part (SWOT analysis, strategy, aims) and a plan of actions. For the analytical part the organization has conducted a survey at schools, in leisure time centres and in cities. The youth are only one of many target groups addressed by the document – the target groups are rather divided into an active and inactive population (in terms of sports activities).

Regional level document
Plan of actions
Created by NGO (for regional government) in 2014
On sports
Young people presented as talented and sport-talented
98 pages, 23441 words

Overall aim of youth policy

Overall aim of youth policy in the Czech Republic is to ensure right of every young person for respect, for support from the state, and for equal treatment. General youth policy declares as the main goal

"improving the quality of life of young people, particularly through the development of their characters so that they can adequately respond to the constantly changing environment and use their creative and innovative potential in practice and in active participation in the community." (National Youth Strategy for Years 2014-2020)

In times of prolonging transition to adulthood it is an important task for authorities to facilitate this transition from children into adults responsible for their lives, family and society, with focus on realistic needs and opportunities of young people (National Youth Strategy for Years 2014-2020) to contribute:

- To the advancement of society
- To democratic governance (active citizenship as a prerequisite for the development of society)
- To employment
- To the competitiveness of the country

How are young people spoken of, presented and described?

As repeatedly noted above, majority of the documents does not address young people directly, nor as the main target group. Though, three documents make an exception: *National Youth Strategy for Years 2014-2020*, *National Report on Youth 2013* and *Strategy for Education Policy in the Czech Republic until 2020*.

Young people are in these documents mostly presented as those under age of 30 who represent a significant proportion of the population. On the one hand, young people are depicted as a part of population that is one of **the most vulnerable and exposed to risky behaviour.**

On the other side young people are represented as an important group, as a valuable resource for societal development. They are represented as a source of natural vitality, source of new perspectives and ideas, as agents of a future positive change, as a group giving a momentum to society as a whole. Such potential is attributed to the youth's critical perspective and sensibility, their idealism and faith in change and to their boundless and specific energy. Young people are, in other words, depicted as those who will eventually replace the current productive generation.

Young people are also represented as **an indicator of the most important challenges** that society is facing today and as a mirror "**reflecting our own flaws"**. According to the documents, if we will cope with young people's problems, we will solve many important problems and challenges in our society.

"*Modern society is often characterised using adjectives such as pluralistic, global, multicultural, consumerist, sensationalist, media-conscious, etc. All of these characteristics are especially prominent in the lives of young people, who subsequently reflect most intensely the current societal trends and values." (National Youth Strategy for Years 2014-2020*)

Because young people are in many aspects one of the most vulnerable group in society – and those who are future of the society – it is task for national policies to "reflect the specific needs of young people during the process of their preparation for their familial, working and social lives, and take on the responsibility of meeting these needs" (*National Youth Strategy for Years 2014-2020*).

Some of the documents focus on specific subgroups (target) of young people or on particular aspects or characteristic of young people. Young

people are for example often mentioned as the students (e.g. *Czech "students still lag behind their peers in countries with the most successful education systems in terms of knowledge, skills and competencies"*, see *Strategy for Education Policy in the Czech Republic until 2020*). In particular contexts, young people are mentioned as those who are not much interested in politics, not much engaged, or those who are not much interested in international mobility (both regarding studies and jobs). The most frequently discussed (target) groups in some areas are talented young people (in education or sports), disadvantaged young people and those exposed to social exclusion and risky behaviour (in education and prevention).

Young people's problems in society - society´s problems with young people

Young people's transition into an independent adult life – the transitional period in which young people test out life before they fully enter the adult – is being prolonged in past years. Mainly *The National Youth Strategy for years 2014*-2020 refers to this new challenging situation, but even several other documents address consequences of this phenomenon.

"*All young people are in a phase of their lives where they have to make many major decisions which will have significant impact on their entire lives. In many respects, however, the transition from childhood to adulthood is far from self-evident. Young people must successfully undertake the significant task of assuming their independence, mainly from their parents and others, to whom they have so far related as children*." (*National Youth Strategy for Years 2014-2020*).

Youth policy should facilitate this process dealing with **actuals problems** of youth people. If youth policy would facilitate the transition (and related risks), it will prevent youth from being dependent on their primary families and their social environments, including society in general. Across the documents we can also identify a significant trend: an emphasis on **equality** (see below) in single policies or programs.

Main problems identified across the documents:

Unemployment

Unemployment rate is in the Czech Republic relatively low. However, the unemployment differs among certain segments of population and it is significantly higher in some regions (NUT2 – Northwest). Youth are one of the most vulnerable group, specifically the absolvents with lower level of education. Moreover, young people and graduates in general are more

vulnerable to fluctuations of economic cycles affecting the labour market. Experiencing unemployment at the start of professional life can slow down the development of the careers and in the worst cases the long-term unemployment can lock the individuals in a vicious circle of social exclusion. The long- term unemployment of the Czech youth is higher the European average. Unemployment can also lead to the higher dependence on family / parents, to social isolation and tendency to risky behaviour. Furthermore, it can prevent young people from developing her or his skills and from developing working habits.

Differentiation in education and quality of education

The problem of unemployment is linked with situation in education. For a long time there was missing functional conception of education, though in recent years there has been an evident trend for differentiation of the education system. One of the often criticized features typical for the Czech education system is actually with this trend: the state conserves and even deepens educational inequality among young people. This differentiation causes divergence among students of different schools or among students belonging to different social groups (namely students exposed to poverty, disadvantaged student and students with special needs, all of them educated apart from majority of their peers). In other words, the Czech education system works too well as the Bourdieusian "Maxwell's demon". It is at the same time linked with distinctions in quality of education among different types of school and with missing effort to prepare youth for labour market by learning working skills.

Social exclusion and poverty

The risk of poverty is not so high in the Czech Republic. However, it is significantly higher in specific groups – notably in Roma minority and socially excluded or disadvantaged localities. The situation of the Roma minority in the country is very problematic for decades; according to researches, about three quarters of the Czech society declare negative attitude against Roma. Roma children and youth, especially those growing up in socially excluded localities, encounter obviously unequal starting conditions.

Risky behaviour and criminality

Risky behaviour and criminality is also phenomenon more typical for some subgroups of young people. This area is one of priorities connected to social inclusion and equality. Often also significantly targeted on regional level.

Low interest in politics, apathy

The process of transition from youth to adulthood includes even the socialization to the social and political environment in which young people learn and develop personal and political views. Unsurprisingly – since the Czech population is generally characterized by low interest in politics – even the interest of young people in public and political affairs it is not very high. Young people are rather actively interested in areas that affect them directly (i.e. events at school) than in political life of their community, country or of the broader world. The evident disinterest in politics is linked with low external political efficacy.

Health and wellbeing

The most frequently mentioned problems of children and young people in this area are overweight and obesity. However, even other problems and risk behaviours are repeatedly mentioned – high tolerance of Czech youth of smoking, high rates of drug use among young people and high rates of alcohol consumption.

What solutions appear to be wise and reasonable, and what are left out of the agenda?

We divided this section according to the horizontal priorities formulated in *National Youth Strategy for years 2014-2020*.

1. **Equal opportunities**
   - Important priority across many areas of policies (equal opportunities should prevent many future problems – unemployment, risk behaviour etc.).

Inclusion of children and young people with less opportunities

According to the strategy, it is important to start to deal with the problem of exclusion in early stage of socialization to stop or minimize the process of differentiation at its beginning. An emphasis is put on:

- Ensuring of pre-primary education for every child (to increase the rate of participation in pre-primary education of children from groups and localities threatened by social exclusion),
- Eliminating postponements of compulsory education,
- Support of out-of-school education and its links to formal education,
- Promotion of effective and targeted activities within primary prevention designed for students and teachers and aiming for decreasing incidence of risky behaviour,

- Development and implementation of educational process based on effective activities guiding pupils and students towards healthy life styles,
- Development and support of efficient counselling services in the area of primary prevention of socially risky behaviour in children, pupils and students.

Complementary to that is encouraging the development children's and youth's ability to promote tolerance across cultural and social groups (e.g. support activities leading to the mutual recognition of traditions and cultures, eliminating prejudice and stereotypes, to promote the development and application of pedagogical approaches in the field of education for tolerance and the prevention of racism and extremism).

Equality - equal access of children and youth to education and information

The strategy aims to reduce significantly the inequality in education through a comprehensive effort to promote quality within the entire education system. It is intended to ensure that not any social group will face a disadvantage in access to school education and that educational opportunities and outcomes are to the least possible degree influenced by factors that an individual cannot influence (i.e. gender, socio-economic status, region, nationality, cultural background). The main goal is then to stop the above mentioned progressive process of differentiation in educational system that has inevitable consequences in broadening the gap among young people and their chances when entering adult life. An emphasis is on:

- Limiting a formal differentiation of educational paths,
- Promoting equal opportunities in the transition from secondary to tertiary education,
- Guaranteeing free and equal access to a wide range of tertiary education (despite a substantial improvement in recent years, the conditions for applicants and students with physical disabilities remain unsatisfactory)
- Reduction of the rate of school failure and drop-out (not at the expense of standards of education).

In this process it is necessary to keep the focus on those target groups that are in a high risk of leaving education earlier than the rest of the population. As noted above, in the Czech Republic these groups mostly

include children and young people with special educational needs (i.e. with disabilities and physical or social disadvantages) and Roma children.
Last but not least, the strategy aims to improve the access the children and young people with less opportunities have to information by means available to them.

Equality – equal access of labour market

The strategy draws upon conclusion that higher levels of education result in an individual's more sophisticated knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes. People with higher qualifications have a generally better position in society and they face a much lower risk of long-term unemployment. Education should help each individual to develop her or his potential to the highest possible degree. But the quality of education represents in just one side of the story in the strategy – at the same time there is evident tendency across the document to promote and create more solid bond between school system (schools) and labour market (employers).

The strategy for example intends to "*to strengthen the common base of programmes of secondary education, secondary education with a vocational certificate and secondary education with 'maturita' consisting in the development of basic knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes so as to ensure the graduates' long-term employability and more success in further studies as well as in their personal lives*" (*Strategy for Education Policy in the Czech Republic until 2020*).

More general goal is to create conditions for easier entry of the graduates into the labour market – so the education system has not only to provide young people with the ability to learn specific skills needed in specific jobs, but it has also to teach them to be flexible enough. According to the strategy, institutions of higher education should:

- Increase the proportion of students in profession-oriented study programmes,
- Expand the offer of profession-oriented courses in life-long education,
- Increase the proportion of experience-based learning in profession-oriented study programmes,
- Promote partnership between schools and employers in order to facilitate the transfer of graduates from schools to the labour market.

The strategy also emphasise also the role of guidance services at schools. Other interesting priorities are, for example, promotion of trans-generational transfer of work experience and skills and focus on lifelong learning/internships/training (to increase or expand individual's qualification at any time of her or his life in order to adapt to changing labour market).

The strategy takes into the account an equal access of women to labour market and transition to family (through systematic strengthening the network of kindergartens) – in contrast to most European countries the Czech Republic lacks a functional childcare system for children up to 3. The lack of day nurseries' capacity combined with a long parental leave and with a considerable rigidity of the labour market (shortage of part-time job offers) creates a trap into which mothers on parental leave may easily fall. This has a significant impact on their employment opportunities later on.

Across document we can witness emphasis on equal chances to successful, complete transition to adult life in terms of ensuring access to information, education, and gaining (soft and working) skills – to avoid and prevent risk behaviour (or to solve existing problems).

2. Inter-ministerial and cross-sectorial approach

Youth policy covers areas of young people's lives that fall under the agendas of different state authorities. Creation and implementation of effective policy therefore requires cooperation between ministries and other state administration bodies whose areas of responsibility include measures affecting young people. This inter-ministerial approach is ensured by the Youth Chamber and the activity of the cross-sectorial thematic groups coordinated by the Youth Department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Cooperation with regional and municipal authorities through their own plans, strategies and measures is also required. Two years ago we have witnessed extensive transformation of the institution dealing with youth policies on national level – accompanied with a dissolution of the former National Institute for Children and Youth and its transformation (some parts) into other organizations as National Institute for Further Education or The Centre for International Cooperation in Education. During last two years a new structure was being set up and many of actors now speak about better

cooperation across institutions (mainly thanks to the Youth Department and The Czech Council of Children and Youth).

3. **Support for non-formal education (including leisure-based education)**

Support for non-formal education / interest based education and creating favourable and sustainable conditions for participation of children and youth in leisure-based and non-formal education is a large and quite important task reaching across different policies. According to the Czech youth policy, non-formal education allows equal opportunities for young people to learn skills necessary for employment or for – it is done through activities in which young people are guided by professional youth workers to develop, in particular, so-called "soft skills". Equally important is promotion of leisure-based education. Although it does not provide a formal level of education, it deals with activities that are necessary for the development of youth, and it helps to fill leisure time in a meaningful way.

According to the documents, through the leisure-based and non-formal education we can help to:

- Ensure development the soft skills,
- Ensure connection with the labour market,
- Improve youth's financial and media literacy,
- Support long-term and systematic work with talented youth (e.g. in sports),
- Improve language skills,
- Support cross-border mobility of young people (through support of projects with international participation, cross-border networking and partnerships and though increase of young people's awareness of the possibilities of mobility through schools, educational facilities and NGOs),
- Develop creativity,
- Develop critical thinking,
- Develop intercultural/ intergenerational dialogue,
- Offer children and young people a variety of paths to culture, art and traditions,
- Motivate children and youth towards a life based on the principles of sustainable development and to develop their environmental literacy,
- Eat healthily and to engage in physical activity.

The documents note that, on the one hand, it is inevitable to support non-formal and leisure-based education itself. On the other side, it is also necessary to **motivate youth for participation** (e.g. release information stimulating the demand for further education, especially with respect to low-qualified and socially disadvantaged segments of the population). Involving young people more intensively in the non-formal education is perceived as a prevention of future risky behaviour as well as solution for existing problems. Through the non-formal and leisure-based education young people gain skills they need for being active adult citizens. The non-formal education targets general youth population, talented youth and those disadvantaged as well.

4. Involving young people in the decision-making process and participation

Based on the outcomes of National Youth Report 2013 a significant emphasis will be put on objectives related to encouraging participation and civic education. According to the key documents, effective youth-related policy is also based on active cooperation of all the interested participants and on thorough consultations with young people – the national youth strategy was created in cooperation with youth and it takes into the account outcomes of a structured dialogue with young people provided by the Czech Council of Children and by Youth Project "Kecejme do toho – Have your say" (this project was also very often mentioned in interviews with authorities). Pursuing the active citizenship is perceived as a precondition for the development of society based on solidarity, sustainable development and democratic governance. One the one hand, there is a need for involving the youth more in decision-making processes (e.g. through school parliaments), for expanding the options for involving children and youth in public life (with emphasis on supporting youth initiatives at local level). On the other hand, it is necessary to ensure better civic education (and to support educational activities developing children's and young people's competencies for their involvement in public life, including civic education) and to motivate youth to participate (to support children and young people in the use of diverse opportunities for participation, including new forms of participation). Another important aspect of the policy is the topic of sharing information about the options for participation.

Other priority in this area also includes support for youth's volunteering, which stimulates active citizenship and contributes to social cohesion. The policy aims not only for creating favourable conditions for youth

volunteering including valuation and recognition of volunteer activities but also for promoting improvement of quality of work with volunteers.

5. Intergenerational solidarity

"The need for intergenerational solidarity and dialogue across generations in the interest of sustainable development and to meet the needs of various age groups of citizens the preservation and development of culture as a system of shared values." National Youth Strategy for years 2014-2020.

Intergenerational exchange should be important part primarily of non-formal education. This exchange of knowledge could have an important impact on solidarity and culture in the society, on process of (political) socialization and sharing values, and facilitating transition to adulthood through exchange of knowledge (e.g. for work, mobility).

Responsible actors – authorities and problem solvers

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MSMT) –
The Ministry of Education has several departments and their agenda is mostly focused on educational system (other major part of the agenda are sports). We are interested in quite small **Youth Department** – an advisory body of the minister responsible for the youth issues. The Youth Department as the most important actor (national working group) – responsible for cross-sectoral youth policy in general – cooperates with other departments at other ministries. The most important topic the Youth Department is responsible for are areas such as prevention and risk behaviour, informal education, inclusion, mobility, creativity, etc.

Youth Chamber is an inter-governmental advisory body of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in the youth field.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is responsible for unemployment (in cooperation with MSMT and other actors) and cooperates on rights, prevention of risk behaviour.

The Ministry of Interior is responsible for volunteering (in terms of legislation) and cooperates on prevention and criminality, active citizenship and volunteerism.

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for area of spreading information (media literacy) and the area of creative industries and culture (in

cooperation with MSMT and other actors); the ministry cooperates on prevention, active citizenship and volunteerism

Other ministries (cooperating with MSMT via the Youth Department)

- The Ministry of Industry and Trade (unemployment)
- The Ministry of Health (health and wellbeing)
- The Ministry of Agriculture (unemployment)
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Transport (health and wellbeing)
- The Ministry of the Environment (environmental literacy)
- The Ministry of Regional Development (tourism with focus on youth)

The Czech Council of Children and Youth (CRDM) is a national umbrella youth organization. CRDM is responsible for implementation of the *Structured Dialogue* project; one of the very prominent topics are currently civic engagement and participation of youth. CRDM is also a member of the *European Youth Forum*.

The National Children and Youth's Parliament is a top-level structure of all children and youth's parliaments, councils and other organisations promoting youth participation; it holds round tables and discussions with experts on various topics and it often acts as an advisory body for the Youth Department (in cases when the Youth Department is interested in youth's opinions etc.).

The National Youth Information Centre (NIC) is an umbrella organisation for all YICs of the Czech Republic (it provides access to information and cooperates with other organisations providing information services both within and outside the Czech Republic)

The Centre for International Cooperation in Education (DZS) is a semi-budgetary organisation (established by MSMT), performing tasks involved in ensuring educational, training and other relations with foreign countries under the instructions of the ministry. DZS is responsible for numerous international programmes and it carries out activities related to promotion of education (national working group)

National Institute for Further Education (NIDV) - previous National Institute for Children and Youth (fully financed and accountable to the ministry, responsible for conducting research on youth, and employs

professional researchers) was recently transformed into NIDV while most of its agenda was split into National Institute for Further Education and into Centre for International Cooperation in Education two years ago. Currently NIDV, only a small department, is dealing with youth issues – notably with civic participation, informal education and leisure-based education.

Regions

In some regions there are very similar structures of cooperation as on the national level: 1. regional institution (regional government/department); 2. regional council of children, and youth; and 3. regional parliament of children and youth. In some regions councils or parliaments are missing and the level of cooperation also significantly varies among regions – quite common is an absence of some or even any strategic (or other) documents on youth policy in general (or general youth policy). **On the local level** the situation is even more diverse than on the regional, because – in terms distribution of power – the regions are more competent in the area of youth policies (e.g. education).

What roles are young people ascribed?

Young people are across the documents (if they are mentioned) usually addressed as quite variable and dynamic group (i.e. they are mostly addressed as pupils, students or absolvents entering to labour market) still dependent on family. In other words as people that are vulnerable to current social and economic trends, people in a crucial transitional and at the same time critical period of their development, in a period that eventually affects their entire life (both in negative or positive sense). The documents mostly represent the youth as rather passive and vulnerable subjects that need to help to overcome this transitional period successfully – as individuals facing risk situations and behaviour who are not quite able to control or change their own situation, drive their lives, think about consequences of simple steps (e.g. quitting the school) etc. Young people are thus constructed in the documents as a hope for **positive change for the future**, as **future leaders in society** and active citizens but at the same time as subject with yet limited autonomy both in terms of agency and reflexivity.

5. National youth policy report – Estonia

List of selected policy documents

D1: Development Plan for Youth Affairs 2014–2020 *(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2014–2020[3])* is a national level strategic document which states the main principals of youth policy in Estonia, gives an overview of current situation and sets the aims until 2020. Issues like monitoring, funding and links to other strategically important areas (e.g., regional development, children and families, health, integration, civil society, etc.) are also covered in this document.

Development Plan for Youth Affairs focus on four main goals which are considered most important to achieve positive change in youth affairs: (1) creating better opportunities for young people to develop their creativity, initiative and cooperation, (2) enlargement of youth involvement and improving young people's readiness to enter labour market, (3) supporting youth's active participation in communities and decision making, and (4) ensuring the development of high quality youth policy and youth work. Therefore, all measures in all sub-areas of youth policy and youth work are not covered in this document.

D2: Final Report on the Implementation of the Youth Work Strategy for 2006–2013, including the 2013 Annual Report *(Noorsootöö strateegia 2006–2013 täitmise lõpparuanne, sh 2013. aasta aruanne[4])* is a national level overview document which is addressed to the Estonian government. The document is compiled and issued by the Ministry of Education and Research and Estonian Youth Work Centre. Document consists of the list the strategic aims of youth affairs for the period of 2006–2013 and the evaluation how well these goals were met.

D3: The Development Plan of Tartu for 2013–2020 *(Tartu Linna Arengukava aastateks 2013–2020[5])* is a central strategic document of the second biggest town in Estonia. The development plans for youth issues are included in this document. Besides the other policy domains, the document states the main principals of youth policy in municipality,

[3] URL: https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/noortevaldkonna_arengukava_2014-2020.pdf
[4] URL: https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/noorsootoo_strateegia_l6pparuanne_vv_parandatud_noortearv.pdf
[5] URL: https://www.tartu.ee/data/Tartu%20linna%20arengukava%20aastateks%202013-2020.pdf

gives an overview of current situation and sets the aims until 2020. The document is a fine example how youth issues may dissolve between different policy areas so that they become almost invisible. Although the town has rather strong youth service and many active youth organizations, the strengths of the local youth work sector are hardly present in this document.

Tartu is a second biggest town in Estonia (approximately 100,000 inhabitants) and it is situated in southern Estonia. Tartu is a university town and thanks to the university, young people form rather big proportion of its inhabitants. In 2010, 72.5 per cent of the inhabitants were Estonians and 14.3 per cent Russians. Other bigger national groups are Ukrainians, Finns and Belarusians. Many international students make the town a bit more international than other Estonian towns. The city government has special unit for youth affairs, Ministry of Education and Science (and its department of youth affairs) is situated in Tartu and there are many active student and youth organisations.

D4: Youth Work Development Plan of Narva for 2014–2020 *(Narva Noorsootöö Arengukava 2014–2020[6])* is a strategic document of the mainly Russian-speaking town. The document states the main principals of youth policy in municipality, gives an overview of current state of the youth affairs and sets the aims until 2020.

Narva is a third biggest town in Estonia (approximately 60,000 inhabitants) and it is situated in Eastern Estonia (Ida-Viru county), next to Russian boarder. Narva is old industrial town. In 2011, 3.9 per cent of the inhabitants were Estonians and 81.4 per cent Russians. 46 per cent of the population was Estonian citizens, 36 per cent Russian citizens, and 17 per cent had no citizenship. Young people (aged 7–26) form about 20 per cent of population. There are special programs to make youth of Ida-Viru region more active and integrate mostly Russian-speaking residents of this area more strongly into Estonian society.

D5: Youth Policy Platform of Estonian National Youth Council *(Eesti Noorteühenduste Liidu Noortepoliitika Platvorm[7])* is a policy document of the Estonian National Youth Council which is an umbrella organization of 43 Estonian youth organizations. The document consists of 12 chapters on different youth policy issues which are considered important by youth organisations (e.g., youth participation, high quality youth work,

[6] URL: http://www.narva.ee/files/0014III21_AK_noorsootoo_proj_est.pdf
[7] URL: http://www.enl.ee/UserFiles/Alusdokumendid/ENLi%20NP%20platvorm_kinnitatud%2016.11.2014.pdf

development of youth organisations, youth counselling, social guarantees of young people, equal rights, etc.). Each chapter gives an overview of pros and cons of current situation and states the views and suggestions of Estonian National Youth Council.

Table 1. Overview of the documents

	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
V1 Level					
	National	National	Regional	Regional	National
V2 Author					
	Agency	Agency	Government	Government	Umbrella youth organisation
V3 Type of policy document					
	Plan of actions	Other: report on implementation of action plan	Plan of actions	Plan of actions	Other: policy platform
V4 Date					
	2013	2014	2013	2013	2014
V5 Policy area					
	General youth policy	General youth policy	Other: general municipality policy	General youth policy	General youth policy
V6 Frequency of phrases/sentences where young people are described as:					
Participants	0	13	2	0	2
Engaged	1	0	0	0	0
Interested	0	1	0	0	6
Active	4	3	1	0	3
Passive	2	0	0	0	0
Apathetic	0	0	0	0	0
Uninterested (not interested…)	0	0	0	0	0
Unengaged	0	0	0	0	0

V7 Total numbers of words of the document					
	3 475	10 527	29 869	5 738	7 037
V8 Total numbers of pages					
	14	25	115	25	34

Definition of youth policy

There is no general definition of 'youth policy' in the documents. However, 'integrated youth policy' is defined as 'coordinated and purposeful action in various domains that is driven by actual needs and challenges of young people' in D1 (p. 3).

Despite the fact that youth 'policy' is not defined in the D2, there is a note that 'youth policy' was defined in the Youth Work Strategy for 2006–2013 (D2, p. 6). It is emphasized that it was very important to define 'youth policy' in policy document and phrase its content but the definition itself is not repeated in the implementation report.

Overall aim of youth policy

The overall aim of youth policy is not phrased in the selected documents. However, the aims of these documents may shed some light to the more general aims of the youth policy in Estonia.

The overall aim of the D1 is that 'young people have wide avenues for development and self-realization, which supports the development of a coherent and creative society' (D1, p. 7). It is stated in D2 (p. 4) that the overall objectives of Estonian youth policy were first stated in Youth Work Strategy for 2006–2013[8] and that this objective is relevant also in current period. The overall objective of youth policy in 2006–2013 was 'to ensure youth participation in decision-making processes and considering their interest and needs in all domains of youth policy'.

[8] The overall objective of Estonian youth policy is described in Youth Work Strategy for 2006–2013 as follows: "The overall aim of youth policy is to ensure young people's participation in decision-making processes and considering their interests and needs in all domains of youth policy." The document goes on by listing the most important sub goals to achieve this objective. Sub goal 1: Activities oriented to young people are guided by the real situation of young people and their real needs. (In order to ensure the development it is necessary: (1) the availability of consistent and systematic evaluation and analysis; (2) improving the scope and quality of youth research; (3) taking research results into account when planning policies. Sub goal 2: Young people participate in decision-making processes and policy-making processes that concern them. (In order to ensure the development it is necessary: (1) ensure that young people are consulted with at local, county and the national level; (2) target attention and plan activities to increase the motivation of young people to participate. Sub goal 3: Formulation, planning and execution of integrated youth policy are carried out in cooperation with different partners. (In order to ensure the development it is necessary: (1) establishing networks at the local level; (2) closer cooperation between ministries.

D3 (p. 66) sets the aim that in 2030 'Tartu is city of active, creative, and happy people. Tartu is a university town, Estonian intellectual capital and a city of youth.' (p. 10). Furthermore, regarding the youth issues in particular, one of the aims of the strategy is that 'Tartu is a city of youth where young people have broad opportunities for development and self-realisation and youth work encourages young people to discover, care and act'.

Another local level document, D4 (p. 14–15) states that the overall aim of youth affairs in Narva is systematic youth work that takes into account social conditions and developments and which is at the same time open to new and values the traditions. Youth work in Narva aims to provide young people with varied opportunities for development. One of the strategic aims of the youth work in Narva is to support young people's active participation in community and in decision-making processes.

D5 aims to phrase the organisation's positions in twelve domains that influence lives of young people. It is evident from the aims for the specific twelve domains that the general aim of the organisation's youth policy is to increase youth engagement and participation in decision-making processes so that young people's interests and needs are taken into account in all twelve domains.

Therefore, it may be concluded that the general aim of the youth policy in Estonia seems to be the creation of conditions for development and self-realization for young people and the enhancement of youth engagement and participation in the society, especially in policy domains that directly affect young people's development and wellbeing.

How are young people spoken of, presented and described? What roles are young people ascribed?

Differentiation between different groups of youth

Gender differences or inequalities seem not to be important issue in Estonian youth policy documents. However, it is stated in D1 that it is important to take gender differences into account when planning and carrying out youth policies and youth work (p. 7). On the other hand, gender differences are mentioned in D2 only in paragraphs which give overview about general trends in demographics and socioeconomic conditions of young people. It is brought out that more young men than young women leave school without any qualification. At the same time young men (less than 25 year olds) are in the better position in the labour market and they earn on average 31% more than young women.

Education gets a lot of attention in Estonian youth policy documents and it is generally acknowledged that children and young people must have good access to education, including hobby education (e.g., music and arts schools, sport clubs etc.). However, the hints that the access to education may be rather different for different groups of young people are rather general and declarative. For example, it is stated in D1 (p. 8) that all the young people (regardless of their background) have the right to gain good educations. In D2, different groups in education are only differentiated in paragraphs which give overview about general trends in demographics and socioeconomic conditions (incl. educational background) of young people and it is brought out how many young people study in different types of educational institutions. There is nothing about specific policies targeted to these different groups. It is acknowledged in D5 (pp. 24–25) that access to both formal and non-formal education is bound to socioeconomic conditions of the young person's family.

Young people's position in the labour market is another domain that receives a lot of attention in Estonian youth policy documents. The most common theme is the transition from the education system to the labour market and related problems. However, once again the differentiation between the groups of young people is hardly seen in documents. For example, it is stated in D1 (p. 6) that transition from education to labour market may be difficult for young people and it is important to support young people to make smoother transition (e.g., programs to acquire work experience). In D2, only in paragraphs which give overview about general trends in demographics and socioeconomic conditions (incl. employment status) of young people it is brought out how many young people are active in labour market and how much they earn. There is nothing about specific policies targeted to different groups. It is acknowledged in D5 (pp. 22–24) that young person's outcomes on the labour market are strongly related to his/her educational background, geographic constraints, etc. To work out effective measures (for example for NEET), it is necessary to take into account that young people and their life situations are different.

One would think that different ethnic groups are important topic in Estonian youth policy documents because of big Russian-speaking community in the country. Actually, ethnic differences are hardly mentioned in the documents. For example, it is only stated in D1 (p. 7) that it is important to take ethnic differences and different cultural backgrounds into account when planning and implementing youth

policies and youth work. It is shortly stated in D3 (p. 74) that the youth initiatives by young people with different cultural background are supported. Ethnic differences receive somewhat more attention in D5 (pp. 33–34), where it is acknowledged that young people from ethnic minorities need special attention and measures to enhance their participation in society. At the same time it is recognised that it is important to work with young people from ethnic majority and encourage the participation that brings young people from ethnic majority and minorities together.

Socioeconomic differences are mentioned in all five documents and considered important for planning youth policies and services that would take into account different needs of young people with different backgrounds. For example, it is stated in D1 (p. 6 & 7) that young people are not homogeneous group and that is why it is important to differentiate provision of youth work according to the background of young people and provide services that help young people with poor socioeconomic background to develop their talents and prevent risk behaviour. In D2, paragraphs which give overview about general trends in demographics and socioeconomic conditions of young people it is brought out how many young people are living in poverty in Estonia. The document provides the assessment that the measures, which were targeted at less privileged youth in 2006–2013, have been successful (pp. 12–13). The measures mainly included better access to hobby education and youth work (especially youth projects). However, it is shortly stated in D3 (p. 74) that the participation of less privileged youth in youth work should be higher. It is mentioned also in D4 (p. 8) that the participation of less privileged youth in youth work is supported, e.g., exemption of participation fees in hobby education. It is acknowledged in D5 (pp. 16–17) as well that young people with different socioeconomic background have different opportunities for participation in society and groups with fewer opportunities need more support to fulfil their rights in society.

In general, different groups among organised youth groups are not brought out in selected documents. There is only differentiation between organised and unorganised youth. D2 and D5 are exceptions. In D2, there is a description of the action plan (no. 31) for youth parliaments and similar organisations that aimed to train young people's skills of political participation. However, other organised youth groups are not mentioned. It is acknowledged in D5 (pp. 11–13) that bigger and smaller youth organisations are in different position, for example when applying for the funding for their activities.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, differentiation between organised and unorganised youth is made. For example, D1 sets the aim to find new youth work methods and ways of participation to engage more (at the moment unorganised) youth (p. 6). It is also stated that it is important to find out what young people, who do not actively participate in youth work and in civil society, think and to take their opinion into account (p. 6, 9 & 10). There was special action plan in D2 (no. 30, p. 22) for unorganised youth which was though rather declarative in its content. It is recognised in D4 (p. 12) that some groups (e.g., over 18 year old young people, unemployed young people, young parents) lack the appropriate ways for participation.

The main representations of and perspectives on young people in the documents

Descriptions (incl., descriptions of young people) are not very common in analysed documents and adjectives are scarce. The main focus is on structures, organisations, and professionals working with young people and young people are hardly described. Therefore, they are also not describes as causing problems. Though, it is recognised in D1 and D2 that there are some problems related to young people (e.g., risky (health) behaviour of young men; high rate of emigration of young people) but young people as a group are not characterized as a cause of some problems.

More often young people are described as offering solutions. For example, it is stated in D1 (p. 7) that if 'young people have wide avenues for development and self-realization then it supports the development of coherent and creative society'. Young people are described in D5 (p. 4) as force that contributes to the development of society, 'the present and the future of the society'.

Young people are also described as agents in D1 and D5. For example, D1 (p. 9) states that 'engagement in organising his/her own and community's life and participation in voluntary activities establishes a basis for the development of a strong civil society in which young people perform an active role in social change process'. It is stated in the next sentences that it is aim of the youth work to create conditions that support active participation of young people. As mentioned above, young people are described in D5 (p. 4) as force that contributes to the development of society.

Young people are also describes as victims in D1 (p. 6): 'Young people are remarkably less able than other age groups to affect their everyday life –

the status of young people and their rights and opportunities in society are weaker. There are different and unequal circumstances in the lives of young people, over which young people have no control (e.g., socioeconomic or regional differences'. It is stated in the next sentences that youth work must provide services to reduce such inequalities and prevent problems in young people's lives.

Young people's problems in society – society's problems with young people

Europe level problems related to young people are not mentioned in the documents. The national level documents focus on the problems in the country and name quite a few of them. However, no problems are mentioned in the regional level documents: there are just things that have to be done to make the life of young people better.

D1, D2, and D5 focus on country level and bring out country level problems related to young people. The growing emigration of young people, the high unemployment rate among 15–19 year old young people, the high number of NEET among the youth, the high rate of relative poverty, and the problematic health behaviour (especially among young men) are seen as the most urgent problems related to young people in D1. D2 lists the biggest challenges of the Estonian youth policy: the provision of more opportunities to develop creativity, initiative and joint action; reducing the impact of unequal conditions for young people's development and avoiding exclusion; young people's active participation in the community and decision-making process; success in the labour market; quality of youth policy and youth work.

D5 addresses youth policy issues in twelve different fields: youth participation and involvement; quality of youth work; development, funding and cooperation of youth organisations; youth information and counselling; social guarantees of young people; health issues of young people; youth mobility; youth employment and entrepreneurship; formal and non-formal education; equal opportunities; young people with special needs; youth work with difficult groups; integration. It is not stated which of these fields are considered more important than the others.

What solutions appear to be wise and reasonable, and what are left out of the agenda?

General youth policy

Much emphasis is put, on the one hand, on the importance of good quality and easily accessible youth work (including youth information and hobby education), and on the other hand, on the participation of young people in decision-making processes, so that the policies would really target the real problems of young people. It was to be expected as the four out of five analysed documents are development plans (D1, D3, and D4)/implementation report (D2) of youth work sector. For example, it is stated in D2 that it is important that youth policies are driven by the actual situation and needs of young people. Furthermore, it is important that young people are participating in decision-making and policy-making processes when youth issues are concerned (pp. 6–7). The need for knowledge-based decision-making in youth issues is acknowledged (Action 17 & 18, pp. 15–16) and the successful program for quality development in youth work is mentioned as well (Action 1 & 3, pp. 8–9). It is considered important in D3 (pp. 72–3) to develop youth work in general and competencies of professional youth workers in particular. Rather similarly, provision of adequate information and counselling and high youth participation (pp. 10 & 16) and good access to youth work services (p. 11 & 16) are considered important in D4. The range of possible solutions is somewhat broader in D1. Good quality and easily accessible youth work and hobby education, development of digital literacy of young people, creating measures for bringing young people back to education and training, and more cooperation with research institutions to develop knowledge based youth policies are seen as most important solutions to youth related problems in D1.

'Structured dialogue' is hardly mentioned in the documents. Structured dialogue and its successful organisation by Estonian National Youth Council were mentioned in D2 (p. 2). However, there is no indication whether it is considered effective or even most effective measure of the youth policy.

Education policy and cultural and leisure policy

Education policy is considered highly important in achieving the goals of youth policy and lot of emphasis is put on non-formal and hobby education. For example, D1 lists the good quality and easily accessible hobby education, the development of digital literacy of young people, and the creation of measures for bringing young people back to education

and training as important measures. Formal education is not mentioned at all in D2, while the need for further development of hobby education to reach more youth is emphasised (Action 10, 11 & 12, pp. 12–13). The importance of hobby education and hobby schools (p. 7) as well as youth projects, competitions and voluntary work (p. 9) is recognised in D4. It is considered important in D5 (p. 26) that non-formal education is more strongly integrated into school system to encourage hobby activities of young people and school democracy. The importance of highly motivated teachers and sufficient support staff (e.g., school psychologists, social pedagogue, school nurse, etc.) is acknowledged (p. 26). D3 is an exception in this regard. Tens of pages are dedicated to education in D3 but main focus is on planning how many school houses are need and it is not phrased, whether and how education could help to achieve the goals of youth policy.

Therefore, it may be concluded that the education policy and cultural and leisure policy are rather intertwined in all analysed documents because hobby education usually means going to an art- or music school or participating in the sports club. Even in D3, which pays more attention to the formal education than the other documents, it is stated that it is important to implement creativity and culture in educational purposes (p. 37). Therefore, it is rather logical that out of 28 big cultural events, which are considered most important by the town, 8 are different youth festivals and competitions and young people are one of the target groups of other bigger events as well (D3, p. 38).

Labour market policy

Encouraging entrepreneurship and creativity of young people, adequate career counselling, and giving young people work experience via youth work are probably the most important keywords related to labour market policies. For example, D1 sets the aim to encourage young people to be active and more open to entrepreneurship. Rather similarly, it is stated in D3 that entrepreneurship training should be developed in schools (p. 47). D3 (p. 44) also foresees developing the career counselling system inside and outside schools. The importance of career information and services for young people in schools is emphasised also in D5 (p. 24). It is stated that there is a need for a systematic approach how to acknowledge non-formal education and work experiences of young people (p. 24). D2

reports the success-story of program 'Noortemalev'9 (Action 25, p. 19). It is also mentioned in D2 that it is crucially important to inform young people about legislation and their rights in the labour market (Action 26, pp. 19–20).

Public health policy

Public health policy does not receive much attention in the analysed documents. The prominent measures that are repeatedly present in documents are information and prevention programs. For example, 'from peers to peers' education and information programs (in particular, the HIV prevention program) are mentioned as the success-story in D2 (Action 8, pp. 11–12). D3 states that support (whatever it means) for children's and students' health promotion (p. 44) and more children and student participation in sports (p. 71) are important. Most detailed public health policy program is to be found in D5. Umbrella organisation of Estonian youth organisations recognises the importance of different education and information programs for health promotion but also states that this is not enough. For example, the organisation sees that alcohol and tobacco should be made more difficult to purchase for young people and advertising of those products should be reduced (pp. 18–19). The importance of easily accessible mental health services is also emphasised (p. 19).

Civic participation

The policies to increase civic participation of young people are clearly emphasised and described only in D5. It is stated that young people must be involved in decision-making processes in local, regional and country level (p. 6). It is considered important that young people are provided with the participation experience and skills to participate through, for example, the formal or non-formal education (p. 5–6). Furthermore, the difficult policy topics should be explained to children and young people in appropriate ways (pp. 5–6).

Resources and rules and legislation

There are not many references to the resources in the analysed documents. It is only stated in D2 that the sustainable use of EU structural funds is important (Action 4, p. 9). Resources and, in particular, the redistribution of resources receives somewhat more attention in D5. It is

[9] This program contains trainings about work life and legislation for young people. However, the program is mostly known for its summer camps where young people can get work experience in safe and supervised environment and different educating and entertaining activities are organised as well.

stated that funding of youth organisations should be changed so that, for example, the system is transparent, and the smaller organisations would have better opportunities to get funding for their activities, etc. (D5, p. 12–13). Furthermore, it is suggested that state should provide municipalities with sufficient resources to fund the services which are necessary for young people (p. 17).

Rules and legislations are hardly mentioned as solutions to youth related problems. Only legislative solution in that regard may be found in D3 (p. 73) where one aim is to work out principals for youth participation in decision-making processes.

Solutions offered outside the public sector

The analysed documents focus heavily on solutions that public sector is responsible for and therefore other actors are hardly mentioned. However, for example, D3 recognises the importance of strong civil society, sustainable organisations and actively participating citizens (e.g., pp. 34–36). It is stated that the town encourages and welcomes the initiatives of third sector to contribute in social sector. As the social sector is strongly related to many youth issues, it has to mean that third sector is also welcomed to participate in the implementation of youth policies more strongly. Involving student organisations in decision-making processes is brought out separately (p. 61).

Three important actors outside the public sector are mentioned in D1. First, emphasis is put on the need that parents should be better informed about youth policies and youth work. Second, it is stated that broad public should be better informed about youth policies and youth work. It sounds like that it may involve different media campaigns on youth issues. Third, it is desirable that entrepreneurs should be involved in the actions encouraging young people to be active and more open to entrepreneurship.

Responsible actors – authorities and problem solvers

All the documents clearly focus on the solutions that their level can provide and in general do not mention solutions in other policy levels. Only national level documents make some references to the regional and local level responsibilities and contributions. For example, the contribution of local governments in the development of youth work sector is recognised in D1 (p. 5). In D2, the cooperation with all 15 counties in Estonia is emphasised regarding the work of juvenile

committees10 (Action no. 7, pp. 11). The contribution of the local governments, local youth work institutions and local youth organisations in the development of youth work sector is recognised throughout the D2. Such references were to be expected because the local government is responsible for provision of youth work and many other services in Estonia.

Public authorities seem to have many different roles in the analysed documents. As most of the analysed documents are development/implementation plans, it is not surprising that these documents mainly focus on the activities of public authorities. Public authorities seem to be responsible for everything: initiation, setting up procedures, evaluation, financial support, and knowledge production. Nevertheless, setting up procedures and financial support appear to be somewhat more relevant than the others. For example, D2 creates the impression that pretty much everything is done by public sector. However, this is probably due to the fact that report on the implementation of the Youth Work Strategy is heavily focused on public sector and its achievements during the given period and the achievements of third sector (including youth organizations) are rather missing in the document.

In relation to youth organisations, the most appropriate descriptions of the public authorities are 'supporter' and 'funder'. Supportive role of public authorities is emphasized in D1 that states that it is important to support youth organisations. However, it is not specified what that support means and whether it includes financial support. It is evident that the public authorities and youth organisations have somewhat different views in this matter as the umbrella organisation of Estonian youth organisations sees public authorities rather as the partner (D5).

In most of the documents it is not clarified what are the main forms for the contacts between the public authorities and youth organisations. Youth Parliaments and Youth Councils are mentioned in D2 (Action 31, p. 22). D5 provides wider view and approves basically any form of contact that enables to involve young people in decision-making processes. The form itself is not important and may vary depending on the situation and needs.

[10] Juvenile committees are formed of professionals from different fields (e.g., teacher, psychologist, doctor, police officer, etc.) and they deal with young offenders who have committed offences that do not need to go to court. Juvenile committees can use different sanctions (e.g., obligation to participate in certain youth program, community work, sending to closed school, etc.) with the aim to correct young person's behaviour.

There are no organisations mentioned in the documents that the public authorities are advised not to engage with. Youth organisations are generally described well organised (if described at all). In general, there is no description of young people's various ways of organising politically and being active. However, it is evident in the documents (perhaps most clearly in D1) that it is most welcomed if young people are active, organise, volunteer, and participate in civic society.

Repeatedly used words and phrases

'(Good quality) youth work', '(good quality) youth information', 'youth organisations', 'hobby schools', 'hobby education', 'youth participation', 'youth engagement', 'career counselling', 'creativity', and 'development' are the words that are repeatedly present in Estonian youth policy and youth work documents. There are not very many words in the documents to describe young people: young people are described as active few times in D2 and as participants in D3. Most adjectives to describe young people are found in D5: they are described as both active and participating and passive in various contexts.

6. National youth policy report – Germany

List of selected policy document

D1. Deutscher Bundesjugendring – German Federal Youth Council - umbrella youth organisation Title; "Mehr Europa wagen – Europäische Neuorientierung ist notwendig! (2012): Position paper of the youth umbrella organisation – Deutscher Bundesjugendring; Situation of youth in times of the financial and economic crisis and role and contributions of the German Federal Youth Council.

D2. Deutscher Bundesjugendring – German Federal Youth Council – umbrella youth organisation; Title "Developing Europe" (2014): Policy document by the German umbrella youth organisation Deutscher Bundesjugendring.

D3. Document "Eigenständige Jugendpolitik"– strategy document from national agency: Initiative for independent youth policies, supported by the federal ministry for families, the elderly, women and youth; Document presents results of many meetings, congresses etc. were various domains regarding youth were discussed, Includes perspectives of people working with youth and research about youth; Lists strategies for improving youth action strategies

D4. Document: "Jenaer Förderplan" – plan of actions by municipality regarding youth work/youth social work

D5. Jenaer youth study – Documents on local youth policy: Study is regularly conducted to describe situation of youth and develop based on evidence a matching youth policy.

D6. Document: "Kinder- und Jugendplan" – National policy document: National guidelines for children and youth support (often referred to in interviews in WP#3)

D7. Document: "Nationaler Jugendbericht" – National report to EU on the country´s youth policy: Reports how the EU youth strategy was implemented between 2012 and 2014 in Germany

Overall aim of youth policy

The Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend; BFSFJ) is aiming at an independent youth policy and hence, together with various actors such as the German Youth Institute (Deutsches Jugendinstitut, DJI) and the German Federal Youth Council (Deutscher Bundesjugendring, DBJR) shared goals and guidelines were developed. Independent youth policy entails that all political domains work in line with the needs of youth; therefore, youth policy is a cross sectional policy. Furthermore, it includes that youth take part in the political process of decision making. Various platforms and means are implemented to fulfill this aim.[11] These initiatives are similar to the EU strategy of the "structured dialogue". The document "Eigenständige Jugendpolitik" sheds light on the current status of the implementation of this independent youth strategy in Germany (cp. D3, table 1).

The Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth is currently lead by Manuela Schwesig (Social Democratic Party). For children and youth, the tasks described by the Federal Ministry are to support the expansion of childcare for children under three years until 2014 and support the day care system to secure a high quality. Since August, 2013, the legal right to early childhood education starts with the age of one year. The ministry supports an active and effective child protection service and does so by prevention and intervention. Furthermore, the aim is to protect children and adolescents on the Internet, especially against sexual violence and exploitation, and is committed to the fight against child pornography on the Internet. Additionally, projects which promote tolerance and democracy in order to prevent extremist tendencies in children and adolescents are supported.[12]

The "Child and Youth Services Act" (Kinder- und Jugendhilfe; SGB VIII) and the "Youth Protection Act" (Jugendschutzgesetz; BGBI. I S. 2730) as well as the "UN Children's Rights Convention" are in the responsibility of the Ministry. A major task is fostering inclusion of young people with disabilities. Working together with other ministries and (political) actors at different levels, such as municipalities, the federal states and the youth welfare system, the interests of children and young people in all policy areas, particularly in education, health and labor market, are targeted.

[11] (http://www.bmfsfj.de/BMFSFJ/Kinder-und-Jugend/eigenstaendige-jugendpolitik.html)
[12] (http://www.bmfsfj.de/BMFSFJ/Ministerium/aufgaben.html).

The further development of an independent youth policy is an important task as well as the support of youth initiatives and youth organizations of various kind and sizes. They support disadvantaged young people and young migrants, foster European youth programs and the cross-border cooperation within youth work. They instruct independent experts to provide regular reports in the work with and for youth (http://www.bmfsfj.de/BMFSFJ/Ministerium/aufgaben.html).

Mainly, document 3 (table 1) gives an overview of youth policy aims in Germany on page 11[13]:

- Youth politics for all and in a positive manner: not only for problematic subgroups of youth, not only youth as future workers
- Participative youth politics on all levels of politics
- Youth politics needs to be structured and cooperative, clear responsibilities on various levels
- Cross-domain cooperation between policy domains needed: youth topics in various domains, check if certain policies influence youth
- Evidence based youth politics, more knowledge for better decisions, improving the "picture" of youth in society

Instead of talking about youth policy, the Kinder- und Jugendplan (D6; table 1) speaks only about youth work. However, to give a more in depth view into (the) German youth policy, seven documents were selected. As can be seen from Table 1, they represent various levels and document types. However, in one way or another they all address youth issues in Germany.

Table 1. An overview of selected policy documents in Germany.

Document no.	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*
Level	National	National	National	Local	Local	National	National
Author	Umbrella youth organisation	Umbrella youth organisation	Agency	Municipality	Municipality	Government	registered organization (works for government and EU commission)

[13] Correspondingly translated and summarized

Type of policy document	Plan of actions	Plan of actions	Plan of actions	Plan of actions	Plan of Actions; youth study including a plan of action	Guidelines	Report
Date	2012	2014	2014 (2nd edition from 2015; preface from 2014)	2012	2014	2012	2015 (referring to 2012 to 2014)
Policy area	General policy area; EU in general terms	General policy area; European policy (youth policy as a part of it)	Many domains in which an independent youth policy is needed such as schools, after school, informal learning, transitions into employment, voting etc.	General policy	General policy; life situation of youth in Jena/surroundings	General youth policy; support different agencies/organizations	General youth policy (including labor market, education, public health, culture, leisure, participation in general)
Frequency of phrases/sentences where young people are described as:							
Participants (Teilnehmer, Teilnehmerinnen, Teilnehmende)	0	0	2	0	0	42	1
Engaged (engagiert)	0	0	1	0	17	0	5
Interested (interessiert)	0	0	1	0	13	0	0
Active (aktiv)	0	1	7	0	10	1	3
Passive (passiv)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Apathetic (apathisch, teilnahmslos)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Uninterested/not interested (uninteressiert/ nicht interessiert)	0	0	0	0	2	0	0

Unengaged (unengagiert/ unbeschäftigt)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other, please specify: Responsible (verantwortlich/ zuständig)	0	0	0	0	0	9	0
Total numbers of words	1273	1820	20,879	4,953	29,921	8,227	11,045
Total numbers of pages	3 with text/ 4 in total	4	76	73	119	17	56

Documents:
D1. Deutscher Bundesjugendring – German Federal Youth Council - umbrella youth organisation Title; "Mehr Europa wagen – Europäische Neuorientierung ist notwendig! (2012).

D2. Deutscher Bundesjugendring – German Federal Youth Council – umbrella youth organisation; Title "Developing Europe" (2014).

D3. Document "Eigenständige Jugendpolitik"– strategy document from national agency.

D4. Document: "Jenaer Förderplan" – plan of actions by municipality

D5. Jenaer youth study – Documents on local youth policy

D6. Document: "Kinder- und Jugendplan" – National policy document

D7. Document: "Nationaler Jugendbericht" – National report to EU on the country´s youth policy

How are young people spoken of, presented and *described*?

Overall, youth are seen as rather active, sometimes as victims such as of the financial crisis (D1; D2). The main point is, however, that youth need to participate (all documents). It is acknowledged that there are elites due to higher education or higher socioeconomic status. The German Federal Youth Council highlights the active role of youth and stresses that they need to be treated as agents, otherwise they would be victims. In the second document by the German Federal Youth Council (D2) it is striking that youth should offer solutions to the crisis and tension in Europe and that they seem to be even more able than governments to live the European idea:

Where governments sometimes work against each other, it is the youth who preserve the cohesion in Europe and deal with each other in solidarity. This is

done from a confrontation with the ever different cultures and historical features. Here the understanding of each other is growing more and more (D2, p.1).[14]

In the strategy document "Eigenständige Jugendpolitik" (D3) it is strengthened that youth are not only potential workers; however, employment is important. Furthermore, all SES levels need to be acknowledged as well as organized and unorganized youth groups. Even though youth can offer solutions to problems and should be included in political processes, the paper highlights limits.

With the project young people were given the opportunity to participate in individual settings directly and effectively in the debate on a stand-alone youth policy. Since the technical forums each presented new themes at the center, the results of the investment rounds were indeed only partially taken up in the forums, the proposals and positions of young people, however, were taken seriously in the centrum for Independent youth policy and appreciated. The youth received detailed feedback from the steering committee of the Centre regarding its assessment of the practicability. The opinions of young people and the feedback of the steering committee can be accessed here https://tool.ichmache-politik.de or here www.allianz-fuer-jugend.de (D3, p.9).[15]

Youth are agents and part of the process of establishing a better position of youth (D4). They offer solutions (D4, D5, D6). They are asked for their opinion and taken seriously which is expressed in the repeated youth study (D4, D5). Furthermore, youth should be part of the process to fulfill the EU youth strategy, all goals are in line with the eight domains within the EU youth strategy, all youth should participate (D7).

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[14] Original text: *Dort wo Regierungen teils gegeneinander arbeiten schafft es die Jugend den Zusammenhalt in Europa aufrecht zu erhalten und solidarisch miteinander umzugehen. Dies geschieht ausgehend von einer Auseinandersetzung mit den je unterschiedlichen Kulturen und historischen Besonderheiten. Hier wächst das Verständnis für einander mehr und mehr* (D2, p.1).

[15] Orginal text: *Mit dem Projekt bekamen junge Menschen die Möglichkeit, sich in individuellen Settings direkt und wirkungsvoll an der Diskussion über eine Eigenständige Jugendpolitik zu beteiligen. Da die Fachforen jeweils neue Themen in den Mittelpunkt stellten, fanden die Ergebnisse der Beteiligungsrunden zwar nur zum Teil Eingang in die Foren, die Vorschläge und Positionen der Jugendlichen wurden jedoch im Zentrum Eigenständige Jugendpolitik ernst genommen und wertschätzend aufgegriffen. Die Jugendlichen erhielten detaillierte Rückmeldungen von der Steue- rungsgruppe des Zentrums über deren Einschätzung zur Umsetzbarkeit. Die Meinungen der Jugendlichen und die Feedbacks der Steuerungsgruppe sind auf den Internetseiten https://tool.ichmache-politik.de beziehungsweise www.allianz-fuer-jugend.de nachzulesen* (D3, p.9).

Young people's *problems* in society - society´s problems with young people

The German Federal Youth Council focuses in the document from 2012 on the European level and mentions the following areas where action is needed (D1):

- Programs against youth unemployment.
- Stop of reduction in youth structures; securing national and international youth structures.
- Implementation of the structured dialog and support of it with sufficient resources.
- Meetings and exchange of young people, not only with focus on employability.
- More initiatives to integrate more (and younger) youth, not so strong focus on elites.
- Politics of sustainability to secure the future of children and youth in all political areas of the EU.

The Council highlights the improvement of the labour market and the reduction of earning differences in 2014 (D2). The policy document (D3) mentions that there need to be various means which allow youth to participate; e.g., the structured dialogue and dialogue in general, and various online participation tools. Main areas which need to be tackled are education, the labor market, culture and leisure.

The Jenaer youth plan is quite precise in defining topics which need to be addressed (D3):

- Gender differences/inequalities: gender sensitive social work
- Educational position: different school types
- Labour market position: employed/unemployed
- Ethnicity: language skills
- Socioeconomic differences: inclusion/exclusion
- Organized youth groups: exchange/meetings with them
- Unorganized youth: contact via social work

Also the study on Jenaer youth acknowledges problems on all levels. However, when needs of youth are clear, then solutions can be developed and that is the rationale of this study (D4). The Kinder- und Jugendplan (D6) is laying out the rules on how to obtain funding for youth work. To be eligible of funding you have to be a somehow organized youth organization. Youth organizations which work in the areas of gender

differences and inequalities or youth with handicaps, youth with different educational positions and many others can apply and eventually receive financial support. The national report to the EU on the country's youth policy (D7) mentions all eight domains of the European youth strategy as domains where work is needed (such as targeting health, NEETs etc.). On the county level the focus is especially on improving living conditions of youth, improving youth work and to engage youth in the process.

What *solutions* appear to be wise and reasonable, and what are left out of the agenda?

Many documents mention the structured dialogue as helpful to involve youth (D1, D7). Then labour market policies seem to be relevant as well to improve the employment situation of youth (D1, D2, D7). The German Federal Youth Council postulates to foster exchange within Europe also for those youth lower in education/ low in resources. They also suggest to lower the voting age from 18 years to 16 years (D2). For the government giving funding youth organizations seems reasonable (D6). Within the national report to the EU on the country's youth policy (D7) the current focus is on:

- *Social integration and successful transitions to work (Soziale Integration und gelingende Übergänge in Arbeit).*
- *Recognition and visualization of non-formal and informal learning in youth work (Anerkennung und Sichtbarmachung des nicht formalen und informellen Lernens in der Jugendarbeit)*
- *Support of participation and strengthening democracy* (D7, p.12) (*Partizipation fördern und Demokratie stärken*).

Responsible actors - What *actors* appear to be authorities and problem solvers?

There are many actors responsible for youth policy, especially as it is seen as a cross-sectional domain. Besides the various political actors, civil society and the media are mentioned (D3). On the local level, the (financial) support of the city and other partners (e.g., money from the federal state of Thuringia) are relevant. However, also the civil society, families and social work which should happen in cooperation with schools (D4). The national report to the EU on the country's youth policy (D7) underlines especially that important actors are those working the field of youth work (which is part of the youth strategy). However, the reputation of youth work in society needs to be increased.

What *roles* are young people ascribed?

Besides the points already mentioned under the heading 2, the local level mentions that there are inactive youth which need to be active to participate as well (D4, D5). All other documents see youth as important actors within the field of youth policy (D1-D7). Even though the exchange of ideas and the participation is not really on par with each other (cp. D3).

The "Eigenständige Jugendpolitik" (D3) sees youth differentiated and acknowledges that youth need space and time to develop.

Young people should learn today in less time and meet new challenges in fragile conditions. A good and self-determined time management in everyday life (school / training / further education, engagement, family, leisure) has become more difficult, freely available time quotas are scarce. However, adolescents need sufficient time for their personal development - one of its central development tasks is to deal with their physical and psychosocial development, and to find their place in the community with their peers. Teenagers need accepted timeouts and more space to unfold and to acquire and shape their surroundings. (D3, p. 16).[16]

Are any *words and phrases repeatedly used* in the framing of youth policy?

There is no repeated use of words and phrases in D1, D2, D3, D4 and D7. In D5, the words "engaged" and "interested" are frequently mentioned. However, this might be due to the items used in the study and this document reports on items and related findings. In D6, "participants" are frequently mentioned which might be due to rules about funding and reimbursement of participants in various programs/workshops.

[16] Orginal text: *Jugendliche sollen heute in kürzerer Zeit mehr lernen und neue Herausforderungen bei fragilen Rahmenbedingungen bewältigen. Ein gutes und selbstbestimmtes Zeitmanagement im Alltag (Schule/Ausbildung/ Studium, Engagement, Familie, Freizeit) ist schwieriger geworden, frei verfügbare Zeitkontingente sind knapp. Jugendliche brauchen aber genügend Zeit für ihre Persönlichkeitsentwicklung – eine ihrer zent- ralen Entwicklungsaufgaben besteht darin, sich mit ihrer körperlichen und psychosozialen Entwicklung auseinanderzusetzen sowie in der Gemeinschaft mit Gleichaltrigen ihren Platz zu finden. Jugendliche benötigen akzeptierte Auszeiten und mehr Raum, um sich entfalten und um sich ihre Umgebung aneignen und sie mitgestalten zu können.* (D3, p. 16)

7. National youth policy report – Greece

List of selected documents

1. National Report for Youth (2012, General Secretariat for Youth - Ministry of Education). The report is divided into three main sections. The first section focuses on youth policies and related legislation that have been implemented in Greece until 2012.

This section presents a ministry's concept of youth, and data on youth's attitudes and values regarding employment, their goals for the future, and institutions, as well as laws related to youth actions (for example, the initiation of Local Youth Councils), and mechanisms for the implementation of these youth actions. In this section, the report also identifies areas and issues that are the target of public policies initiatives. Examples are the areas of education, employment, military service, leisure, culture, sport, volunteering, entrepreneurship, and migration. The second section presents data based on a qualitative and quantitative research program, focusing on the characteristics, attitudes, beliefs and problems of Greek youth at the time. The report concludes with a summary and discussion of key areas identified on the report. The document is also published in English.

2. Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan (2013, Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Welfare). The Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Welfare, supported by the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation, intends with this document to make a first attempt to establish a "Youth Guarantee" Action Plan in Greece. This action plan follows a European Union initiative on how to tackle youth unemployment and to implement a set of related initiatives. It is a cohesive set of actions targeting young people, aged between 15 and 24, not in employment, education or training (NEET). The goal is, from the moment the Action Plan is fully implemented, all young people aged up to 24 years to have opportunities for employment in accordance to their credentials, or opportunities for vocational training, an apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four (4) months after leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. This Action Plan is based on a wide horizontal cooperation between

public services and institutions, as well as on the creation of partnerships between different stakeholders and youth themselves. The document is also published in English.

3. National Strategic Plan for Social Inclusion (2014, Ministry of Employment, Social Security and Welfare). The aim of this plan is to enact a common frame of principles, priorities and goals for the coordination and the evaluation of all interventions against poverty, social exclusion and discrimination. One of the clearly defined policy priorities is to combat the social exclusion of children. This plan also refers to action to combat youth unemployment.

4. Youth Policy in Greece (2014, Council of Europe). This document is a comprehensive review of youth policies in Greece up to 2014. The first section of the review focuses on two key transitions in youth development. The first concerns the transition from formal education a) to the labour market, and b) to military service and conscription. Military service is compulsory for young men in Greece. The second section focuses on ways to promote civic engagement (e.g., youth participation, civil society and volunteering, dissemination of information and engagement in European youth programs). This section also examines the promotion of civic engagement of minority and marginalized youth The third section identifies problems of the public administration regarding the implementation of youth policies, such as the absence of an integrated youth policy and strategic frameworks targeting young people, and problems with the cross-sectorial cooperation. The fourth section summarizes the issues presented in the proposal. It identifies significant problems with youth policies in Greece, for example the high degree of centralization of youth policy development and implementation, and highlights the impact of the gap in the transition to the labor market. The final section offers recommendations regarding youth policies, employment, military service, the different capacities of government and youth NGOs.

5. Action plan of targeted interventions for the reinforcement of youth employment and entrepreneurship (2012, Ministry of Employment, Social Security and Welfare). Its main goal is to highlight specific policies and measures for the growth of employment rates for youth aged 15 to 35 years. It emphasizes the following thematic priorities: a) job creation, b) professional training and work experience, c) adoption of programs that support the transition from school to work, d) support of

vocational counselling programs, e) support of youth entrepreneurship, and f) investment in programs that combat school dropout.

6. 2014 Report of the Municipality of Thessaloniki (2014, Municipality of Thessaloniki). This is the sole local report that refers to specific youth policies. Since Thessaloniki was the 2014 European Youth Capital, a number of events were organized targeting youth and addressing youth issues in the city. In this context, events as the General Assembly of the European Youth Forum were organized. Another such example was the organization by the Greek Presidency of the Council of the European Union of the EU Youth Conference on the topic of Social Inclusion of Young People. A special focus during the year was on the initiation of a dialogue between young entrepreneurs and different stakeholders on current challenges and the future of youth entrepreneurship.

7. National report: First cooperation cycle of the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2012. The report describes youth policies and actions, including legislative actions, undertaken by the Greek government. Based on the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2012, which acted as the frame of reference for youth policies, the Greek report focused both on ongoing and future plans.

Overall aim of youth policy

In Greece, different institutions at the government level develop youth policies without really communicating with each other. There is no National Strategic Plan for Youth or an integrated youth policy (1, 2, 4). The European Commission report (4) also highlighted the lack of coordination between agencies and institutions and the fact that policies often do not get translated into successful actions.

After the start of the economic crisis in 2010, governmental agencies' main interest focused on the employment and social inclusion of vulnerable groups. Youth are considered to be vulnerable and at risk to become poor and socially excluded. However, they are not differentiated in these documents from other vulnerable groups (3). Two main aims of the government are to combat youth unemployment and to support youth entrepreneurship. To combat youth unemployment, the Greek Manpower Organization has developed a program to support young unemployed people. Private companies, as well as governmental agencies may employ young people on a five-month basis, offering approximately the minimum wage. The government considers the support of youth

employment and entrepreneurship as a steppingstone for boosting the Greek economy (2).

How are young people spoken of, presented and described?

The documents included in this report convey a pessimistic and negative picture of youth. Firstly, they are presented, especially during the last years due to the economic crisis, as a vulnerable group and at high risk for poverty and social exclusion, as well as for becoming NEETs (3, 5). Secondly, they are depicted as passive users of policies and programs (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), whose needs, interests, and wishes are not taken into account (2). Thirdly, according to the European Council's report, it is a goal of the different policies developed by Greek authorities to make them more active and responsible citizens, since *(…) 'there is a prevailing view that young Greeks are passive and dependent. During a discussion of the crisis and the current situation of youth in Greece, one respondent explained that this supposed tendency is reflected in: "Young people's abstinence from society, rejection, and reluctance to expose themselves to new experience and to learn from it, as well as in non-conformist inclinations that produce protest as their first reaction"' (p. 68)*. Young people seem to be oscillating between autonomy and dependency.

In this context, it is of no surprise that government youth policies are developed without including young people's account of their wishes and needs. In contrast, Greek young people are described in more positive light in the document of the European Commission. "They have been proven to be extremely creative, active, and constructive …with a variety of interests and willingness to participate in various events", "creative, athletic, innovative, talented and engaged (4, 6). However, these positive descriptions are also conditional (e.g. in document 4 "if given opportunities").

Young people's problems in society – society's problems with young people

The most prominent problems that young people face are unemployment, insecure and flexible work conditions, and lack of social resources to enhance their position in the labor market (1, 2, 3, 5, 7). Young people who are not in employment, education, or training (the so-called "NEETs") are the most vulnerable (5) and at risk for poverty and social exclusion (2, 3). Last but not least, is young people's lack of trust towards government and public agencies (4), which seems to be symmetrical to society's view of young people as not worthy to ask their opinion about

youth policies. Society's problems with young people become clear when they are described as passive and dependent individuals, with non-conformist tendencies.

What solutions appear to be wise and reasonable, and what are left out of the agenda?

Youth policies focusing on combating youth unemployment and promoting youth entrepreneurship seem to be reasonable solutions to the problems youth and society are facing. Examples are the available policies and programs addressed to youth, co-funded by the E.U. and national funds. These help deal with the high levels of unemployment and the transition from education to the labor market. The promotion of youth entrepreneurship (1, 2, 4, 5, 7) is also considered a reasonable solution.

Emphasis should be given to the collaboration and coordination of different governmental agencies and institutions a) in needs assessment and b) in youth policy development and implementation. As was already described earlier, the Greek policy for youth is segmented between different ministries and given the labyrinth of bureaucracy it is almost impossible for a decision to be implemented widely. So the most wise and reasonable solution that is left out of the agenda is the initiation of a truly cross-sectorial policy on youth that will liaise between different agencies, ministries and departments. That was the role and the goal of the General Secretariat for Youth. In 2014, General Secretariat for Youth was diminished to a directorate in the Ministry of Education, with limited responsibilities, which is a step in the exact opposite direction (3, 4). Another negative aspect is that administrative processes appear to be more important than substantive policy action in Greece. This mainly relates to the fact that laws, regulations, and formal processes shape the work of the public administration, leaving little room for effective policy making, or applicable incentives related to it (3, 4).

Possible pathways to solutions that are left out of the agenda include i) the field of human (minority) rights and values as one of the government's priority policy domains, ii) the active participation of youth to the initiation of youth related policies, iii) the promotion of the dialogue between the government and youth, iv) the influential role of the family and the media, v) empowering youth-state relations, vi) encouraging peer-to-peer health education, especially on substances use and abuse, vii) engaging young people and youth organizations in the design and evaluation, and, ix) taking into account the recommendations

of the European Youth Week relating to structured dialogue. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7).

Responsible actors - What actors appear to be authorities and problem solvers?

The responsible actor for the design and the implementation of policies and programs for youth appears to be the public sector. Until 2014, it primarily consisted of the General Secretariat for Youth, which was the main body of the Greek state dealing with policies for youth, and it operated under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, Culture and Sports. However, as we have already mentioned under Theme 4, the General Secretariat for Youth diminished into a directorate with limited responsibilities (1, 2, 4).

The Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Labor, Social Security, & Social Solidarity are currently the authorities responsible for youth policies nationally. Locally, regional and municipal authorities are by law responsible to decide on youth policies and to implement them (2, 7). However, no related documents were found. Policies related to youth are, as a result, implemented by various agencies at the national level according to their thematic priorities. Overall, the elements of "youth policy" in Greece represent a range of services for youth based on proposals and approaches from different quarters, but not a horizontally integrated approach to youth issues (4).

Finally, civil society and private institutions carry part of the responsibility to provide solutions and to implement programs, however they are mostly funded by the government, and therefore, they have little opportunity to pursue their own solutions (4).

What roles are young people ascribed?

In most of the documents, young people are considered to be a socially vulnerable group facing severe problems, which are the consequences of the present economic crisis in Greece. It is really interesting that the report of the General Secretariat for Youth does not describe the characteristics of young people in Greece, and does not openly discuss the roles they have in society. Instead they discuss the roles that they should occupy (they should actively participate and engage in the labor and social life of the country). Although the general aim is to promote the active, responsible, creative and innovative role of youth, the actual role of youth is not mentioned, but is implied by the fact that young people have little or no access to the decision making process (1, 4, 5, 6).

Young people are mostly described as service users of various programs that promote employment and entrepreneurship, and as a vulnerable group, at risk for poverty and social exclusion. At the same time however, young people are acknowledged to be the ones that will have to face the consequences of and overcome the financial crisis, rejuvenating Greek society and labor market (2, 3, 4, 7). Young people also negotiate their transition to autonomy and to working life, but this is mentioned without addressing the complexity of the transition.

Are any words and phrases repeatedly used in the framing of youth policy?

Policy goals: Employment, training, education, active participation, cooperation, networking between youth and agencies, taking initiatives, social media, unemployment, minority rights, cross-sectorial co-ordination, equal opportunities, innovation.

Policy evaluation: Lack of coherent vision, absence of a specific and shared vision, absence of an integrated youth policy (lack of) joint vision, (lack of) clear sense of purpose in the youth field in Greece.

DOCUMENT 1

V1 Level
1. National
2. Regional
3. Local

V2 Author
1. Government
2. Agency
3. Umbrella youth organisation
4. Youth organization
5. Other, please specify

V3 Type of policy document
1. Law
2. Bill
3. Plan of actions
4. **Other, please specify: National Report of the strategies on youth policy**

V4 Date
1. 2012
2. 2013
3. 2014

V5 Policy area
1. General youth policy
2. Labor market
3. Education
4. Public health
5. Culture
6. Leisure
7. Other, please specify….

V6 Frequency of phrases/sentences where young people are described as:
1. Participants 45
2. Engaged 3
3. Interested 11
4. Active 19
5. Passive 0
6. Apathetic 0
7. Uninterested (not interested…) 2
8. Unengaged 10
9. Other, please specify: dependent 2 - independent 1

V7 Total numbers of words of the document: 26.515

V8 Total numbers of pages: 84

DOCUMENT 2

V1 Level
1. **National**
2. Regional
3. Local

V2 Author
1. **Government**
2. Agency
3. Umbrella youth organisation
4. Youth organization
5. Other, please specify

V3 Type of policy document
1. Law
2. Bill
3. **Plan of actions**
4. Other, please specify

V4 Date
1. 2012
2. 2013
3. **2014**

V5 Policy area
1. General youth policy
2. **Labor market**
3. Education
4. Public health
5. Culture
6. Leisure
7. Other, please specify….

V6 Frequency of phrases/sentences where young people are described as:
1. Participants: 14
2. Engaged: 23
3. Interested: 8
4. Active: 16
5. Passive: 1
6. Apathetic: 1
7. Uninterested (not interested…): 3
8. Unengaged: 21
9. Other, please specify: Beneficiary: 68

V7 Total numbers of words of the document: 26.422

V8 Total numbers of pages: 92

DOCUMENT 3

V1 Level
1. **National**
2. Regional
3. Local

V2 Author
1. **Government**
2. Agency
3. Umbrella youth organisation
4. Youth organization
5. Other, please specify

V3 Type of policy document
1. Law
2. Bill
3. Plan of actions
4. Other, please specify: **National framework of social inclusion**

V4 Date
1. 2012
2. 2013
3. **2014**

V5 Policy area
1. General youth policy
2. Labor market
3. Education
4. Public health
5. Culture
6. Leisure
7. Other, please specify: **Social inclusion of vulnerable groups**

V6 Frequency of phrases/sentences where young people are described as:
10. Participants **10**
11. Engaged **23**
12. Interested **19**
13. Active **23**
14. Passive **6**
15. Apathetic **0**
16. Uninterested (not interested…) **0**
17. Unengaged **1**
18. Other, please specify: socially vulnerable group **64**

V7 Total numbers of words of the document: **35.047**

V8 Total numbers of pages: **128**

DOCUMENT 4

V1 Level
1. **National**
2. Regional
3. Local

V2 Author
1. Government
2. Agency
3. Umbrella youth organisation
4. Youth organization
5. **Other**, please specify: **Council of Europe**

V3 Type of policy document
1. Law
2. Bill
3. Plan of actions
4. **Other**, please specify: **International review of youth policy in Greece**

V4 Date
1. 2012
2. 2013
3. **2014**

V5 Policy area
1. **General youth policy**
2. Labor market
3. Education
4. Public health
5. Culture
6. Leisure
7. Other, please specify….

V6 Frequency of phrases/sentences where young people are described as:
1. Engaged 34
2. Interested 10
3. Active 39
4. Passive 6
5. Apathetic 0
6. Uninterested (not interested…) 0
7. Unengaged 3
8. Other, please specify

a. Participants 59
b. Dependent 5
c. Independent 12

V7 Total numbers of words of the document: 34.261

V8 Total numbers of pages: 90

DOCUMENT 5

V1 Level
1. **National**
2. Regional
3. Local

V2 Author
1. **Government**
2. Agency
3. Umbrella youth organisation
4. Youth organization
5. Other, please specify

V3 Type of policy document
1. Law
2. Bill
3. **Plan of actions**
4. Other, please specify

V4 Date
1. **2012**
2. 2013
3. 2014

V5 Policy area
1. General youth policy
2. **Labor market**
3. Education
4. Public health
5. Culture
6. Leisure
7. Other, please specify….

V6 Frequency of phrases/sentences where young people are described as:
1. Participants 36
2. Engaged 17
3. Interested 14
4. Active 10
5. Passive 1
6. Apathetic 0
7. Uninterested (not interested…) 0
8. Unengaged 7
9. Other, please specify: Beneficiary 83
10. Other, please specify: Creative 3
11. Other, please specify: Innovative 7

V7 Total numbers of words of the document**: 43.144**

V8 Total numbers of pages: **160**

DOCUMENT 6

V1 Level
1. National
2. **Regional**
3. Local

V2 Author
1. Government
2. Agency
3. Umbrella youth organisation
4. Youth organization
5. **Other, please specify: Local Authority**

V3 Type of policy document
1. Law
2. Bill
3. Plan of actions
4. **Other, please specify: Regional Report**

V4 Date
1. 2012
2. 2013
3. **2014**

V5 Policy area
1. General youth policy
2. Labor market
3. Education
4. Public health
5. Culture
6. Leisure
7. **Other, please specify: Events/Activities Report**

V6 Frequency of phrases/sentences where young people are described as:
1. Engaged: 14
2. Interested: 9
3. Active: 21
4. Passive: 4
5. Apathetic: 0
6. Uninterested (not interested…): 0
7. Unengaged: 0
8. Other, please specify

V7 Total numbers of words of the document: 2.427

V8 Total numbers of pages: 6

DOCUMENT 7

V1 Level
1. National
2. Regional
3. Local

V2 Author
1. Government
2. Agency
3. Umbrella youth organisation
4. Youth organization
5. Other, please specify

V3 Type of policy document
1. Law
2. Bill
3. Plan of actions
4. Other, please specify: National Report

V4 Date
1. 2012
2. 2013
3. 2014

V5 Policy area
1. General youth policy
2. Labor market
3. Education
4. Public health
5. **Culture**
6. Leisure
7. Other, please specify: volunteering, social inclusion and participation, evaluation of structured dialogue

V6 Frequency of phrases/sentences where young people are described as:
1. Engaged: 10
2. Interested: 4
3. Active: 9
4. Passive: 7
5. Apathetic: 1
6. Uninterested (not interested…): 1
7. Unengaged: 3
8. Other, please specify: Unemployed: 6

V7 Total numbers of words of the document: 10.865

V8 Total numbers of pages: 22

8. National youth policy report – Italy

List of selected document

Researchers followed different strategies to identify possible candidate documents for analysis. Web searches through search engines and databases were accompanied by direct request for suggestions to experts who were interviewed for the WP3 Task 3.2. and to FNG, that is member of the CATCH-EyoU Consortium.

A preliminary list of 27 documents was created[17]. After a first reading of such documents, 8 documents were finally included in the list for analysis, allowing enough variability in terms of year of publication, policy level (national and regional/local) and policy area.

Table 1 presents the final list of documents that were selected and analyzed by the UNIBO team. The documents 1-3 were published by agencies at a national level, while documents 4-8 refer to the regional-local level. Documents 2 and 3 were produced by Youth Organizations, while documents 1 and 4-7 where published by governmental agencies (at national, regional and local level). Each document was independently analyzed by two researchers. Results were revised by a third researcher.

Table 1. List of selected documents.

N.	Document name	Level	Year
1.	*Piano di Attuazione Italiano della Garanzia per i Giovani* [Italian Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan]	National	2013
2.	*Forum Nazionale dei Giovani - Linee programmatiche 2012-2015* [Italian youth forum - programme of action 2012-2015]	National	2012
3.	*Filo diretto con le seconde generazioni - il nostro*	National	2014

[17] The first list was also uploaded on the WP3 group/documents private area of the project website.

	Manifesto [Direct contact with second generations – Our Manifesto in 10 points]		
4.	*Promozione del benessere e la prevenzione del rischio in adolescenza: "Progetto Adolescenza" Linee di indirizzo regionali* [Promotion of well-being and risk prevention in adolescence: "Project adolescence", Regional guidelines]	Regional (Emilia Romagna)	2013
5.	*Approvazione dello schema di accordo e relativi allegati in materia di politiche giovanili (GECO 3 – Giovani evoluti e consapevoli) tra la Regione Emilia Romagna e la Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri – Dipartimento per la gioventù. - Anno 2013.* [Approval of the agreement on youth policies between Region Emilia Romagna and President of the Council of Ministry - Department of Youth - year 2013]	Regional (Emilia Romagna)	2013
6.	*Approvazione Indirizzi Strategici in attuazione della Garanzia Giovani e della Direttiva pluriennale per la realizzazione del Progetto Straordinario "Garanzia Giovani Piemonte - GGP". Anni 2014 - 2015.* [Strategic guidelines for the implementation of the youth guarantee – Regione Piemonte – years 2014-2015]	Regional (Piemonte)	2014
7.	*Piano Provinciale Giovani 2013 – Approvazione Bandi "Creazione, incremento e continuità di incubatori giovanili e spazi giovanili" (Gennaio 2013)* Youth Plan 2013 – Approval calls "Creation, improvement, and continuity lab and business incubators and youth spaces"	Local (Provincia di Novara - Piemonte)	2013
8.	*Tutti i giovani sono una risorsa. Indirizzi strategici e obiettivi di sviluppo di Bollenti Spiriti, programma della Regione Puglia per le Politiche Giovanili 2014-2015* [All youth are resources. Aims and strategies of "Bollenti	Regional (Puglia)	2014

Spiriti", programme of Puglia Region for youth policies 2014-2015]

Short description of the documents and overall aim of youth policy

National-level documents

We selected three documents (1-3), each representing the perspectives of different actors: the Government (1), a National Youth Umbrella organization (2), a National Network of migrant organisations involving also youth (3), in order to provide a representation of a range of issues of concern of different actors. The first document (Government) focuses on education and labour policies, the other two documents are centered on the concerns of youth organisations and migrant (including youth) organisations.

(1) The **Italian Youth Guarantee Implementation plan** is a plan of action of the Government of 2014 focusing on the policy areas of Education and Labor Market. The document is 27 pages long (about 7000 words) and is available both in Italian and in English.

In the document there are no explicit definitions of "youth policy". Indirectly, it is possible to derive some core guiding principles. For example, at p. 1, the Recommendation clearly distinguishes structural reforms, included in the Guarantee itself, and the introduction of a wide range of initiatives to help young people, supported by funding from the Youth Employment Initiative and the European Social Fund (ESF) and the relevant national co-financing.

At p. 3, it is emphasized that the implementation of the Guarantee constitutes both a challenge and a great opportunity to test a more effective system for taking charge, analysing needs and activating its beneficiaries on the basis of a mutual obligation.

The stated aim of the youth policy is formulated as follows, in different pages of the document.

At p.4, it is stated that "The framework of the Youth Guarantee Plan, *has the dual purpose of impacting on the unemployment emergency and to lay the foundations for the creation of a permanent guarantee system.* Concentrating resources in the years 2014-2015 will provide a strong impetus for a new

project, *laying the foundations for the set-up of more efficient programmes and a new system of coordination, monitoring and evaluation,* which will have an impact in upcoming years.

The aim is to regulate "the component of the youth guarantee that *concerns young people who are out of the formal education system but do not register with the employment services".*

At p. 3, it is clarified that the "Youth Guarantee", at least with respect to those who register with the employment services (upon provision of Legislative Decree N. 181), is thus already part of national legislation since 2002 (when this legislation was introduced). What is not regulated is the component of the youth guarantee that concerns young people who are out of the formal education system but do not register with the employment services. While "essential levels of performance", at least for some categories of beneficiaries are already regulated, such legislation is not yet fully implemented and there is a lack of a standardized system that can monitor services and evaluate their effectiveness.

In terms of the involvement of young people leaving the formal education system, there is also a need to make the most of this system as a "starting point" for information and first level guidance. For the reasons described above, the implementation of the Guarantee constitutes both a challenge and a great opportunity to test a more effective system for taking charge, analysing needs and activating its beneficiaries on the basis of a mutual obligation.

The document includes explicit reference to youth policies at European, National and Regional level.

(2) The **Italian youth forum - programme of action 2012-2015** is a plan of action (strategy plan) at national level produced by the main youth umbrella organization in Italy in 2012. It is a document of general youth policy of 8 pages (4338 words).

The document does not include an explicit definition of youth policy. The aims of the youth policy are stated by authors in the following terms, at p. 1:

"Through these guidelines we want to emphasize that our mission is to focus the public debate on the value of youth. Personal growth and integration of new

generations are core elements to guarantee the respect of human rights and democracy. Starting from this approach, we defined these "program guidelines" that represent a guide and the aim of our forum, that has his value in the representation of youth organization."

The document makes reference to other policies at European level, like "Education and Training 2020" (ET 2020) (at p. 4) and "The Bologna Process".

(3) Direct contact with second generations – Our Manifesto in 10 points is a position paper (manifesto) elaborated by a network of 30 organizations following a public call launched by the Ministry of Work and Social Policies in 2014. The document was elaborated following a 3-days meeting in Rome, and networking activities through the portal "Migrant integration". A Community was created with representatives of the organizations involved, in order to discuss the manifesto. It covers the policy areas of education, labour market, culture and sports. The participants explicitly decided not to include the issue of citizenship into the document. However, all associations involved adhere to the campaign "Italy is also me", having among its aims to promote the reform of the right to citizenship. It is 16 pages long (8370 words). Its extended version is published in Italian, but a summary is available in different languages (including English).

The document does not offer an explicit definition of youth policy. The aims of youth policies are defined as follows (at p. 1):

"The aim of this document ("Manifesto") is to collect the purposes that were elaborated by more than 30 organizations, through a direct discussion and though the network created through the web portal devoted to the initiative. […] Some priority issues were identified. The document is made of four main sections (work, education, culture and sport, participation and active citizenship) in which concrete solutions are proposed, that could be adapted to different contexts and specific needs."

No specific references are made to other policies (EU, national, regional, local level).

Regional/local level policy documents

In order to have sufficient geographic variability, the subsequent 5 documents were collected from three different Regions, including the

Centre (Emilia Romagna, 2 documents, 4-5), the North (Piemonte, 2 documents, 6-7), and the South (Puglia, 1 document, 8)

(4) The document entitled **"Emilia-Romagna regional guidelines. Project Adolescence (2013)"** has been developed following a large consultation process with experts on adolescent issues. It proposes inter-institutional and inter-professional coordination and integration of existing services and interventions "based on the involvement of the actors who work at different levels on adolescent issues: local authorities, health services, cultural and social services, educational authorities, cultural, sport and religious youth associations, and families" (p. 7). The document moves from the consideration of vulnerabilities and challenges faced by young people during the developmental phase of adolescence, and aims to identify intervention strategies within the framework of health promotion and risk prevention. In particular, it stresses the importance of interprofessional and intersectoral collaboration and integration between social, health and education services as a strategy for community development for well-being promotion. The document is 46 pages long (about 17843 words).

The aim of the guidelines is health and well-being promotion:
Talking about well-being promotion risks to be rhetorical: we all desire wellness, but the question is: how can policies guarantee to be promoters and producers of well-being, especially in such a complex and changing life period as adolescence? … The mandate of pursuing well-being and full development of children, adolescents and young people is fully shared by Law 14/08 'Norms for the younger generations' that identifies well-being as key objective in the first article of the law itself and places it as a necessary condition to enhance social, cultural and economic development of the society (p. 5).

The guiding principles of the document are inspired by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the recognition of citizenship and rights to adolescents and, ultimately, defines the need of "a conception of policies for the new generations as *policies for citizenship"* (p. 14). Central to the aims of youth policy are: the right to participate in the community; the right to education and knowledge; the right to live in a healthy context that promotes well-being; the right to be listened to. The guidelines, thus, adopt a framework that considers which local services and contexts should be supported in order to value adolescents' rights:

The Region should guarantee conditions which would ensure to every teenager living in Emilia-Romagna the recognition of their rights: to listen, to know the reality where they live, the right to self-knowledge and to express their own creativity, skills and aspirations, to benefit from interventions and easily accessible, flexible, comfortable and nearby services. Planning the future of our Region also means to support adolescents in their growth, by promoting health and well-being from a bio-psycho-social perspective. (p. 5)

The document includes many explicit references to policy at national and regional level. There are no references to the European level.

(5)The second document selected from Region Emilia Romagna is the **agreement about youth policies (GECO 3 - Giovani Evoluti e Consapevoli) between the Region Emilia-Romagna and the Presidency of the Council of Minister– Youth Department - Year 2013**. The main document is 5 pages long (1893 words) and 18 pages of attachments.

The youth policy GECO3 has different aims:

- To implement innovative policies for young people, arranged between various institutional levels, shared within the Region and with Local Authorities, in order to develop more effective actions, by relying on the experience and the skills acquired in the interventions implemented in youth aggregation spaces;
- To value best practices and territorial vocations, by paying attention to the smaller realities and those most in need on financial or planning support (p. 9);
- To develop activities in the aggregation spaces with particular emphasis on the promotion of individual and social skills, adolescents' creativity, active citizenship and leadership (p.9);
- To promote projects aimed to strengthen civic engagement, volunteering, healthy lifestyles education and responsible participation;
- To promote communication between the existing experiences, to spread useful information for youth, and monitoring the experiences;
- To promote youth aggregation centres as spaces in which it is possible to work on youth empowerment, trough bottom- up methodologies, participative planning and peer education;
- To strengthen and qualify these intervention areas in order to make these experiences more rooted at the regional level, maintaining a strong focus on the weakest realities, operating according to the construction of an organic system of interventions in aggregation

youth spaces, creating networks, which will improve the integration between the existing experiences, their qualifications and their development (p. 9).

The subsequent two documents are from Region Piemonte; one document is from the Regional Government and the second one from a provincial government.

(6) The sixth selected document is the **resolution adopted by Region Piemonte in 2013 to implement Youth Guarantee Plan at the regional level.** It is composed of two main document: the first is *Atto di indirizzo per l'attuazione del piano straordinario "Garanzia Giovani"* [Act of directives for the implementation of the special plan "Youth Guarantee"]: in 27 pages it describes the actions that are comprised in the implementation plan, the actors who are in charge of the implementation, the beneficiaries for the activities and the amount or financial resources devoted to each kind of action; the second one is called *Indirizzi strategici per dare attuazione alla Raccomandazione del Consiglio dell'Unione Europea del 22 aprile 2013 sull'istituzione di una "Garanzia per i Giovani* [Strategic directives to implement the European Union Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on the establishment of a "Youth Guarantee"]. This document illustrates the principles that guided the preparation of the plan by the *Direzione regionale Istruzione, Formazione Professionale e Lavoro* [Regional Directorate of Education, Vocational Training and Employment]. The main ideas behind the plan is to adopt a common frame, connecting all the public actors that can support (directly and not) the implementation of the programme. It identifies the target of the action (young people aged between 16 and 25 years old), it identifies the public actors in charge of evaluating the process and the criteria/indicators for evaluation. It provides a detailed analysis of the situation of the target group at national, regional and EU level, with reference to education, training and position in the labour market and describes the strategies, the actions (training, training on the job, apprenticeship, financial support) to be implemented and the amount of money devoted for those actions).

There are references to youth policies at other institutional levels: national (Italian Youth Guarantee), local (Labor market policies) and European (Youth Employment Initiative and the European Social Fund - ESF).

(7) The **Provincial Youth Plan 2013** (Province of Novara) refers to the promotion of local interventions that will involve, as actors and

beneficiaries, youth living in this area. Such projects should offer concrete opportunities to candidates to acquire technical, social, organizational and professional skills. The main document is 5 pages long (923 around words) with 7 additional pages of attachments.

The aim of the Novara Provincial Youth Plan 2013 is to promote projects on several thematic areas (aggregation places/opportunities; start up and co-working) according to the regional guidelines, through interventions that will involve, as actors and beneficiaries, youth living in this local area. Such projects should offer concrete opportunities to acquire technical, social, organizational and professional skills. The plan is a call for projects. The document makes explicit reference to youth policies at regional level (LR 44/2000).

(8) **Bollenti Spiriti** is the program for youth policies of the Region Puglia. It consists of a set of interventions and actions to allow young citizens of Puglia to take part in all the aspects of the community life. The idea beyond this program (literally "Boiling Souls") is to consider youth as a resource and not as a problem. The explicit focus is on their power and the willingness to participate. The document is 16 pages long (around 5388 words).

The overall aims are to transform the challenges related to the economic crises in opportunities involving young people as transformative agents and to provide opportunities to a larger number of young people and involve them actively in the development of their community.

The plan (Bollenti Spiriti) goes beyond top-down policies that have an impact on youth: school, university, education, work, culture, territory, innovation. The aim of Bollenti Spiriti is to evaluate the contribution of youth in each of these fields, not only as target of public policies, but active part of an innovation and development process in the territories and communities. Seven years after the start of Bollenti Spiriti, the aim is always "to make youth the protagonists in the decisions about issues that concern them".

The aim is to strengthen young people's skills, to help them develop a personal and professional life project and at the same time to take part in the development of their local community. The task of Bollenti Spiriti is to evaluate young people's contribution to face the crisis, transforming it in

a possibility for change. Five aims mentioned as strategic are the following:

- To leave hidden resources and potentials to emerge;
- To enhance youth training and learning by doing;
- To support youth projects and initiatives until they become autonomous;
- To create an open intervention system for youth;
- To make Puglia a welcoming Region to new generations.

The document includes explicit reference to policy at regional/national level, in particular the Youth Guarantee (DGM n. 1693/2005, n. 175/2008, n. 778/2011 e n. 2788/2012), which informed the Region's orientations and aims. Moreover, it makes reference to the EU level, and particularly to the "Youth Guarantee" and "Youth on the move" programmes and to the following: Communication of the Commission 412/ 2008; Recommendation of European Council 22 April 1013: Renewed Social Agenda: Opportunity, access and solidarity in XXI century Europe.

Description of documents:

- Eight documents were finally selected.
- Three documents (1-3) were published by agencies at national level; among them two documents were published by youth (umbrella) organizations (2-3) and one by the Italian Government (1). Five documents (4-8) refer to the regional and local levels.
- All the documents were published in Italian. Only two documents have an official English translation (1, 3).
- The length of documents ranges from about 5 pages to 46 pages.
- One document was published in 2012, four documents were published in 2013, three were published in 2014.

Overall aim of policy documents

- The documents rarely include an explicit definition of youth policy.
- The aims of the policies are quite heterogeneous. In general, documents put youth at the centre, emphasizing the importance of innovative

policies for young people capable to value their resources and contribution. This idea is more explicit in some documents (e.g. Bollenti Spiriti) and implicit in others (e.g., in the Provincial Youth Plan 2013 - Province of Novara).
- The aims are declined at different levels (national, regional, local).
- The aims of policy documents cover several policy areas. The most typical are education and labor market.
- Documents make reference to youth policies at higher levels (e.g., local documents make references to the regional levels, regional documents make reference to the national and European levels, etc.).
- At the European level, Youth Guarantee is the most cited policy.

How are young people spoken of, presented and described?

National-level documents

(1) In the **Italian Youth Guarantee Implementation plan** the descriptions of youth are very limited and framed in negative terms: youth are described (1 instance) as "passive":

The stock of young people aged 15-24 amounts to 6,041 units. Of these, 1,274,000 are neither working nor attending education or training, so they are "never employed"/unemployed and inactive. Expanding the target population up to 29 years old, the number of those who are not working ("never employed" /unemployed and inactive) and do not attend any education or training pathway - the so-called NEET - amount to 2,254,000 people, out of a total of 9,439,200 young people (23,9 %).

and "unengaged" (1 instance, at p. 2):

Most worrying, in particular, is the phenomenon of young people 15-24 years old who are not engaged in any work activity or included in educational/training pathway (NEET),

The description of young people stresses the educational position, age differences and labour market position, with a special focus on geographic differences. Gender and foreign status (ethnicity?) are also mentioned at p. 2:

"since the beginning of the economic crisis, the employment rate fell by 3 points percentage for those *with only a primary school degree and by 5.4 for persons with only an intermediate school degree"*

[…] Most worrying, in particular, is the phenomenon of young people 15-24 years old who are not engaged in any work activity or included in educational/training pathway (NEET), estimated at about 1.27 million (including 181 thousand foreign citizens), 21% of the population of this age group. This percentage exceeds 30% in some of the most relevant regions in the South of Italy (Campania, Calabria and Sicily).

[…] In 2012 the youth unemployment rate (15-24 years) was 35.3% and in the first half of 2013 it registered a further rise, with a similar profile between males and females (for the latter, however, a lower rate of participation in the labour market can be registered).

Young people are represented as "victims"
(At p. 2:) Young people are definitely the age group most affected by the present employment crisis: in 2012 the youth unemployment rate (15-24 years) was 35.3% and in the first half of 2013 it registered a further rise, with a similar profile between males and females (for the latter, however, a lower rate of participation in the labour market can be registered). This is particularly the case for the South, where the youth unemployment rate verges on 47% and where the employment rate is stuck at 13.2% (compared to 18.6% nationally and 32.8 % of the average European Union).

The document does not describe explicitly ways in which young people are engaged politically (or other ways of being active).

(2) In the **Italian youth forum - programme of action 2012-2015** young people [those belonging to youth organizations, and as a result of such involvement] are described as "engaged" (1 instance) and "active" (1 instance):

P. 2. Youth Organizations are the most important tool for young people to be active and engaged citizens. The work in the Youth Organizations, offers important opportunities for development of skills that allow them to be innovators and protagonists in society.

Young people are described in terms of gender differences (1), labour market position (2) and organised youth groups (3). For example:

(1) P. 4 *The importance of policies for young women to guarantee the compatibility of work and family life*.
(2) P. 4 *Youth who are approaching labour market*

Brain drain - the emigration of intelligent, well-educated individuals searching for better salary or life conditions.

NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)
"*working poor*", i.e. youth with a long term contract but with low salary
(3) P. 1 *Youth organizations* are the part of society that is committed toward guaranteeing a better future for next generations.
P. 2 *Youth organizations* are the most important instrument for being active and engaged youth.

Young people are presented nor as causing problems nor offering solutions, but as a reserve of potentials and competences that is ignored/underestimated by the society. The representation of youth in general describes them as "passive" (e.g. waiting for recognition and support from society's institutions). The only active youth are represented as those who belong to youth organizations; the latter are described as the most important opportunity for being active and engaged citizens.

In terms of political action, young people are described as well-organised.

(3) In the document entitled **Direct contact with second generations – Our Manifesto in 10 points**, Young people are described in term of:
Gender differences:
For example, at p. 9 it refers to "*experimenting new ways of involvement for mothers, because experience shows that it is more difficult to involve mothers at home, because they have a less rich social life*"

Labour market position;
(p. 12) *Young migrants (second generations) have more difficulties in finding a job with adequate salary*.

Ethnicity (and age):
Second generations – youth who are considered "migrants" even if they did not decide to migrate, or they did not migrate at all.

Socioeconomic differences:
Parents' (mother's) socio-cultural background influences school achievements. (p. 5).

Young people are described as (potential) agents: the document stresses the need to promote young migrants' active participation. In terms of political action, young people are described as diversely organised (p. 15).

Regional/local level policy documents

(4) Emilia-Romagna Regional Guidelines: Project Adolescence, as the title suggests, focuses in particular on adolescents. This age is presented from a psychological point of view as a period of significant transitions which relate to specific needs and challenges (construction of autonomous personal identity, body image, attachment to and relationships with significant parental figures, etc.). Attention is focused on the potential developmental risks and vulnerabilities:

Adolescence is a stage of development with specific needs and characteristics that make adolescents particularly vulnerable and this may also facilitate the use of substances and problems of addiction or distress. (p. 34)

Youth of immigrant background are described as more vulnerable:
In particular, foreign adolescents living in Italy are facing a complexity of challenges including working out their dual belonging to the culture of origin and that of the country in which they live… (p. 14).

Young girls from ethnic background are mentioned in terms of being under even bigger threat of school dropout due to cultural norms or economic necessity. Females are also reported as being under particular risk of eating disorders.

The guidelines describe several times young people in an active citizenship perspective as agents and as resourceful:

It is therefore necessary to provide adolescents and young people with knowledge, skills and opportunities in order to help them become active citizens (p. 13)

*Beyond each single project, it is necessary to share a vision of young people as trustworthy, full citizens with resources, **capable of activating** to promote well-being for themselves and for their community. (p.22)*

*Adolescents represent a fundamental **resource** for the future of society and as such it is important to promote their ability to make healthy choices, to protect their physical and mental integrity and the development of opportunities for autonomy. (p. 12).*

However, even though young people are seen as active and as a resource for their communities, it is not clear from the text in what their agency and input consists. The focus is instead on the contextual aspects that can be targeted in order to ensure a supportive and preventive environment for them and on the strategies for developing skills and knowledge that presumably lead to active citizenship.

This perspective on young people describes them as offering solutions, but only when the education contexts are active and supportive of youth:

"*Valuable experiences of youth **protagonism** were enacted in the spaces designed to enhance active citizenship and the promotion of civic engagement, creativity and responsible participation. This confirms that a territorial area where young people have the opportunity to be **active** participants, will benefit from their greater capacity to promote initiatives in autonomy, allowing to create a fertile ground for the vitality of the spaces as places of real active citizenship.*" (p. 29)

(5) In the approval of the **agreement GECO 3**, young people are described as active, creative, aware and innovative.

- *To recognize young people not only as a social category characterized by disease, but as a resource and an incentive for the development of the local community, able to give a significant contribution in terms of knowledge, expertise, creativity, innovation*. (p.7)

Young people are also able to manage project by themselves and to be responsible to initiate activities focused on citizenship, racism, peace issues.

- *some experiences of self-management were implemented, in which young people, protagonists and actors also at a management level, proposed themselves as active interlocutors on rights, peace and environmental issues.*(p.8)

The document cites the problem of NEET referring to the lack of opportunities for young people but gives some solutions.

(6) **In the resolution adopted by Region Piemonte in 2013 to implement Youth Guarantee Plan**, young people are described as passive,

sometimes even victims. They pay the consequences of the crisis more than any other generation: they find a lot of obstacles to enter the labor market: due to increasing age of retirement; if they get a job, they are the first who lose it in case of crisis. As a consequence they lose motivation, stop searching for a job and reduce their investment in education, with dramatic consequences in terms of human capital loss.

In most parts of the document, young people are described as passive. From p. 43 to p. 56 there is a specific section reporting the situation of young people in Italy regarding unemployment and education. It includes one paragraph illustrating statistics on NEET (4 sentences) and one discussing European mobility of young people and how mobility increases skills that facilitate youth employment. There are only 2 sentences that describe young people as active (1 = young as innovators; 1 = young that have training experiences abroad). Distinctions are made in terms of:

- Gender differences/inequalities: there is only one sentence reporting that the presence of youth (up to 24 years old) in the labour market is decreasing (especially males).
- Educational position: there is a distinction between those having diploma, students, those with a university degree.
- Labour market position: the document deals in particular with young people who are not in labour market, focusing on their challenges; the document offers concrete action and general strategies that the Guarantee implements to support youth entry in the labour market (with apprenticeship or traineeship).
- Socioeconomic differences: describing NEETS social, economic and educational capital are mentioned.

Young people are described as victims of the crisis. Data reported in the document, however, emphasise that youth unemployment preceded the economic crisis, and that in order to face this issue, structural actions need to be implemented.

(7) In the calls of the **Provincial Youth Plan 2013 – Province of Novara**, youth are mostly beneficiaries of interventions projects that will be funded through the calls. Their involvement in project implementation is a criteria that gives additional points to project concerning aggregation/animation, and it is valuable for project funding. No specific differences between youth groups are mentioned. The target of projects

will be young people between 15 and 30 years old, who live in the local area.

(8) In the plan **Bollenti Spiriti**, youth are conceptualized in terms of educational position and socioeconomic differences; there is a distinction between those who have opportunities and can benefit from the program, and those who are at risk of further exclusion–due to lower cultural, relational and economic capital –. Past experiences showed that low socio-economic background reduces the chances to become beneficiaries of plans of actions, public calls, policies. In this sense, Bollenti Spiriti aims to reach its target group to the largest extent (optimistically, all youth). Youth are described as agents (potentially): for example at p. 2, youth are considered not only as target of public policies, but active part of a innovation and development process in the local territories and communities. In the document, they are also presented as victims: "Youth are paying for the economic crisis, more than others" (p. 2). "Youth are the main victims of the crisis and the only way to get out of it, is offering (potential) solutions" (p. 3, 4).

How are young people spoken of, presented and described?

In general terms, young people are described as potential agents.

- When documents describe the current status quo (in term of job opportunities), young people are often described as disadvantaged and victims.
- When policies focus on the "policy rationale", youth are described as resources for their communities, respectively at local, regional, national level. The policies is intended to value such resources for the present and for the future of the society.
- The regional documents under analysis show different approaches to youth. The document from Piemonte (6) focus on the implementation of a European Plan (Youth Guarantee) and presents youth as passive victims. The other two regional documents report an experimental initiative in the sphere of youth policy and refer to the development of the community (more so in Bollenti Spiriti). Indeed, Puglia concentrates on involving youth as a resource and as agents through a

bottom-up process (8), while Emilia-Romagna (4, 5) takes a more top-down approach and focuses on contextual educational interventions, which conceive youth as recipients.

-Young people are differently grouped and described mainly according to education, labour market position and socio economic status; less frequently according to gender, age, and ethnicity.

Young people's problems in society - society´s problems with young people

National-level documents

(1) In the **Italian Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan** the most urgent policy issues (i.e. young people's problems in society) are formulated as follows:

- At the European level, the most urgent issues are: employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship;
- At a country level, the most urgent problems are: the negative effects of the crisis, the employment crisis, and training.

(2) In the **Italian Youth Forum - Programme of Action 2012-2015** the issues that are considered most urgent (at national level) deal with ensuring of human rights and, in particular: the right to work, the right to a house, the right to have a family; the right of participation, education and identity.

(3) In **Direct Contact with Second Generations – Our Manifesto in 10 points** the most urgent policy issues at national level are: work, education, culture and sport, participation and active citizenship. All of these are treated with a specific focus on migrants' social and economic integration – for example, second generations' difficulties in the sphere of education (e.g. risk of academic failure and school dropout) and in finding employment.

Regional/local level policy documents

(4) In the **Emilia-Romagna Regional Guidelines: Project Adolescence** the most urgent policy issues also deal with the recognition of rights, in particular those of adolescents, and the promotion of well-being through development of local communities, development of personal resources and diffusion of correct and specific information. The actions should support education initiative to prevent school drop-out and facilitate

entry into employment, sustain intercultural integration, prevent behavioral risks.

The document refers to adolescents' problems in society mainly in terms of 'risk behavior' and, specifically — school dropout, bullying and violent behavior, addiction. These are all related to the specific vulnerabilities teenagers face in their psychological development and to the lack of healthy relationships and/or supportive environments in their lives.

So, adolescents are recognized as potentially problematic, but as the language refers mainly to 'vulnerabilities' and characteristics of significant relationships and contexts, the responsibility seems to be placed mainly on structural factors and adults' role. This kind of focus gives centrality to the issue of how social and health care services can act to prevent risk behavior. The guidelines stress on the need of a holistic approach, which considers neurobiological, psychological, social and cultural aspects.

(5) In the **Approval of the Agreement on Youth Policies: GECO 3**, the society's problems with young people are the lack of resources and opportunities caused by the crisis. The main issue is to give continuity to the interventions in education, civic engagement and volunteering areas.

(6)In the **resolution adopted by Region Piemonte in 2013 to implement the Youth Guarantee Plan** the problems that challenge young people in society are due primarily to unemployment that can have dramatic long term consequences on incomes, welfare provisions, health and well-being of current and future generations. Society in turn loses human capital, while job market and enterprises miss the opportunity to benefit from innovation and creativity of younger generation. In this sense, youth unemployment and inactivity are framed as costs and damage to society. The situation in Italy is presented as particularly problematic – higher values of indicators of occupational difficulties and inactivity, increasingly lengthy education which does not meet adequate results in terms of acquired qualifications and skills, long delays for the exit from the family home and the construction of an independent residential status. Youth's problems are seen in terms of costs to society, bringing the idea of "causes of problems", more than comprehension or support.

(7) In the calls of the **Youth Plan 2013 – Province of Novara**, no explicit youth policy issues are mentioned, but indirectly one can understand that

the main issues are youth entrepreneurship (create and support start up) and youth lack of skills suitable for the labour market.

(8) In the **Puglia Regional Programme for Youth Policy (Bollenti Spiriti)** the most important issue is the creation of pathways to allow youth to be active, that is - to allow youth to train and learn by doing, and to accompany projects and initiatives towards autonomy. This idea spans all the other issues (work, education, etc.). At a national level, particular attention is given to youth unemployment, NEET, employability of young people as the most critical issues.

Young people's problems in society - society´s problems with young people

Overall, the Italian policy documents at all levels (national, regional and local) stress as major issues of concern employment and education. Unemployment, inactivity, lack of opportunities and the effects of the economic crisis on them, are some of the major problems related to young people, which the texts address. Other problems regard the particular vulnerabilities young people face and the need to support their education, training and skills development, but also to recognize their rights and build interventions, services and organizations accordingly.

What solutions appear to be wise and reasonable, and what are left out of the agenda?

National-level documents

(1) At p. 1, the **Italian Youth Guarantee Implementation plan** recalls that EU Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a "Youth Guarantee" (henceforth "Guarantee") invites Member States to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. The nature of this initiative is basically preventive: its aim is to offer, as a priority, a response to the youngsters who approach the labour market every year after concluding their studies.

Moreover, at p. 3, it is stated that regions have tried to limit the negative effects of the crisis on youth through the establishment of integrated

policies of training and employment. In many cases, they have used "special plans for youth employment".

(2) In the **Italian youth forum - programme of action 2012-2015**, the possible solutions are expressed together with the policy aims:

- To promote policies for young people oriented to the care of their rights through the implementation of existing legal tools or advocacy for the creation of new tools;
- To re-think work and work context, in a new larger perspective, in order to imagine the pathway to propose to the new generations, taking into account their legitimate aspirations and desires;
- To encourage better educational and training system at national level, in order to give young generations the tools to realize fully their potentialities and a qualified access to the work;
- To support the development of the priorities identified at national level in the different areas of international cooperation;
- To promote the active participation of young people in the political decision-making processes (at every institutional level), in order to guarantee inclusive and effective programs of mobility, e.g. see the Lifelong Learning (LLP) and Youth in Action (YiA) programmes and the priorities and programs of the European Youth Foundation of CoE.

(3) The document entitled **"Direct contact with second generations – Our Manifesto in 10 points"** includes some proposals which are solution oriented.

For example, the *cultural and linguistic background of 2nd generation students*, who speak more languages and know other realities, could be enhanced by the school. To this aim, it is important for teachers to recognize the needs of students living in such specific conditions. So, it is deemed as extremely important to have teachers trained on intercultural education. In this way, the experience of 2nd generation migrants could be enhanced.
In order *to prevent school drop-out* among youth, it would be useful to organize an efficient system for families, and it would be important to accompany teachers with the creation of specific support psychological services and linguistic-cultural mediation.

It would be useful to implement tools for linguistic support, to help youth who speak languages different from Italian in their families. At the same

time, action for the maintenance of mother tongue should be created. It would be also important to individualize didactic strategies, which promote peer-to-peer and tutoring.

Regional/local level policy documents

(4) In the Project Adolescence, the solutions given for the promotion of adolescents' well-being in Emilia-Romagna deal mainly with the socio-educational sphere on a local/regional level. The strategies aim at:

- The development of healthy local communities:
  Because adolescence raises increasingly complex and changing questions, the answer can only be a contextual and encompassing intervention, a response "of the community." An *educational community* that as a whole is ready to take on the commitment of developing conditions for growth and maturity in a healthy social environment. (p. 21)
- The development of personal resources and skills of adolescents through educational interventions (which are generally framed as aimed at the development of autonomy, sense of responsibility and active citizenship);
- The development of empowering relationships between educators and teens (training of educators is seen as essential);
- The diffusion of scientific information and specific knowledge through peers and communication channels close to adolescents' everyday lives (web, social networks, etc.).

The perspective of *Project Adolescence* is clearly educational and caring. It presents the integration of local and regional services, converging on the goal of supporting adolescents in their growth as citizens and responding to their needs and urgent problems, as the most reasonable and wise solution. Young people in this case are framed as users/objects of the services and interventions. The solutions are local and relational and do not contemplate nor Europe or European citizenship, nor governmental agenda and regulation, nor self-organization of youth, grassroots initiatives or activism.

(5) In the **Approval of the agreement on youth policies GECO 3**, the solutions mostly refer to the promotion of communicative networks, creativity actions and civic engagement with the aim to strengthen youth socialization and the youth enterprise.

initiatives on the work issue (carried out in aggregation spaces where young NEET people often meet, through the enhancement and recognition of their personal abilities) and also access to credit, opportunities for co- working, counselling and support to spread know-how for youth business (p.8)

The activities that take places in and out the aggregation spaces in this region are intended for people between 14 and 30 years old. They allow the meeting to develop skills through creative, cultural, sport, information, and training activities, to promote well-being.

(6) The actions foreseen in the **implementation plan of Italian Youth Guarantee in Regione Piemonte** are driven by public agencies (regional, and local) and are supported by financial resources. Economic support for orientation, training, apprenticeship, training on the job is described as the most important measure of the plan. Additional measures are: creating networks between actors/agencies charged of implementing the program, in order to facilitate access to training/apprenticeship/ employment/ opportunities for young people; using web facilities, support dissemination and youth "emersion of skilled talents" (promoting participation to an international World Skills Competion); Supporting orientation/training/apprenticeship/ employment/ opportunities for young people is proposed as the only viable solution to the problem of youth unemployment and NEETS. Other solutions are left out the agenda.

(7) In the **Youth Plan 2013 – Approval calls "Creation, improvement, and continuity lab and business incubators and youth spaces" (Provincia di Novara),** the solution proposed is funding projects to reinforce skills that young people could spend in the labor market, support youth entrepreneurship, and co-working. In this way, youth can also "develop cultural and creative skills, which are at the basis of creativity and innovation, that in turn contributes to a smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth".

(8) In the plan **Bollenti Spiriti**, some solutions are proposed. They are in line with previous solutions proposed by precedent editions of the same plan. New solutions include:

1. A new action to make new talents to emerge.
2. A new action to put youth at the service of the "common good"
3. A network of social spaces for youth

4. New services for job orientation
5. A system of people and projects
6. A platform for learning how to do business
7. The legality as "construction site". (p. 7-8)

What solutions appear to be wise and reasonable, and what are left out of the agenda?

- Possible solutions are heterogeneous and obviously depend on identified priorities. The range is quite large, and there are no specific fields which are left out of agenda.
- Some policies propose solutions for the most relevant issues in the fields of labour market and education.
- Solutions for youth participation in this field can vary. At an extreme there are solutions that require the modification of structures and services devoted to youth. For example there are policies that are oriented to the care of their rights through the implementation of existing legal tools or the advocacy for the creation of new tools. On the other side, there are policies that suggest the active participation of young people as solution itself, for example the emergence of new talents or their participation in the political decision-making processes.
- Many strategies in the various documents adopt a perspective which highlights the need of services and social contexts to be more adequate and to adapt to young people's needs, but do not contemplate in a more detailed and specific way their input in this transformation. (except Bollenti Spiriti).

Responsible actors - What actors appear to be authorities and problem solvers?

National-level documents

(1) The **Italian Youth Guarantee Implementation plan** does not explicitly mentions the "structured dialogue" but refers to "other" policies. Relevant actors involved as problem solvers are mentioned at different levels: in the public sector (*Education policy and Labour Market policy*); civil society (*p.8: proposal to enrol at the civil service (with a relevant grant for the beneficiary*); private enterprises and entrepreneurs (*p.8: supporting measures for business creation*); media publicity and pressure (*p.18: Job proposals will be offered by the running public and private network structures ("competent services"), as well as through "Cliclavoro" portal and its regional operating points*)

(2) The **Italian youth forum - programme of action 2012-2015** makes reference to the "structured dialogue" and policy areas of Education, Labor market, cultural policy (p. 3, 5, 6).

The presence of a strong sector of Youth organization could strengthen the Italian society, favouring a structured dialogue between the Institutions and the Youth organizations at different levels (regional, national, European and international). In facts, the main role of public authorities is initiating processes, setting up procedures, legitimizing the formal role of youth organizations (e.g., at p. 3).

(3) In the document entitled "**Direct contact with second generations – Our Manifesto in 10 points"** relevant actors and effective measures are identified within policy areas of Education (eg, Ministry of Education; networks of schools), labour market, culture and leisure. Moreover, the importance of migrants' organizations is considered.

Regional/local level policy documents

(5) **Project Adolescence** refers to multiple actors as responsible and involved in the issue of youth well-being promotion. In terms of authority, however, the region is seen as the central "guarantor" of the direction of aims and strategies implemented by the local services. This mandate includes the institution of the regional Ombudsman and regional Coordination for childhood and adolescence:

The establishment of the regional Ombudsman for children and adolescents has precisely the function to ensure the implementation and deployment of their specific rights and to be a reference point for all children and adolescents within the region. (p. 21)

In line with the educational perspective of the document, the key actors to involve and sustain are:

- *Families and educational actors:*
  The social complexity that characterizes the daily life of adolescents and their families, makes it necessary that this area of intervention is assumed as a priority, by promoting the educational activity of parents, teachers, extracurricular educators, sports coaches, through actions aimed at strengthening forms of collaboration and their communicative, social and relational skills. (p. 25)

- *Schools,* whose resources and services should contrast academic dropout, facilitate intercultural integration and offer support and listening to adolescents:

  To develop opportunities for participation, involving also parents, there is the need to build strong alliances between local government, schools and local associations, so that the school is placed as the heart of the district – an open and friendly atmosphere that encourages participation, valorization and the spreading of both formal and informal knowledge, and that is able to exploit the resources and opportunities in the area. (p. 26).

- *Youth centers and cultural aggregation spaces*, whose function relates to that of community development and valorization of adolescents' resources and competences in an organized context.

- *Extracurricular education,* such as educational intervention groups or "street education" in informal groups
- *Civil society* in the form of existing cultural, social and civic associations and regional civil service, which promote the development of sense of responsibility and participation.

(5) In the **Approval of the agreement on youth policies GECO 3**, the main responsible actors are local authorities and government for funding. Young people are considered active representatives in order to the actions to succeed.

(6) In the **Strategic guidelines for the implementation of the youth guarantee – Regione Piemonte,** public authorities are described as the only ones who are in charge of solving the problems. Public authorities are in charge of setting up procedures, providing financial supporting and evaluate the implementation of the program. Young people are mere beneficiaries.

(7) In the **Youth Plan 2013** (Province of Novara) local authorities are the ones responsible for the selection and the funding of relevant projects. Local organizations (including youth ones) and networks of organizations are responsible for projects implementation. Youth are implementing the projects (via or collaborating with associations) and are the main beneficiaries of the actions (target of the projects).

(8) In the program **Bollenti Spiriti**, different actors seem to play an important role in order to achieve the goals of the policy. Collaboration and networking between different actors are required, in particular public sector, civil society private enterprises and entrepreneurs and young people. Non formal education plays also a key role in youth policy. The *Regional Government* of Puglia wants to involve people and organizations from the public and private sectors in a large initiative of sharing resources with youth (p.8).

Responsible actors - What actors appear to be authorities and problem solvers?

In many documents, authorities appear the most important "problem solvers". They are in charge of the main funding sources, and sometimes they coincide with the authors of the policy. Youth are considered as potential actors, but their role is often limited to being beneficiaries of measures. The collaboration and networking between actors from private and public sectors is welcome, and it is explicitly requested in at least three documents (at national, regional/local level). In particular, they refer to the collaboration between public sector, civil society, private enterprises and entrepreneurs.

What roles are young people ascribed?

National-level documents

(1) In the **Italian Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan** the role of public authorities is of initiating, setting up procedures and evaluation. They are described as "supporters" and "beneficiary":

(2)

the implementation of the Guarantee constitutes both a challenge and a great opportunity to test a more effective system for taking charge, analysing needs and ***activating its beneficiaries on the basis of a mutual obligation****.*

The document does not specify forms of contact between public authorities and young people. Moreover, the document does not mention organisations advised not to engage with. Young people's role is, thus, passive and that of recipient of initiatives.

(2) In the **Italian youth forum - programme of action 2012-2015**, the role of public authorities is of setting up procedures and legitimizing and supporting the formal role of youth organizations:

… to ensure support to the youth sector, to participation and to recognition, by the national Institutions of work inside the Youth Organizations. (p. 3).

The relationship between young people and public authorities is described as one of partnership. The forms of contact with public institutions are through dialogues and forums.

(3) Direct Contact with Second Generations – Our Manifesto in 10 points describes the role of public authorities of initiating and setting up procedures. The best metaphor describing the relationship between public authorities and youth is of partner and supporters. The forms of contact mentioned are through dialogue, forums, internet, youth parliaments and youth councils.

Regional/local level policy documents

(4) In the **Emilia-Romagna Regional Guidelines: Project Adolescence** the role of public authorities is of initiation, setting up procedures, evaluation, knowledge production. The metaphor of the relationship between public authorities and young people is of support. Forms of contact are through youth centers, informal groups, associations, which are contemplated in the actions proposed by the guidelines.

Young people are regarded as citizens with rights according to the guiding principles of *Project* Adolescence. The framing, however, is a developmental one and adolescents, in particular, are seen as "citizens in growth", who need the support of adults and of educational contexts and are mainly recipients of services:

*The younger generations are therefore considered as "**citizens in growth**" with their own rights and the possibility to exercise them in the various contexts of life, so as to ensure their equal opportunities for growth and achievement – an offer of opportunities suitable for different ages and needs and easily accessible services, willing to listen, comfortable, flexible and close to one's living space. (p. 38)*

The input of young people themselves in designing or implementing projects is not really laid out in the document. The possibility of adolescents organizing themselves and pursuing their interests independently is only touched upon vaguely and, in any case, as a result

of the developmental role played by services, contexts and opportunities given by adults:

… thanks to specific local projects aimed at enhancing actions in aggregation spaces through the involvement of young people in paths of active citizenship, were born experiences of involvement in the management of associations and informal groups, which in some cases have created experiences of ***self-management****. Valid territorial experiences of direct youth protagonism were activated in the spaces designed to enhance active citizenship and the promotion of civic engagement, creativity and responsible participation. This confirms the fact that a territorial area where young people have the opportunity to be active participants, will benefit from their greater capacity to promote initiatives in autonomy, allowing to create a fertile ground for the vitality of the spaces as places of real active citizenship. (p. 29)*

It can be argued that such perspective brings an implicit idea of dependency of adolescents, but the emphasis seems to be more on the responsibility of local services and educational contexts towards young people in providing suitable opportunities for developing a capacity to enact their active citizenship. In this sense, *Project Adolescence* brings attention to structural and contextual issues that may be facilitating or obstructing adolescents' path towards well-being and participation.

(5) In the **Approval of the Agreement on Youth Policies: GECO 3**, young people are considered as resources and offering solutions to develop actions in the local context. The public authorities set up procedures, give financial support and evaluate the interventions. Finally, youth are considered beneficiary of the economic funding.

(6) In the **resolution adopted by Region Piemonte in 2013 to implement the Youth Guarantee Plan** young people are simply those who can benefit from the measures adopted and are, thus, in a completely passive role.

(7) In the calls of the **Youth Plan 2013 – Province of Novara**, youth are implementing the projects (collaborating with associations) and are beneficiaries of the actions (target of the projects).

(8) In the **Puglia Regional Programme for Youth Policy: Bollenti Spiriti** public authorities are responsible for initiation, setting up procedures and evaluation; they are also partly responsible for financial support. Young

people, however, are responsible for knowledge production. Public authorities are supporters and partners of youth organization and initiatives. Concerning forms for the contacts between public authorities and youth organisations, besides Internet, none of the forms under inspection (forum, youth parliaments etc) is relevant. Contact is expected through organizational support/partnership/ training for the specific actions envisaged by the program.

Moreover, youth organizations are not at stake; the plan is devoted to youth in general (individuals rather than organizations).

What role are young people ascribed?

In general, the documents highlight a vision of young people as being supported by institutions, authorities and services. Their active role is not always considered in this perspective, especially in the national governmental Youth Guarantee Plan and its regional implementation. Seldom are they just the target of measures and interventions, which are initiated and sustained by other bodies. Youth have more substantial role in the policies proposed by organizations and in some of the regional and local ones, as their role includes in fact implementing projects, producing knowledge, offering local solutions and partnering with authorities as youth organizations and associations.

Are any words and phrases repeatedly used in the framing of youth policy?

National-level documents

(1) In the **Italian Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan**, one of the key word is "employment", that is used in many and different ways: employment, unemployment, employment rates, unemployment rate, employment crisis, self-employment, employment services, employment agencies, employment emergency, employment contract.

(2) In the **Italian youth forum - programme of action 2012-2015**, the words "youth" and "youth organizations" are repeatedly used. Also the words "new/youth generations" and "country" are used quite often.

(3) In the **Direct Contact with Second Generations – Our Manifesto in 10 points**, many verbs are used to describe the idea of empowerment. In more detail: "to promote", "to empower" (potenziare), "to foster"

(rafforzare), "to build", "to recognize", "to value" (valorizzare), "to stimulate", to "encourage", "to realize".

Regional/local level policy documents

(4) In the **Emilia-Romagna Regional Guidelines: Project Adolescence**, one of the key-words is "adolescence" and the other one is "well-being". More specifically, the document often refers to the "promotion of well-being", "to pursue well-being", "health and well-being in a biopsychosocial model", "youth well-being", "physical, psychic, and social well-being", "overall wellbeing", "social wellbeing", "students' well-being".

(5) The first part of the **Approval of the Agreement on Youth Policies: GECO 3** is characterized by a technical language, with many references to "laws", "decrees", "agreements" and "budget". The attachments provide more details about the structural features of the Agreement on youth policies, with references to previous regional initiatives. More specific of this document is the use of "youth aggregation spaces" (spazi di aggregazione giovanile) and a focus on the "territorial" dimension. The frequencies of words like "to promote" and "to guarantee" is low and mostly present in the descriptions of aims.

(6) In the **resolution adopted by Region Piemonte in 2013 to implement the Youth Guarantee Plan** there are references to the European and national documents related to Youth Guarantee. The issue of "employment" is present in this document like in the national one (1). However, the resolution adopted by Region Piemonte is also operational and more focused on "actions": new actions, orientation actions (azioni di orientamento), eligible actions (azioni ammissibili), cross-actions (azioni trasversali), actions against unemployment, actions targeting individuals.

(7) The calls for projects of the **Youth Plan 2013 – Province of Novara** is an operative documents which describes also the features of eligible proposals, "costs" and "budget" devoted to them. The variety of eligible projects (about "employment", "education", "creativity", "use of youth spaces") makes it difficult to find words that are systematically repeated through the document.

(8) The **Puglia Regional Programme for Youth Policy: Bollenti Spiriti**, uses the word "youth" cited many times through the whole document. Like in the title and subtitle ("youth as a resource"), in the text there is a

specific use of terms like "resource", "initiative", "program". Note that there are also referrals to public and private "organizations", but there are no specific references to "youth organizations", because the program is devoted to youth in general (not organized).

Are any words and phrases repeatedly used in the framing of youth policy?

- The focus on the use of "spaces" by youth and to the "territorial" dimension is mostly present in documents at local and regional level.
- Most operative policies are focused on "actions" and on concrete and situated issues, while larger plans refer to "principles" that should guide future initiatives.
- Some policies seem devoted to specific topics (like "employment" (1), "well-being" (4)), while others are more focused on "youth", covering different areas of interest (e.g., 6, 8).

Appendix 1.

Document No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Frequency of phrases/sentences where young people are described as:								
Participants	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0
Engaged	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Interested	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Active	2	3	0	1	3	1	2	0
Passive	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Apathetic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Uninterested	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unengaged	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other:								
Discouraged	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Not involved	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Innovators	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Resources	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Protagonists	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Resources	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	-
Discouraged	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

Note. Documents. *1*: Italian Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan. *2:* Italian youth forum - programme of action 2012-2015. *3:* Direct contact with second generations – Our Manifesto in 10 points. *4:* Promotion of well-being and risk prevention in adolescence: "project adolescence", Regional guidelines; *5:* Approval of the agreement on youth policies between Region Emilia Romagna and President of the Council of Ministry - Department of Youth - year 2013. *6:* Strategic guidelines for the implementation of the youth guarantee – Regione Piemonte – years 2014-2015. *7:* Youth Plan 2013 – Approval calls "Creation, improvement, and continuity lab and business incubators and youth spaces". *8:* All youth are resources. Aims and strategies of "Bollenti Spiriti", programme of Regione Puglia for youth policies 2014-2015.

9. National youth policy report – Portugal

List of selected documents and overall aim of youth policy

In total, we selected six documents, from National and Regional/ Local levels, representing perspectives of the Government (3x), of the Porto City Council (2x), and of the Academic Federation of Porto (1x).

Table 1. An overview of policy documents in Portugal.

Document no.	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
Level	National	National	National	Regional/ Local	Regional/ Local	Regional/ Local
Author	Government	Government	Government	Porto City Council	Porto City Council	Umbrella Youth Organisation
Type of policy document	White Paper	Assessment of Activity	Roadmap	Municipal Plan for Youth	Educational Project	Plan of Actions
Date	2015	2015	2012	2011	2013	2014
Policy area	General youth policy	General Youth policy	General Youth policy	General Youth policy	Education	Education
Frequency of phrases/sentences where young people are described as:						
Participants	0	0	0	0	0	0
Engaged	0	0	0	0	0	0
Interested	0	0	0	0	0	0
Active	0	0	0	0	0	0
Passive	0	0	0	0	0	0
Apathetic	0	0	0	0	0	0
Uninterested (not interested…)	0	0	0	0	0	0

Unengaged	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total nr. of words	37723	2095	12008	15544	55647	15540
Total nr. of pages	166	10	52	56	208	62

Documents:

D1. Government of Portugal, Portuguese Institute of Sport and Youth. (2015). White Paper on Youth: 3 years of action.

D2. Portuguese Institute of Sport and Youth (IPDJ). (2015). Assessment of Activity 2012-2015.

D.3 Presidency of the Republic. (2012). Roadmap for Youth. Young people in the creative industries: innovate to grow. Journey VI.

D.4 Porto City Council. (2011). Municipal Plan of Porto for Youth 2.0. A city's commitment with the youth.

D.5 Porto City Council. (2013) Municipal Educational Project of Porto.

D.6 Academic Federation of Porto (FAP). (2014). Activities Plan and Budget 2015.

As described in the table above, the first policy document **(D.1)** is a White Paper on Youth. As mentioned in the document, the implementation of the Youth White Paper in Portugal "came out from the political commitment of the XIX Constitutional Government and of the need to build a national political agenda for youth, considering not only a transversal approach of the intervention areas, but especially a wide consultation of the sector. This initiative was inspired by one of the guiding principles of the European Commission: the opening of the decision-making process to citizens' participation, and also in alignment to the Government's political priority to foster the civic participation of young people" (p. 9). The process of creation of the Youth White Paper sought to recognize international best practice and was based on the open method of coordination, with the aim of identifying guidelines and lines of action for Youth. "This work allowed the identification of 14 thematic areas: Education and training; Employment and entrepreneurship; Civic participation; Young emancipation; Mobility and young Portuguese in the World; Road safety; Health and risk behaviours prevention; Environment and sustainable development; Culture, innovation and creativity; Volunteering; Combating inequality of opportunities and social inclusion; Housing; Intergenerational Solidarity; and Associations" (Ibid.). The overall aim of youth policy of this document is (besides foster young people participation in general) "to contribute to strengthening the

confidence of young people in their institutions, particularly in the Government" (p. 11).

The second policy document **(D.2)** is the 'Assessment of Activity' developed by the Portuguese Institute of Sport and Youth Ministry for the period between 2012 and 2015. In the context of the Plan of Reduction and Improvement of the State's central Administration (PREMAC), this document focuses mainly the financial management of the Institute in the areas of Sport and Youth, highlighting the following achievements: "i) Reduction of structural expenditure at 32 million euro; ii) Full payment of the debt inherited from the previous administration, more than 12 million euro; iii) Adjustment on the map of officials and workers with an annual charges reduction, compared to 2011, of 3,5 million euro" (p. 1).

The third the policy document **(D.3)** is a 'Roadmap for Youth' written by the Presidency of the Republic. According the document, the roadmap intends "to stimulate and enhance the way in which young people should participate in society in profound transformation, becoming an active part of this change, overcoming the difficulties and anxiety they feel about their responsibility on social renewal" (p. 6), showing "good examples of how young people participate in society and develop initiatives that allow them their affirmation, autonomy and personal fulfilment" (p. 14).

The fourth policy document **(D.4)** presents the 'Municipal Plan for Youth' of the Porto City Council. The Municipal Plan for Youth (PMJ) "intends to respond, in the first instance, to the fragmentation of supply in the youth sector through the establishment of a comprehensive strategy for Youth in Porto, which is participatory, transversal and integrated, involving all stakeholders in the sector, meeting the expectations, needs and aspirations of young people throughout their life cycle, creating a real commitment of the City with Youth" (p. 9). In that sense, this document identifies the following priority axes of intervention: Education; Training, Employment and Entrepreneurship; Social innovation; Culture, Leisure and Sport; Social Promotion, Associations and Citizenship; and Creativity, Science and Knowledge. Furthermore, this document argues that the youth capacity should be understood "as a means and an end in itself, and the process of elaboration of the youth policy should involve civil society in the public debate about collective problems, integrating the contributions in their definition, co-opting synergies, negotiating its implementation and thus making all stakeholders responsible. The Municipal Plan for Youth is participated by various departments of the

municipality and external entities, on the assumption that the technical and political structure is the guarantor of the implementation of measures/programs and actions guided by the youth ideology to solve challenges of modernity" (p. 51). The overall aim of this document is, in line with national and international guidelines, "to generate a movement for change that meets our commitment to young people, ensuring that the city is the expression: of a participatory and mobilizing democracy for the new generations; of multisectoral policies in response to an increasingly complex and challenging society; of equal opportunities as a way to empower youth to do better for themselves, their city and their country; of plurality, consolidated on respect for difference and benefits from the knowledge that results from our openness to the global space; of ethics, essential to building a more united and inclusive youth ideal" (p. 5).

The fifth policy document **(D.5)** is also from the Porto City Council and presents the 'Educational Project of Porto'. The document mentions that the Porto municipality strategy is based on three universal principles: "Education must be oriented to strengthen the culture and values of democratic citizenship; Education is one of the basic factors needed to promote and ensure progress, mobility, integration and social cohesion; Education is a basic tool, essential for renewal, creation and cultural change" (p. 14). In addition, it also argues for a logic of Educating Cities, assuming "the formation and development of the inhabitants as a central objective, with a focus on children and youth; mobilizing partners and resources to demand and implement responses to issues and educational needs of the city and improvement of the performance of municipal action and of all partners involved based on dynamics created together" (Ibid.).

The final policy document **(D.6)** is the 'Activity Plan and Budget 2015' from the Academic Federation of Porto. The document states that the reorganization of the higher education system, the school social action, the school dropouts and the funding of higher education are the heart of their main concerns. In this regard, the document mentions that the Academic Federation of Porto intends to actively intervene in student life, by setting up some structural bases around which revolve all activities and areas in which she wants operate: "in student and institutional representation, from the local to the national intervention; in boosting the best of several student groups of the Academy of Porto, acting as a true catalyst thereof; in consolidating the activities of FAP in sports, in the social and academic arenas; in promoting employment and

entrepreneurship; in spreading of FAP mark for the city of Porto; in approaching students by positively intervening in their daily lives through an effective approach in the activities and spaces they attend daily; in a most frequent and dynamic communication seeking to reach the largest number of recipients, communicating more clearly what is the FAP and what it does; and still in its sustainability as a solid structure, investing in its historical record and its strategic financial planning" (p. 2).

In brief:

- The policy documents do not exhibit a clear definition of youth policy.

- In general, the policy documents suggest an alignment with European policies.

- The aims of policies mentioned in the documents are, in general, very diverse. There is a tendency to present policies with a multisectoral perspective, and at different levels of action (international, national and local/ regional). Although cover several policy areas, the documents seem to put more attention on Education, Training, Labour Market, Employment, and Entrepreneurship – this latter seems to be a trendy 'buzz word'.

- The policy documents place young people at the heart of the concerns, emphasizing mainly the importance to foster its participation, and its emancipation and empowerment. In this regard, the policy documents seem to put more responsibility in the individual variables than in the structural variables in what concern the young people's achievements.

How are young people spoken of, presented and *described*?

D.1 – All in all, this is a strategic document which does not show any specific analyses about the quality of youth participation and engagement. However, as a strategic document, it presents some goals related, such as "youth participation" (appears in 16 sentences), "youth associations" (appears in 20 sentences), and "associative movements (appears in 13 sentences). There are no explicit or literal references differentiating different groups of youths, however there are sentences which can be interpreted as being related with, such as the following themes suggest: Gender-based prejudice toward young people; Young people at risk of early school leaving, and school failure; Young entrepreneurs; Unemployed young people; Young migrants (e.g.,

children of immigrants living in Portugal); Young people from families in situations of economic vulnerability; Youth associations; Young people with disabilities; Institutionalized young people; Young people with risk behaviours, e.g., bullying, racism, prejudice, homophobia, etc.. Young people are represented by this policy document as being active agents in changing their lives, as the following sentence clearly suggests: "the principle of 'nothing about us, without us' seeks to be the touchstone in the definition of youth policy, assuming the direct involvement of young people, whether in debates about their situation or in the construction of solutions as a key in the decision-making processes" (p. 9).

D.2 – This document also does not show any analyses about young people, therefore with any references to youth engagement in the Portuguese society. It merely presents/informs about the activities developed between 2012 and 2015 in both youth and sport areas – without any kind of qualitative-reflexive-critical analysis about these activities, such as the following 4 subparagraphs suggest:

"Citizenship and Participation

i) Youth Parliament Program, in partnership with the Parliament, which involved around 250,000 young people;

ii) ii) Competition Euroescola. It reached more than 7500 young people.

Associative Movement

i) Creation and implementation of IDA program - encouraging youth associations;

ii) The creation and implementation of the prize "Good Practices of the Associations" (...)" (p. 8). There are no explicit or literal references differentiating different groups of youths.

D.3 – Similar to the other documents, this one also does not present specific phrases analysing or characterizing the Portuguese young people. This document emphasizes mainly the (economic) theme of "young people in creative industries", giving some well-succeeded examples in Portugal; but also the "problems that concern young people" (e.g., unemployment), and "youth participation". Regarding the latter, this document mentions for instance the following: "It is essential to deepen the mechanisms of political participation and social and civic intervention of young people" (p. 13). The term 'participation' (when related with civic and political participation of young people) appears 7 times. There are no explicit or literal references differentiating different groups of youths;

however there are sentences which can be interpreted as being related with, especially regarding the themes of education and employment: "The concern in the face of the rapidly changing labour market, the difficulty in acquiring a first professional experience, the frustration of not often seeing their diplomas valued, degradation of relative wages and instability of career, characterize the way that young people face their entry into the labour market" (p. 12). Young people are, in general, viewed as offering solutions, like the following sentences show:

- "Young people know better than anyone the true meaning of words like "excellence", "innovation" and "social inclusion". Presidential speech at the ceremony to mark the April 25, 2007" (p. 7)

- "Young people are the key resource for the constant renewal of democratic societies" (p. 13).

- "Portugal has an entrepreneurial generation in various fields and that it's the contribution and participation of this generation that we will have a restructuring role of the country's economy. In order to compete this it is necessary to focus on innovation, on creativity and on ambition, on the determination and on the hope of this generation" (p. 16)

In accordance with this representation, young people are also viewed as agents: "We live in a crucial time for the country, being necessary change the course and reverse trends. And for this occur it is necessary that this generation will be one of the main agents of change in all sectors but with special attention to the business area" (p. 16).

D.4 – As the previous ones, this document also does not present specific sentences characterizing youth involvement and participation, i.e., there are no sentences describing young people as being, for instance, engaged or unengaged. Notwithstanding, there are sentences where the term of 'participation' (when related with social, civic and political participation of young people) appears 5 times. There are no explicit or literal references differentiating different groups of youths; however there are sentences which can be interpreted as being related with, especially regarding the themes of education and employment. Also as the previous documents, young people are viewed as active agents offering solutions: "This document was based on contributions from civil society actors working in youth area and on the young people's proposals, as an interested and active part in the construction of an array of effective policies [...] Porto city's progress is happening inspired and supported in good practices, informed decisions shared by agents for the development,

and in young people which, in the future, will take the leadership of this City" (p. 5).

D.5 – Regarding youth engagement, this document, in line with the previous ones, also does not present specific analyses. This is a strategic document and its focus is the educational community in general, in order to overcome some specific issues related with young people, such as: dropout and school failure, unemployment, violence and drugs. In fact, students' associations, which opinions and perceptions (collected through an online survey) were included in this document, mention the following areas as the most problematic that should be integrated in the Municipal Educational Project: "School dropout; Economic and social vulnerability of a large numbers of students; Lack of food quality provided in the schools (quality and quantity); Lack of attractive initiatives for youth and lack of support to youth initiatives" (p. 115). Like the previous documents, there are no explicit or literal references differentiating different groups of youths; however there are sentences which can be interpreted as being related with, especially regarding the themes of education and employment. In contrast to the others policy documents, this one seems to include a vision of young people as victims which the educational community should deal: "In terms of the perception of the technicians who dealt with the problem there was an unanimous understanding that the lack of attraction of these children and young people towards school results from several related factors, some personal and familiar and others related to the school itself" (p. 90).

D.6 – In the same vein of the previous documents, this one also does not present analyses about the quality of youth engagement. This is a Plan of Actions and, in that sense, the focus of the text was to identify some key-areas which are important to promote activities in order to involve and engage the student community in academic and public affairs, such as: Employment, Entrepreneurship, Social, Sport, Cultural and Academic Activities. Notwithstanding, in the explanation of the objectives and aims that are intended to achieve, there are several sentences where the term 'participation' (when related specifically with social, civic and political participation of young people; and about individual and collective forms of participation) is used: 21 times. Similar to the other documents, there are no explicit or literal references differentiating different groups of youths; however there are sentences which can be interpreted as being related with, especially regarding the themes of education and employment. Young people are conceptualised in this policy document as active agents: "The role of the Federation in this area contributes to an

improvement in people's quality of life in several areas in an effort to repay to society what is obtained from higher education" (p. 35).

In brief:
- The documents analysed are mainly indicative and strategic, mentioning merely the goals and objectives that they wish to achieve.
- There are no analyses, in any document, regarding the quality of the involvement and participation that young people currently have, i.e., the documents do not exhibit any description of young people with terms such as: 'engaged', 'unengaged', 'active', 'passive', 'interested', 'uninterested', 'participant' and 'apathetic'.
- There is, in general, a tendency to emphasise the dimension of participation, at both the individual and collective level (with specific references to associations), suggesting the importance that this dimension takes for institutions concerning the full exercise of the young people's citizenship.
- There are no explicit or literal references differentiating different groups of youths; however there are sentences which can be interpreted as being related with, especially regarding the themes of education and employment – suggesting in some way the existence of disadvantaged groups victims of the school failure and unemployment.
- In general, young people are described as active or potential agents.

Young people's *problems* in society - society´s problems with young people

D.1 – The three most urgent policy issues mentioned in this policy document at both European and national level are the following: i) Foster young people participation, ii) Young people involvement in the decision-making process; and iii) Strengthening of young people confidence in political institutions.

D.2 – As mentioned above, this document merely presents/informs about the activities developed between 2012-2015 in both youth and sport areas – without any kind of qualitative-reflexive-critical analysis about these activities. In that sense, it does not present any reference to the most urgent youth policy issues to be addressed.

D.3 – In this document the three most urgent youth policy issues to be addressed (again, at European and national level) are: i) Autonomy, ii) Education and Training, and iii) Employment – as the following sentence shows: "The major issues of concern to young people, in particular the

group now identified as young adults, are very strong in Portugal, even if also across Europe. *Autonomy, education and training and employment* are some of the issues that most concern young people. The lack of autonomy until a late period of youth is a major concern for young people in Portugal, but also in many European countries, especially in Southern Europe, which may be due mainly to the extension of school training careers and to the vulnerable labour integration of young people" (p. 9).

D.4 – The three most urgent youth policy issues to be addressed (mentioned in this document at the city level) are: i) Education, ii) Work and Financial situation, and iii) Housing – as the following sentence indicates: "The reality of youth is very heterogeneous, as well as their experiential pathways, yet their interests converge on priority areas such as *education, work, financial situation and housing*" (p. 17).

D.5 – Here, the three most urgent youth policy issues (mentioned at the city level) are: i) Dropout and school failure, ii) Unemployment, and iii) Violence and drugs.

D.6 – Finally, in this document the three most urgent youth policy issues (mentioned at the city level) are: i) Reorganization of the higher education System, ii) School social action and school dropouts, and iii) Higher education funding – as the following sentence shows: "Thus, anticipating the political agenda for 2015, we have a responsibility to invest in solving problems in several areas that await solution for too long and are at the heart of our concerns: the reorganization of the higher education system, school social action, school dropouts and funding of higher education" (p. 6).

In brief:

- At European and national levels, the most urgent youth policy issues are, in general, the following: i) Education and Training, ii) Young people employment and autonomy, iii) Young people involvement and participation, and iv) Young people confidence in political institutions.
- At city level, the most urgent youth policy issues are, in general, the following: i) Dropout and school failure, ii) Unemployment, iii) Housing, iv) Violence and drugs, and v) Higher education reorganization and funding.
- Education and Employment are the main youth policy issues; they are present at all levels.

What *solutions* appear to be wise and reasonable, and what are left out of the agenda?

D.1 – The several possible solutions presented in the 14 thematic areas identified in the document (in total, with 279 lines of action), could be expressed together with the overall aims: i) Foster young people participation in general, ii) and strengthening the confidence of young people in the institutions, particularly in the Government.

D.2 – As pointed out, this document merely presents/informs about the activities developed between 2012-2015 in both youth and sport areas – without any kind of qualitative-reflexive-critical analysis about these activities. Thus, it does not present any solution or any about what are left out of the agenda.

D.3 – This policy document intends, overall, to stimulate and enhance young people participation in a society which are in a profound transformation. "Nowadays, the major concern of the Portuguese youth focuses on the demand for support and opportunities that they need to manage their own lives and to have conditions to take independent decisions. The extension of the schooling period required for acquiring skills, the difficulties in accessing the labour market and the job instability [...] contribute to slowing the empowerment of young people." (p. 6). In that context, the document presents the following general possible solutions: i) Foster an active and independent civic participation of young adults, crucial aspect "to the development of an economically and socially developed society" (Ibid.); ii) Encourage young people who have sought and found the way to the emancipation and civic participation, "providing information about not only the successes but also the risks and the difficulties they had to overcome, being a good example for others and a stimulus for further improvement mechanisms to participate in decisions that affect them" (Ibid.).

D.4 – The possible solutions suggested by this policy documents are mainly focused in three main areas: i) "*Education* is the key to cultural and socio-economic progress of contemporary societies (p. 13); ii) "*Entrepreneurship* was established as an opportunity to create innovative solutions and to generate local wealth, so a resolution path for unemployment [...] promote employability and entrepreneurial potential of young people, informing and guiding vocations, increasing personal and professional skills, encouraging the spirit of initiative and creativity, directing it to the construction projects and local businesses that open doors to new market niches, expand employment and self-employment"

(p. 14); and iii) "*Association membership* is essential in the construction of critical thinking, citizenship and democracy, representing a high potential for local development, making it imperative its recognition, support and encouragement" (p. 15).

D.5 – This document suggests that the possible solutions should be posed in three specific domains [each one of those domains has several areas of activity] (pp. 130-131): i) *Quality of education and training systems of Porto (More and Better school / 2020 strategy)*, which aggregates the following areas of activity: Educational success, Dropout prevention, Diversity and equal opportunities, common framework of action for all schools, Training for teachers and staff, Inter-relational dynamic school/family, Rehabilitation/maintenance of school facilities, Feeding; ii) *Citizenship and personal and social development*, with the following areas of activity: Citizenship education, Parental education, Health education and sport, Environmental education, Education for art, Scientific and technological culture, Risk prevention in schools, Prevention in young people outside the education and training systems; and iii) *Functioning of the inter-institutional Network PEM-Porto*, aggregating the following areas of activity: Structuring of the organizational and communicational network of PEM-Porto, Commitment with the PEM-Porto.

D.6 – The multiple possible solutions mentioned in the document could be expressed together with the areas that are at the heart of the concerns of the Academic Federation of Porto intends to operate: i) Reorganization of the higher education System, ii) School social action and school dropouts, and iii) Higher education funding.

In brief:

- In general, the policy documents do not present explicit solutions. They seem to be subsumed in the quite large and heterogeneous youth policy aims mentioned in the documents. In that sense, it seems that there no specific areas which are left out of agenda; although they pay more attention to the Education and Employment areas.
- At national level, the policy documents seem to suggest as possible solutions: the promotion of young people participation; the strengthening of young people confidence in the Government; and the encouragement of young people to the emancipation through the examples of well-succeeded youth experiences.
- At regional/local levels, the policy documents seem to suggest that the possible solutions lie mainly: in the quality of Education (including

Higher Education); in the Entrepreneurship as an opportunity; and in the Citizenship and Personal and Social development of young people.

Responsible actors - What *actors* appear to be authorities and problem solvers?

D.1 – On of the most important actors suggested by this policy document was the 'Public Sector', involving the youth policy in general trough the following policy areas: *Education policy*, *Labour market policy*, *Culture and leisure policy*, *and Public health policy*. Still in the 'Public Sector', the document made a specific reference to the 'Structured Dialogue', as can be seen in the following sentence: "Youth participation, fundamental to the whole process, was established through methodologies in the context of the Structured Dialogue and took place through the fostering of a broad debate on the topics identified" (pp. 9-10). Besides public sector, it is also referred as an important actor the de 'Private enterprises and entrepreneurs'.

D.2 – This policy document suggests the 'Public Sector' as the most important actor, involving the youth policy in general through the following policy areas: *Education policy*, through the area of 'Citizenship and Participation' (possible example of effective measure: 'Euroschool contest'); *Labour market policy*, through the area of 'Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Employment (possible example of effective measure: 'Perception and Management of Business Network – EMPREENDE JÁ'); *Culture and leisure policy*, through the area of 'Volunteering and Leisure'; *Public health policy*, through the area of 'Health and Healthy Lifestyles'; and *Other policy areas*, such as: 'Youth Associations', 'Cooperation within the framework of the National Plan of Gender Equality'; 'International Relations'; and 'Information and Communication'. The policy document does not explicitly mention the 'Structured Dialogue'.

D.3 – Two most important actors are suggested in this policy document: the 'Public sector' and the 'Private enterprises and entrepreneurs'. In the public sector, the document refers the youth policy in general, involving the following policy areas: *Education policy*, identified in sentences like the next one: "It opens up a new market, especially for the most qualified, which requires a huge competition in the education systems and an ongoing effort to combat exclusion and school dropout" (p. 9); and *Labour market policy*, which could be represented, for instance, by the following sentence: "The creative economy is an evolving concept based on creative

assets with the potential to generate economic growth and development. The creative economy is seen as having the potential to generate export earnings, create jobs, and promote social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development" (p. 17). The policy document does not explicitly mention the 'Structured Dialogue', however emphasises that "it is to strengthen the mechanisms of political participation and social and civic intervention of young people" (p. 13).

D.4 – The 'Public Sector' is suggested as the most important actor. The policy document indicates the youth policy in general, involving the following policy areas: *Education policy*, "Contribute to boost the educational level and promote academic success realizing interfaces between business and academia, linking best practices, scientific knowledge and technology; intensify and expand the movement of exchange" (p. 19); *Labour market policy*, "Equipping young people with skills to cope with changes in the labour market, the ability to adapt to new forms of employment, to training requirements, developing in them the spirit of initiative and the overall market perspective" (Ibid.); *Culture and leisure policy*, "Develop measures and specific positive actions to facilitate young people's access to goods and services, including cultural, tourism, leisure and sport" (Ibid.); *Other policy areas*: [Housing] "Create responses and strategies to rejuvenate the social fabric through the housing access" (Ibid.); [Youth associations] "Support youth association movement, contributing to the construction of citizenship, encouraging the participation of young people in different bodies of consultation and policy-making" (Ibid.); [Scientific and technological knowledge] "Enhance the scientific and technological knowledge and stimulate creative and innovative processes for young people by promoting an enlightened action, fundamental for the construction of sustainable development" (Ibid.). The policy document does not explicitly mention the 'Structured Dialogue'.

D.5 – This policy document is an Educational Project. As expected, suggests as the most important actor the 'Public Sector', mainly regarding the policy area of *Education policy* through three specific domains (and related areas of activity) already presented above: *Quality of education and training systems of Porto (More and Better school / 2020 strategy)*, *Citizenship and personal and social development*, and *Functioning of the inter-institutional Network PEM-Porto*. The policy document does not explicitly mention the 'Structured Dialogue'.

D.6 – Following the tendency of the previous ones, this policy document suggests the 'Public Sector' as the most important actor, involving the following policy areas: *Education* policy, as the overall aims presented suggest (i.e., Reorganization of the higher education System, School social action and school dropouts, and Higher education funding); *Labour market policy*, "in promoting employment and entrepreneurship" (p. 2); and *Cultural and leisure policy*, "in consolidating the activities of FAP in sports, in the social and academic arenas" (Ibid.). The policy document does not explicitly mention the 'Structured Dialogue'.

In brief:
- In general, the 'Public Sector' appears as the most important actor.
- Despite the rhetoric of young people as potential actors, the policy documents suggest that they are mainly considered as beneficiaries of the implemented policies.
- In general, the policy documents suggest the Education as the most important policy area. However, they also suggest the importance of collaboration between different areas, especially the Labour market policy, where the Employment and Entrepreneurship are often mentioned.
- Only the 'White Paper on Youth: 3 years of action', of the Portuguese Institute of Sport and Youth (Government of Portugal), mentions explicitly the 'Structured Dialogue'. The other documents do not mention (at least explicitly) the 'Structured Dialogue'.

What *roles* are young people ascribed?

Previous Note: In order to better understand what roles are young people ascribed, this section will present the data of each policy document by three different levels of analysis concerning the relationship between authorities and young people, i.e., the *main role of the public authorities*; the *most appropriate metaphor* to describe the relationship; and the *main forms of contact.* The level of analysis regarding the organisations which the public authorities are advised not to engage with, will not be considered: none of the policy documents presents information in that sense.

D.1 – The *main roles of the public authorities* are the 'Stetting up procedures': "Completed the White Paper and returning it, now, to young people with the action of the Government, it is reasonable to consider that this work marks a new way in the relationship of the institutions with the citizens" (p. 11), and the 'Knowledge production': "The process of creating the Youth White Paper sought to recognize

international best practice and was based on the open method of coordination, with the aim of identifying guidelines and lines of action for Youth" (p. 9). The *most appropriate metaphor* to describe the relationship is the 'Supporter': "In this Resolution, it was determined the political involvement of various government departments, in accordance with the respective sectoral skills in the operation of the identified guidelines. The Office of the Secretary of State for Sports and Youth was the responsible to monitor the actions implemented by the various departments, which now culminates with the publication of this book" (p. 10). The *main forms of contact* are the 'Forums' and the 'Internet'.

D.2 – The *main role of the public authorities* is the 'Evaluation', i.e., the assessment of activities. The *most appropriate metaphor* to describe the relationship is the "Funder". There is no information concerning the *main forms of contact*.

D.3 – The *main role of the public authorities* is the 'Promoter': "stimulate and enhance the way young people should participate in a society in profound transformation, becoming an active part of this change, overcoming the difficulties and anxiety that they feel about their responsibility on social renewal" (p. 6). The *most appropriate metaphor* to describe the relationship is the 'Supporter': "In a one more Roadmap for Youth, will be presented several projects in the creative industries with great impact on national exports, but also with great respect for the legacy of previous generations, and that, associated with the knowledge, technological development and innovation, have been providing excellent results" (p. 19). The *main forms of contact* are the 'Forums' and the 'Internet'. In addition, this policy document presents explicit descriptions of Portuguese young people, such as: "Portugal has an entrepreneurial generation in various fields and that it's the contribution and participation of this generation that we will have a restructuring role of the country's economy" (p. 16); "Young people know better than anyone the true meaning of words like 'excellence', "innovation" and "social inclusion'" (p. 7); "Young people are the key resource for the constant renewal of democratic societies" (p. 13).

D.4 – The *main role of the public authorities* is the 'Setting up a strategic plan': "Based on these guidelines, result of a broad, open and plural debate, and of the consultation process of various entities and internal and external stakeholders of the Porto City Council, was possible the structuring and definition of the Intervention Priority Axes that guide the Youth Municipal Policy" (p. 19). In that sense, the *most appropriate*

metaphor to describe the relationship is the 'Promoter'. The *main forms of contact* are the 'Dialogues', the 'Forums' and the 'Internet'.

D.5 – The *main role of the public authorities* are the 'Evaluation' and the "Setting up procedures": "The work involved will be developed from an initial diagnostic phase which consists of the collection and analysis of information on educational programs and projects in education of 16 municipalities in the AMP. This phase aims to acknowledge the local contexts in education, with a view to the optimization and integration of pre-existing dynamics. From the diagnostic phase of the work will be developed, based in a research-action approach, a spiral of three-phase cycle: planning, action, monitoring of the action outcomes" (p. 147). In accordance, the *most appropriate metaphor* to describe the relationship is the 'Supporter'. The *main form of contact* is the 'Dialogues': "Principle of Consultation / Dialogue - The listening and dialogue are tools that activate and boost participation, adapt the theory to the context, enhance knowledge, promote personal and institutional involvement and must be present at all stages of the PEM (design, development and evaluation)" (p. 16).

D.6 – The *main role of the public authorities* [in this case, the Academic Federation of Porto] are the 'Setting up a strategic plan': "Thus, anticipating the political agenda for 2015, we have a responsibility to invest in solving problems in several areas that await solution for too long and are at the heart of our concerns: the reorganization of the higher education system, school social action, school dropouts and funding of higher education" (p. 6); "Politically, the year 2015 will be marked by the occurrence of legislative elections in Portugal. In this moment of supreme importance in the formulation of national policy strategy for the next four years, we want to intervene with the main parties to include in the political agenda relevant matters to the associative movement and contribute to the discussion and follow up in order to actively influence government programs" (p. 16). In accordance, the *most appropriate metaphor* to describe the relationship [in this case, from the youth organisation to the young people and to the public authorities] is the 'Supporter' and the 'Influencer'. The *main form of contact* is the 'Dialogues': "We understand the FAP as a structure that is involved in finding a solution, much more than as being part of the problem, open to the community which represents, and which is based on structured and consistent dialogue, systematic and targeted as a structural pillar to achieve the desired results, marking its position among the political and

institutional decision-makers from local, regional and national levels" (p. 6).

In brief:
- In general, the relationships between authorities and young people suggested by the policy documents emphasise a vision of youth as being supported by services and strategic plans and procedures.

- In general, the policy documents mention the Dialogues, Forums and Internet as the main forms of contact between public authorities and young people.

Are any *words and phrases repeatedly used* in the framing of youth policy?

As illustrated in Table 1, there are no specific words describing the quality of young people involvement and participation, such as: 'engaged', 'unengaged', 'active', 'passive', 'interested', 'uninterested', 'participant' and 'apathetic'. However, as pointed out in the section 2 of this report, there are sentences in the policy documents that are frequently associated to youth participation. For instance, in the policy document **D.1** the expressions "youth participation" (appears in 16 sentences), "youth associations" (appears in 20 sentences), and "associative movements" (appears in 13 sentences). Similarly, in the policy document **D.6** the term 'participation' (when related civic and political participation of young people in general, is used 21 times. The emphasis of the word 'participation' and related expressions such as 'youth participation' (at both individual and collective level of participation) strongly suggests the importance of this dimension for the institutions in what concern the full exercise of the young people's citizenship. This association it seems to indicate, in fact, a vision of young people as potential agents for the development of Portuguese democracy, emphasizing in that sense the importance to foster its participation, and its emancipation and empowerment. However, it seems also indicate that the young people's achievements are more dependent on individual variables than structural variables – the buzzword 'Entrepreneurship' is a good example of the emphasis placed on the individual level, and which appears very frequently associated with the following most referred policy areas: 'Education', Labour Market' and 'Employment'. In addition, the absence of explicit descriptions of young people (such as engaged and interested) seems also to indicate an ambiguity of their role in the

Portuguese society. There is, indeed, a very 'polite' rhetoric in the policy documents, however without any analysis describing objectively (and positively) young people's roles and participation.

In brief:

- There is an emphasis of the word 'participation' and related expressions such as 'youth participation', suggesting a vision of young people as potential agents for the development of Portuguese democracy.
- The policy documents seem to suggest that young people's achievements are more dependent on individual variables than structural variables – the buzzword 'Entrepreneurship' (which appears very frequently associated with the following most referred policy areas: 'Education', Labour Market' and 'Employment') is a good example of the emphasis placed on the individual level.
- The absence of explicit descriptions of young people (such as engaged and interested) seems to indicate an ambiguity of their role in the Portuguese society.

10. National youth policy report – Sweden

List of selected documents

Table 1 gives an overview of the selected policy documents from Sweden. As shown, the sample includes national as well as regional and local policy documents.

Table 1. An overview of policy documents in Sweden.

Document no.	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*
Level	National	National	National	Regional	Local
Author	Government	Government	Government		Skellefteå Municipality
Type of policy document	Bill	Memorandum	Report	Plan of actions	Plan of actions
Date	2014	2013		2014	2015
Policy area	General policy area	General policy area	Youth employment policy	General policy area	General policy area
Frequency of phrases/sentences where young people are described as:					
Participants	0	3	0	2	1
Engaged	1	1	0	0	1
Interested	0	0	0	0	1
Active	3	0	0	0	1
Passive	0	0	0	0	0
Apathetic	0	0	0	0	0
Uninterested (not interested…)	0	0	0	0	0
Unengaged	0	0	0	0	0
Influence /participation	169/60	7	0	3	4
Total numbers of words	71 693	13 299	7554	2629	592
Total numbers of pages	180	24	24	26	3

Documents:
D1. With youth in focus – a policy for good living conditions, power and influence (2013/14:191)
D2. Referral Memorandum - A new youth policy (U2013 / 4442 / UC)
D.3 Youth employment policies in Sweden – the Swedish response to the Council recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee.
D.4 The Youth Strategy of Region Jämtland Härjedalen (2014-2020).
D.5 Strategy for children and young people's influence and participation.

As shown in the table above, the first policy document (D.1) is a government bill. In this bill the Government proposes a new objective for all central government decisions and initiatives that affect young people aged between 13 and 25. The Bill also presents a youth policy action programme for the period 2014–2017 with initiatives in three priority areas: young people's influence, earning a living and mental health.

The second policy document (D.2) is a referral memorandum developed by the Ministry of Education as a part of the work for the new youth policy bill (i.e., Government Bill 2013/14:191). In other words, this memorandum presented proposals for the current national youth policy based on a number of reports and evaluations of youth policies.

The third the policy document about youth employment policies (i.e., D.3) is written by the Ministry of Employment. The document describes the Swedish strategic policy for promotion youth employment. It also presents the measures the government has implemented and will implement in the future to support young people's entry into the labour market.

The fourth policy document (D.4) presents the youth strategy of the region of Jämtland Härjedalen for years 2014-2020. A number of goals and measures are presented to be undertaken to improve young people's living condition alongside various priority areas, such as education, employment, housing, influence and participation.

The final policy document (D.5) is from the municipality of Skellefteå. This document presents the municipality's youth strategy and vision. The municipality's youth vision is to get all youth involved in the development of the municipality of Skellefteå. The target group for this youth strategy is children and young people up to 25 years old.

Overall aim of youth policy

Swedish national youth policy is directed at the approximately 1.6 million Swedish inhabitants (about 16 % of the total population), who are between the ages of 13–25. The *Ministry of Education and Research*, headed by Gustav Fridolin (32 years old), is responsible for government's education, research and youth policy. Within this Ministry, Aida Hadžialić (29 years old), Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training, has the main responsibility for the coordination of Swedish youth policy.

The current Swedish youth policy is primarily formulated within the government's bill "Focus on young people – a policy for good living conditions, power and influence" (Government Bill 2013/14:191), which was adopted by the parliament (Riksdagen) in June 2014. With this new youth policy the previous national goals (i.e. young people's genuine access to welfare and influence) was replaced with a new overarching national goal: "All young people are to have good living conditions, power to shape their lives and influence over social development"

(Government Bill 2013/14:191, p.16). By this new youth policy goal the Swedish government wants to further clarify that the youth policy is cross-sectoral and encompasses all decisions and measures that affect the conditions for young people in different policy areas, such as employment, housing, education, health, leisure, culture and influence.

As can be seen above, the overarching national goal consists of three specific objectives. The first objective, access to good living condition, is about creating good living conditions for young people in terms of access to education, employment, housing, health, security, culture, leisure, language, opportunities for participation and influence, and a life free from discrimination. The second objective, power to shape own lives, is about providing young people with opportunities to be independent and make independent choices and take responsibility for their actions. Finally, the third objective, that is, the influence over the development of society, stresses that young people in Sweden should not only have a say in matters that immediately concern them, but they should have the opportunity to participate in political decision-making and influence issues and policies that are important for society at large, such as the environment, public transport, social care, and gender equality.

How are young people spoken of, presented and *described*?

In a review of the descriptions of young people in the policy documents, several interesting characteristics of the Swedish youth policy emerge. First, according to the Government Bill (2013/14:191), a single youth perspective should be taken into consideration in the planning, implementation and monitoring of all decisions and actions affecting young people between 13 to 25 years of age. Such youth perspective should be based on the rights of young people to come into the enjoyment of human rights as expressed in the constitutions and in the Sweden's Convention commitments in the area. More specifically, this single youth perspective that should permeate all policy areas, emphasizes that young people should be (a) considered as a diverse group of individuals, (b) supported to become independent individuals, and (c) have the opportunity to participate in the formal decision processes and have influence (Referral Memorandum, p. 10). Hence, having a youth perspective is seen as a tool to promote progress toward the goal that all young people must have good living conditions, the power to shape their lives and influence over the development of society.

Second, and related to the first one, in several policy documents it is explicitly stated that young people should be considered as a diverse

group - not as a unified group where everyone is assumed to have the same conditions, needs and desires – and that they should be supported to become independent individuals, who have the opportunity to participate and influence. This dominating view of young people is clearly and explicitly reflected in the policy documents under study. For example, this diversity perspective, which simply refers to an awareness that all young people are not the same because they are young, is expressed in the following way in the Government Bill and in the document describing youth employment policies:

"*Young people, like all people are diverse and should not be considered as a homogeneous group but as a diversity of individuals. Young people are different based on gender, gender identity or expression, age, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, socio-economic and psycho-social background, place of residence, interests, etc. The efforts the community is aimed at young people must take account of this diversity*" (Government Bill 2013/14:191, p.24).

"*...it is important to acknowledge that young people are not a homogeneous group and it is therefore important to meet every individual's needs.*" (Youth Employment Policies, p. 2).

All in all, it is clearly and repeatedly stated in the policy documents that young people should be viewed as a heterogeneous group with different identities, desires, and interests. And, that government initiatives and measures in different policy areas should aim to create opportunities for all young people to develop according to their own individual interests and preferences.

Third, in the Swedish youth policy young people are viewed as a resource and youth is seeing as a phase of life that has an inherent value of itself, which is pointed out in various ways in the policy documents. It is sometimes more implicit and indirect; sometimes it is expressed more explicitly, as shown by the quote below:

"*The period of youth shapes people and represents a significant stage in life. It is therefore important to see adolescence as a period of great significance and a value in itself.*" (Government Bill 2013/14:191, p. 14).

Unlike the previous national youth policy, the current youth policy focuses on the concept of participation (delaktighet), rather than resource. By emphasizing on the concept of participation rather than viewing young people as a resource, it is argued, it will be made clear that young

people have the right to participation and influence. Further, it is emphasized that the concept of participation not only includes taking into consideration the views, ideas or proposals of young people, but it also includes to capitalize young people's own initiatives and own work in the civil society. All in all, from a Swedish youth policy perspective, youth is a period with intrinsic value, meaning that young people are presumed to contribute to the development of society with their knowledge, experience and participation.

Fourth, and finally, the Swedish youth policy seems to be framed within a universalist policy framework, in the sense that it initiatives and measures are directed to *all* young people in Sweden, and not only to a certain group or groups of youths who are considered in need of various initiatives. In the Government Bill it is repeatedly underlined that all young people must have good conditions, the power to shape their live and have influence over the development of society. Put differently, all young people between 13 and 25 year of age should enjoy equal opportunities, irrespectively of their social and demographic backgrounds:

"It is vital that all young people irrespectively of their sex, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age have the same opportunities for development." (Government Bill 2013/14:191, p. 20).

In this context, it is important to mention that despite the fact that the youth policy at the national level is and has been general in that it has not single out certain groups as higher priority than others, it has also included targeted initiatives. For example, the current action program for the period 2014-2017 contains a number of specific actions and measures aimed at the group of young people who are neither in employment, education or training (NEETs). In this regard, the Swedish National Agency for Education has previously been commissioned to develop a model for national follow-up of NEETs under the age of 20 and offer support for the municipalities' work with this target group. Furthermore, labour market policy initiatives target those who been long-term unemployed. To conclude, alongside a general youth policy aiming at all youths, the Swedish youth policy also target certain groups of young people, who are considered to be disadvantaged compare to other groups of young people in terms of education, employment, and etcetera.

To summarize, the current Swedish youth policy is aimed at all young people, who are considered to be a diverse group of individuals, and

promotes equal opportunities and fair living conditions. Moreover, young people's knowledge, experiences, and especially their participation in the formal decision-making process, are viewed as essential for a healthy democracy.

Young people's *problems* in society - society´s problems with young people

In order to point out some of the problems that society and the government consider as urgent and critical among the young people, we take a closer look the youth policy action program. The national youth policy, which is mainly formulated in the Government Bill (2013/14:191), includes an action program for the period 2014-2017. The action program contains not less than 40 different actions covering three priority areas: youth influence, earning living, and psychical health.

In regard to area on youth influence, the policy documents are claiming that young people in Sweden, who constitute a significant share of the Swedish population, should have a voice in politics. It is argued that young women and men who are minors have limited formal opportunities to influence issues that concern them. But also young people who have full formal rights to influence have still difficulties to be heard. In this context, there are a number of challenges and difficulties facing young people. For example, young people remain underrepresented in decision-making assemblies and, compared to the overall population, fewer young people choose to become members of political parties and participate in elections. Furthermore, according to the policy documents, even though the Internet is an important arena for democratic debate and a platform for democratic participation, it has also become an arena for extremist groups to spread their anti-democratic values and to recruit young people for participation in their activities. In order to overcome these and other related challenges facing young people, the government suggests a number of actions, which will be discussed in the forthcoming section.

A number of challenges are also brought up within the second priority area, earning living, which includes issues concerning young people's education, employment, economical situation, and accommodation. In regard to the education, the national Government Bill points out that a major challenge is to overcome the shortcomings of equivalence presence in the Swedish schools. It is argue that to overcome such kind of challenges additional measure should be taken so that the schools can full

meet is compensatory mandate. Yet another challenge, within this second priority area, concerns young people's entry into the labour market. According to national statistics presented in the policy documents, the unemployment levels are higher among young people compared to older segments of the population. An additional challenge is about the failure of many young people to establish themselves in the housing market. In this regard it is mentioned that a majority of Swedish municipalities have difficulties to offer young people that kind of housing that they are asking for. At the same time, an increased number of young people are indebted and are in need of financial assistance. Finally, some challenges are also highlighted about the entrepreneurship among people. It is noted that, in spite of Sweden being ranked high internationally with regard to various kinds of innovations, the entrepreneurship among people has been comparatively low.

Finally, as to the challenges facing Swedish young people in regard to psychical health, the policy documents express a concern about an increased mental illness among young people, especially among young women. According to statistics reported in the documents, a significant number of young people reported that they have experienced, for example, anxiety and stress. Furthermore, a concern is also expressed in regard to young people's exposure to violence of different kind, such as sexual assault and coercion, and rape.

In sum, the government identifies a number of challenges facing young people in Sweden within the three priority areas highlighted in the action program for the period 2014-2017. These challenges are believed to be interconnected and to overcome them various initiatives in different areas are required.

What *solutions* appear to be wise and reasonable, and what are left out of the agenda?

To overcome the challenges mentioned above within each priority policy areas, the action program suggests a number of new measures. In regard to first priority area, youth influence, the government suggests, among other things, the following:

- Support and grans to municipalities that work innovatory to increase young people's opportunities to influence.
- Efforts to increase the participation rate of young people in the national as well as the European parliament elections.

- Appoint a committee to review the individual's opportunities for participation and influence in political decision-making.
- Produce information and support material to teacher on how to stimulate political and democratic conversations in schools.
- Support to young elected politicians.
- Efforts to strengthen young people's democratic values and preventing that individuals adhere to violent extremist groups.
- Work for the development of the structured dialogue in Sweden in order to reach more young people.

Among the actions suggested to overcome the challenges within the second priority area, earning living, there are: increased actions for young NEETs (not in education, employment or training); facilitate transitions between education and work within the framework of the EU program Erasmus+; and the opportunities for young people to participate in EU mobility programs should be facilitated. Finally, in regard to last priority area, psychical health, the government suggested a number of actions. For example, an assignment is given to the *Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society* to conduct a survey to increase knowledge of how young people with self-perceived mental illness experience their difficulties. The agency is also given the assignment to implement a gender equality action in order to support young women's and men's mental health and well-being.

Overall, the actions suggested to overcome the challenges facing young people in Sweden seem to be wise and reasonable. However, some of the actions are described at a more general level. More concrete actions are needed in order to strengthen young people's opportunities for political participation and to get organized. At the same time, while it is important to have a youth perspective that permeate all policy areas, it also essential to take into consideration and listen to young people's own perspectives and experiences on how they can contribute more to the society. Put differently, young people must be understood not only from a top down and outside perspective, but also from an inside perspective, where what young people themselves want and consider important is evaluated and taking into account.

Responsible actors - What *actors* appear to be authorities and problem solvers?

A number of national governmental and public authorities are dealing with or are responsible for the youth policy in Sweden. At the national level, the *Ministry of Education and Research* has the overall responsibility for the coordination of the government's youth policy. Within this ministry, *The Division for Youth Policy and Liberal Adult Education*, has the specific responsibility for the coordination and development of youth policy issues, which also includes the cross-sectoral youth policy objectives and follow-up of youth policy. In addition, the division is also responsible for international cooperation on youth policy issues as well as for the conditions and development of youth organisations. Furthermore, the division has also responsibility for the youth research and statistics on young people's living conditions in Sweden. In addition to the *Ministry of Education and Research*, also other ministries have responsibility for policy areas that concern young people, such as work, health, culture, housing, etc.

At the national level, beside the ministries, there are also a number of government agencies responsible for the evaluation of the national youth policy. One of the most important actors are the *Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society* (*Myndigheten för ungdoms- och civilsamhällsfrågor*). According to the Government Bill (p.38) and the agency's own mission statement, the agency missions are, among other things, to:

- Promote youth mainstreaming in relevant activities at the state level
- Follow up the objectives set for national youth policy by the Riksdag (the Swedish Parliament) and the Government and support municipalities in their youth policy work.
- Follow up young people's living conditions and enable comparisons at both the local, national and European level.
- Collect knowledge about actions and methods that can improve young people's living conditions, power, and influence and make it available to the municipalities, counties and other authorities.
- Contribute to a better interaction and coordination of governmental actions directed to young people.
- Support youths and other civil society organisation.

In this context, also the *Ombudsman for Children Sweden* (Barnombudsmannen), which is another government agency, is

important to mention. This agency's primarily goal is to promote the rights and interest of children and young people (up to the age of 18) on the basis of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In the Swedish Parliament (Riksdagen) youths issues are prepared in various committees, such as the committee of Education, committee of Cultural Affairs, committee on Labour market, etcetera.

At the regional level, the twenty-one county administrative boards are important actors. The county administrative boards, which in fact constitute the link people and municipalities on the on hand, and the government, parliament and central authorities on the other, have the responsibility for implementation and clarifications of government policies, including youths policies.

At the local level, there are 290 self-governing municipalities that have responsibility for different public services, including school, health and environmental protection, water and sewerage, etcetera. However, due to the autonomy of municipalities in relation to the state, they are not obligated to follow the national youth policies. They can, if they wish, formulate their youth policy work on the national goals outlined in the Government Bill. Their work to develop local youth policies is supported by the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society. As described above, the agency provides the municipalities with knowledge and supports local projects.

Alongside the agencies described above at different government levels, that is, national, regional and local, there are also a number of non-governmental actors, who are active in issues concerning young people. One of them is LSU (National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations), an umbrella organisation, representing 84 different national youth's organisations. LSU works with different issues concerning young people, both at national and international level. One of their main aims is to ensure that young people are in involved in decision-making process at different levels. The Youth Councils of Sweden (Sveriges Ungdomsråd) is another umbrella organisation, representing over 50 different local youth councils. The organisation aims at providing better opportunities for young people to influence their own lives and issues that concern them.

All in all, there are various governmental as well as non-governmental agencies and organisations that, in one or another way, work for issues taping on different aspects of young people's lives. While, some are working on specific assignments from the government, others work more independently on the issues of importance to different groups of young

people. The latter applies to a greater extent to membership-based organisations, whose members deliberately have decided to uphold different distances to governmental authorities at various levels. On a final note, it should be added that the overview is not comprehensive, as there exist many other agencies and youth organisations that represent the interests of young people.

What *roles* are young people ascribed?

The question about which role(s) young people are ascribed, is basically about how the society views the younger generations; as independent individuals who are capable of taking responsibility for their own as well as society's development; or as dependent objects who have to be taken care by society. The new overarching national youth policy goal, that is, "all young people should have access to good living conditions, power to shape their own lives and influence over the development of the society", gives us a hint about how young peoples are viewed in society.

As described above, the first part of the youth policy goal (i.e. all young people should have access to good living conditions), is about creating good living conditions for young people in terms of access to education, employment, housing, health, security, culture, leisure, language, opportunities for participation and influence, and a life free from discrimination. Put differently, the society should create favourable conditions for young people to become adults. From that perspective, youth is viewed as a transitional phase, from childhood to adulthood. This kind of view on youths is explicitly declared in the main youth policy document:

"The period of youth is characterized by the gradual development towards increased autonomy and independence. This development will be supported and factors that restrict young people's freedom of action must be opposed so that they can develop into independent and responsible individuals" (Government Bill 2013/14:191, p. 26).

Thus, the role of the youth policy is to reflect the opportunities and challenges young people face when going through the transition from youth to adulthood. In this sense, it could be argued that young people are viewed as passive recipients of services and objects of different socialization agents, as school and other governmental institutions.

However, the second and third part of the national youth policy goal (i.e. power to shape their own lives and influence over the development of the

society), ascribe young people a more active role in the process of shaping their lives and society. Put differently, young people are viewed as independent individuals, who take responsibility for their own actions and have the right to participate in political decision-making and influence issues that matter to them. This different, but coexisting, perspective on youth is also in many respects reflected in the policy documents. For example, in the Government Bill this perspective is formulated in the following terms: "...young people should be part of the construction of the society…have an explicit right to influence (Government Bill 2013/14:191, p. 20-21)."

In sum, the national Swedish youth policy highlights society's responsibility to create good living conditions for all young people, while pointing out that young people have the power to change their lives as well as their society. In other words, young people are both viewed as passive recipients of various social services and active agents in changing their lives and influencing their society through democratic participation.

Are any *words and phrases repeatedly used* in the framing of youth policy?

The final section of this report is about presenting a quantitative overview of young people are viewed. The results are presented in table 1 above. As shown, the frequency of words and phrases repeatedly used in the framing of youth policy reflects clearly the view of young people as a resource with a significant potential to play a positive role in the development of society. Not surprisingly, words like 'influence' and 'participation' are repeatedly used throughout almost all the documents to indicate that young people are to have power to shape their lives and influence over social development.

The quantitative analyses also reveal that the policy documents are not describing young people as passive, apathetic, uninterested or ungagged. There were no such negatively loaded words and phrases occurring in the documents to describe young people. Notably, however, positively loaded words such as 'interested' and 'active' were also less frequently used. It seems that, even though young people's participation in the development of society is being perceived as important and necessary for the overall development of democracy in Sweden, young people are not explicitly described as active or interested in societal and political issues. Hence, there seems to be an ambiguity in the descriptions of the roles of young people in the society. Perhaps an overly optimistic interpretation could be that it is the public sector's mission to give young people equal

opportunities, within which young people could then themselves shape their life.

11. National youth policy report – United Kingdom

List of selected policy documents

Title	Level	Author	Type of Policy Document	Date
Our Children and Young People – Our Pledge: A Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2006 – 2016	Regional - Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland Government	General Youth Policy	2006
Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014	Regional - Scotland	Scottish Government	Law	2014
Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland: National Youth Work Strategy 2014-2019	Regional - Scotland	Scottish Government	Youth Work	2014
Youth engagement and progression framework Implementation plan	Regional - Wales	Welsh Government	General Youth Policy	2013
Children and Young People First: Welsh Government/Youth Justice Board joint strategy to improve services for young people from Wales at risk of becoming involved in, or in, the youth justice system	Regional - Wales	Welsh Government	Youth Justice	2014
Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales – Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales on the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism	National	UK Government	Counter Terrorism	2015
Evaluation of the Mayor's Youth Offer: A Report to the London Development Agency January 2011	Local, England	Ecorys / London Development Agency	Evaluation of Local Youth Policy	2011
2010-2015 Government Policy: Young People	National	UK Government	Policy Paper	2013
Positive for Youth: A new approach to cross-government policy for young people aged 13 to 19	National	UK Government	General Youth Policy	2010
Youth Services in England: The State of the Nation	National	National Youth Agency	Youth Policy Review	2013

Methodology

This study employed a multi-step methodological process for selection, categorisation and analysis of policy documents. The first stage followed guidelines established by the WP3 coordinators, which identified the

parameters of the work package task in establishing a minimum number of policy documents across national, regional and local levels, and the preferred nature of the documents (youth policies or strategies available between 2012 and 2014)

Sample

In the second stage, which focused on the selection of a sample for analysis, we performed a search of national, regional and local youth policies across governmental and non-governmental organisations and bodies. Over 50 documents were captured and catalogued (see **Appendix A**). Agreed WP3 selection criteria were then used to identify the most relevant documents from the wider corpus of policy texts sourced. Unlike the other countries in our consortium, the UK could be said to have two different levels of 'regions'. In addition to England's nine official regions, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales each occupy a distinct and separate devolved status within the UK. We therefore elected to treat England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales as regions for this study, since each have their own specific, government-led youth policies. With this distinction, we elected to review youth policies for governments of UK (England), Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales that were within the specified date range. Where no youth policy could be found within the date range, we moved on to the most recent and wide-ranging official youth policy. In the case of Northern Ireland, this was a 2006 document detailing a 10-year youth strategy, making it still applicable to the current youth policy context there.

Thematic content analysis

The third stage involved the completion of individual content and qualitative/discourse analysis sheets for each document. Using the template and questions provided by the WP3 coordinators we read each document and provided analysis that corresponded to the quantitative and qualitative questions included in the template. As the number of documents was limited at this stage, we did not carry out statistical analysis of any kind.

Modified critical discourse analysis

Finally, the fourth stage involved discourse analysis that corresponded to the seven key questions outlined by the WP3 coordinators, and which form the structure of this report. Responses from the qualitative/discourse analysis section of each individual document were used to answer these questions where relevant. A modified form of

critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2013) was used to analyse the selected policies. CDA is a popular tool for analysing power relations as they are revealed in texts that have a wide social, cultural and political significance. These texts are most frequently drawn from literature or speeches produced by institutions with connections to governance and powerful interests such as corporations or international bodies. The texts most commonly subjected to Critical Discourse Analysis are political speeches, news reports and documents produced by institutions. CDA builds on Foucaultian elaborations of discourse as socially situated statements about the world and human consciousness, which construct and elaborate positions and orientations towards social structures and actions and are linked to the circulation of power. Approaches based on such an understanding are notably sociolinguistic, focusing on uses of language and groups of statements about the social world which work to establish and maintain ideological, material and political systems of power or control (Rabinow, 1984; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). CDA focuses on contextual analysis, examining the way in which texts inflect or are inflected by prevailing (or normative) ideological beliefs, how sociolinguistic choices include, exclude or reference particular subjects; how gaps and absences in textual representation are linked to social power interests. It also examines how the expression of these beliefs in particular texts either serve to strengthen or to disrupt dominant and commonly accepted social structures (Fairclough, 2013). Given space and time-constraints, the length of some of the documents under consideration, and the guidelines for analysis, our modified CDA retained the primary goals of linking powerful political changes outside the texts with phrasing, linguistic formulations, and discursive patterns in the documents. However, we did not delve further into intertextual relationships, absences or 'voices' which might have yielded further insight.

Gener*al Description of Selected Policy Documents*

National

At the national level, the UK Government's most recent comprehensive policy document is *Positive for Youth* (2010). This outlines the previous coalition (Conservative-Liberal Democrat) government's youth policy approach for young people aged 13 to 19. This document remains the primary national policy guidance on youth under the Conservative government who came to power in 2015. The stated purpose of the document is 1) to outline the government's 'vision' for the role of youth in

society; 2) to present its policies in relation to all aspects of British young people's lives; and 3) to outline plans for implementing policy in partnership with various stakeholders. *Positive for Youth* states that its intended strategy is to combine all the government's policies concerning 13 to 19 year olds is a 'radical new approach to youth policy' (Ministerial foreword, no page number).

A second policy paper we analysed provides more current detail of the range of national policies and strategies in relation to young people across the UK. *2010-2015 Government Policy: Young People* was published in April 2013 to demonstrate what the government is doing to improve the quality of education and opportunities for young people.[18] This document reviews on-going policy initiatives arising during the 2010 to 2015 Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government. It highlights various government supported initiatives occurring around youth, several of which had started under the previous Labour government. The document outlines some general government priorities for and views on young people and lists actions being taken by the government in three areas 1) improving education; 2) supporting more young people to study beyond the age of 16; and 3) providing wider opportunities. Additionally, *2010-2015 Government Policy: Young People* details who is involved in consultation processes and partnerships for delivering youth services at regional and local levels. It features appendices providing information on different UK organisations and actors supporting young people, the *Positive for Youth* cross-government initiative for young people, and new regulations raising the participation age of young people which increases the amount of time young people in England are required to continue in education or training. Overall the document provides mainly surface-level, factual information about the government's policy priorities and initiatives.

Finally, we analysed a third policy paper that is not specifically youth orientated but sets policy on youth related to counter-terrorism policy – *Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales* (2015). As such, we highlight the areas where youth policy/provision is addressed as part of the government's overall strategy to prevent people in the UK from being drawn into terrorism.

This document was selected because it demonstrates how youth policy interacts with wider governmental strategic priorities that a) are not explicitly linked to youth, but significantly target young people as part of

[18] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-young-people

overall outreach; and b) are related to government-identified policy priorities for families and young people in the current media and political climate. Counter-terrorism is one of the most significant rhetorical priorities on the current UK government's policy agenda. Understanding how such policies address the question of young people and terrorism provides insight into the government's discursive construction of young people in relation to national security.

Where youth are concerned, the document represents them all as passive objects both of governmental efforts to protect them from the ideology of terrorism and of ideological approaches from radicals. Schools are conceptualised as sites of government-sanctioned knowledge and information on terrorism, and as implicit battlegrounds for the careful inculcation of a specific set of government-approved beliefs on:

- 'fundamentally British values' (UK Government, 2015, p. 10)
- the 'existing duties [of schools] to forbid political indoctrination' (UK Government, 2015, p. 11)
- the securing of 'a balanced presentation of political issues' (UK Government, 2015, p. 11)
- the 'need to identify and divert those involved in or vulnerable to radicalisation (UK Government, 2015, p. 20)

In this construction, what constitutes British values is set by government, as is the way in which schools should cover political issues with young citizens. The government also controls the definition of what constitutes 'indoctrination,' and who exactly are 'vulnerable to radicalisation.'

Regional

Although they are not named as regions – they are referred to internally in the UK as countries operating in a devolved system of government under UK unitary rule – the devolved governments of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are referred to in this report as regional authorities. Each of the three regions referenced have nominally taken different paths in formulating and delivering their own policies on young people.

In Northern Ireland, the current youth policy dates back to the 2006 document *Our Children and Young People – Our Pledge: A Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2006 – 2016.* It outlines a long-term strategy grounded in a rights-based approach.

Scotland has mainly enacted the most recent legislation and policy on young people, via a law, the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014* and a separate policy document, *Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland: National Youth Work Strategy 2014-2019*, also in 2014.

In Wales, the most recent youth policies available were *Children and Young People First: Welsh Government/Youth Justice Board joint strategy to improve services for young people from Wales at risk of becoming involved in, or in, the youth justice system* (2014), and *Youth engagement and progression framework Implementation plan* (2013). *Children and Young People First* presents a joint strategy and policy framework that 'brings together the Welsh Government and YJB's vision and commitment to improve services for children and young people from Wales at risk of becoming involved in, or who are in, the youth justice system' (Welsh Government, 2014, p. 3). The *Youth engagement and progression framework Implementation plan* is primarily aimed at young people either still in full time education, or currently not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Local

At LSE we analysed an evaluation of the most recent London-wide youth policy, entitled The Mayor's Youth Offer, which ran from 2007 until 2010. *Evaluation of the Mayor's Youth Offer: A Report to the London Development Agency January 2011* evaluates the two year Mayor's Youth Offer (MYO) programme, reviewing the objectives, background, activities, expenditures, outputs and impacts of the project.

Non-governmental Organisation/Charity

Our analysis of a youth-oriented non-governmental organisation document focused on *Youth Services in England: The State of the Nation*, written in 2013 by the National Youth Agency, a non-governmental charity focused primarily on youth work, which often works in partnership with government. This report was written in cooperation with the Local Government Association, the UK's national organisation for local government. We selected this document because it provided a 'state of the nation snapshot' of youth services across the UK during the date range for this study, providing an external view of government youth policy, particularly the UK government's *Positive for Youth*.

Overall aim of youth policy

National

In *Positive for Youth,* the government lists the key aims of its youth policies as being to:

- 'Support parents and families, as primary carers, to support their children from birth through the teenage years;
- Ensure that all young people succeed in learning and find a job;
- Help young people develop their character, a sense of belonging and the behaviours which help them succeed in learning, work and life;
- Encourage young people to take care of their physical and mental health;
- Look out for the most vulnerable young people who may suffer abuse, neglect, exploitation, or homelessness, focusing intensively on those for whom the state acts as corporate parent; and
- Prevent youth crime, and support young people in the criminal justice system. (UK Government 2010, p. 17)

Some of these aims indicate mechanisms that appear value-neutral – for instance, supporting parents and families to support children. Some are openly value-laden and subject to ideological interpretation, for instance: to help people develop their character; and look out for the most vulnerable people. A definition of what type of character the government wants young people to develop is not offered explicitly, but can be inferred through the rhetorical phrasing of other aims: 'successful', 'employed', 'physically and mentally healthy', and 'exhibiting behaviours that foster learning, work and life success'.

2010-2015 Government Policy: Young People somewhat narrows the aims of government policy from those espoused in *Positive for Youth*, focusing mainly on education, life and work skills:

We want to increase the quality of education for young people so that they are well prepared for further education, higher education and work. We want to make sure that there are **high quality options** for young people to undertake both academic and vocational education, including **apprenticeships and traineeships**. More broadly, we want to ensure all young people have the tools and opportunities they need to fulfil their potential, **regardless of background or life circumstances**. We believe that all young people should have access to local and national opportunities to develop skills for life and work and to **create a more**

responsible, engaged and cohesive society. We also want to encourage young people to **have their say on issues** which matter to them; and decision-makers at local and national levels to listen to them. Together, this will help to ensure that:

- More young people go on to study and gain the skills and qualifications that lead to sustainable jobs
- Fewer young people are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- More young people are involved in social action and feel they can make positive changes in society and in their own lives. (UK Government, 2013, p. 2, emphasis added)

Even a brief overview of the phrases we have highlighted in the passage above is enough to suggest the ways in which the previous Conservative coalition and the ruling Conservative government's ideological values in relation to economic and social issues are impacting on their policies and strategies for young people. In line with the previous New Labour government's emphasis on the role of educational institutions in diminishing achievement gaps between children from working and middle-class families, this document, the fulfilling of 'potential, regardless of background or life circumstances' is explicitly enshrined as a policy goal. Meanwhile, implicitly, the government support for marketization of higher education and the removal of state support for students with academic rather than vocational aspirations is referenced via the phrases 'high quality options' and 'apprenticeships and traineeships'. This document has to be read in the context of the sustained dismantling of educational scholarships, maintenance grants, free places and other provision under the coalition and now conservative government. From the time this policy document was published, to the present day, young people have been publicly contesting these policies, with two periods of sustained protest against the raising of university tuition fees and the removal of educational support grants for the poorest young people in 2010 and 2011.

In the *Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales*, there is no specific aim stated for youth actions expressed in the document. However, the aim of the *Prevent* agenda as it relates to young people's education is clearly outlined:

Schools should be safe spaces in which children and young people can **understand and discuss sensitive topics**, including terrorism and the **extremist ideas** that are **part of terrorist ideology**, and learn how to

challenge these ideas. The Prevent duty is not intended to limit discussion of these issues. Schools should, however, be mindful of their existing **duties to forbid political indoctrination** and secure a balanced presentation of political issues. (UK Government, 2015, p. 11)

This framing of how politics should be treated in schools is accompanied by an expectation that schools will be active in assuring that sensitive political topics can be discussed – i.e. Making space for such discussions within the curriculum – but also doing so without violating the unwritten rules that circumscribe the limits of political discourse (as 'not allowing political indoctrination') and their balanced presentation (which itself can be argued is subjective). The assumption that all school teachers are equipped to recognise some universal 'terrorist ideology' and even that there is a single 'terrorist ideology' very poorly masks an attempt to characterise political Islam, and ideas critical of Western military actions in the Middle East without naming it.

Regional

Northern Ireland's Youth Policy identifies the primary aim of ensuring 'that by 2016 all our children and young people are fulfilling their potential' (Northern Ireland Government, 2006, p. 3). Other aims identified include that of improving the 'quality of life, life chances and living for all our children and young people and reduc[ing] the likelihood of more serious problems developing in the future' (Northern Ireland Government, 2006, p. 18). These egalitarian and supportive aims must be seen in the context of decades of state-sanctioned military and insurgent violence between Protestant and Catholic communities and paramilitaries in Northern Ireland, which had taken a ferocious toll on the lives of young people, particularly in the Catholic community even in the years following the 1998 Good Friday agreement. Rates of incarceration for violence, and involvement with the criminal justice system for young people in Northern Ireland were of serious concern to the authorities. Hence the use of the phrase 'more serious problems developing in the future' has to be read against this backdrop of attempted de-radicalisation and violence prevention.

The Scotland Act aims to provide a youth policy framework that 'best safeguards, supports and promotes the wellbeing of children…[and] is most integrated from the point of view of recipients' (Scottish Government, 2014a, p. 8). The main aim of Scotland's Youth Work Policy states that 'all young people, in every part of Scotland, should have access

to high quality and effective youth work practice' (Scottish Government, 2014b, p. 8).

In Wales, the aims of the Youth Work Policy are presented as a utopian vision that aspires to eliminating youth criminality, while also providing a support system with effective rehabilitation: 'We want a country in which we all work to prevent children and young people from entering the youth justice system. But if young people do offend, we want to ensure the system and associated services do all they can to help and support them to have the best chance of not having further convictions' (Welsh Government, 2014, p. 4). Wales' youth engagement and progression framework, on the other hand, sets out its aims as being to improve young people's services through effective partnerships for improving educational performance and attainment. 'Our aim is to help all young people overcome the challenges they face so that they have the opportunity to make a positive progression beyond compulsory education at 16.' (Welsh Government, 2013,p. 2). These challenges are categorised in the document only as the 'economic and personal circumstances [of] some groups of young people' (Ibid, p.2), with no further explanation of what those circumstances might be or the identity of young people being discussed.

Local

The Mayor's Youth Offer (MYO) for London describes its aims as being to

- Increase participation of disadvantaged young people in positive activities;
- Reduce exclusions and absences from schools;
- Reduce the number of young people who are NEET; and
- Reduce the number of first entrants to the criminal justice system.

The rationale in the document for these priorities is apparently the high economic and societal costs associated with young people being NEET and with youth offending, and the resultant longer-term impacts on employment prospects and crime rates.

Non-governmental Organisation/Charity

As it is a review of policy, the National Youth Agency's (NYA) *Youth Services in England: The State of the Nation* does not itself outline an explicit youth policy, but rather points to *Positive for Youth* (see above) as the key policy by which it is assessing the state of youth services. It proposes a

mild critique of existing youth policy in relation to a perceived failure to match rhetoric and practice.

How are young people spoken of, presented and described?

National

A range of messages about how the government perceives youth can be discerned from reviewing *Positive for Youth*. The title itself is explicitly signifies the government's stance on young people. In the ministerial foreword, the policy initially defines itself in terms of how the proposed strategy breaks with past UK policy to treat young people in a more positive and respectful manner, implicitly suggesting that previous policies have demonised young people. The ministerial foreword asserts seven key ways in which the new policy 'represents a radical new approach that breaks from the past approaches' (UK Government 2010, Ministerial foreword, NP):

- It is positive about young people.
- It is centred on young people
- It respects young people's right to have their voice heard.
- It seeks to support parents and carers, not ignore or supplant them.
- It is based on genuine partnership rather than state control and silo working.
- It empowers and supports local leadership.
- It has been developed through a collaborative process.

(UK Government 2010, Ministerial foreword, NP)

Here, apart from assertions about the new policy, young people are presented and described in ways that correspond to some adult-defined positive characteristics; their central role in policy formation; their rights and views; and their agency vis-à-vis partnership and collaboration.

Section 2 of the report, entitled 'Young People Today' and beginning on page 3 offers an official government perspective on young people across a number of areas. In the sub-section 'Outcome trends and inequalities,' young people are immediately presented as simultaneously problematic and positive:

There are 4.5 million teenagers in England today. Despite some widely held prejudices, most of them are doing well, and over 85% report high life satisfaction. Most young people aspire to succeed in their education and enter work, and to make a positive contribution to their communities.

They have loving – if sometimes anxious – families or carers who encourage them and help them learn from the mistakes that are a natural part of growing up. They have more in common with previous generations than many believe. (UK Government 2010, p. 3)

On page 4, notably, **the significance of intersectional identities and experiences, as well as of family, in defining young people is a welcome addition**: 'although they have many values, concerns, and experiences in common, there is no such thing as a typical teenager. Young people's lives are influenced by different social, cultural, and economic circumstances and personal choices. These act in combination rather than in isolation. The most important influences are those relating to young people's family' (2010, p 4).

Quite interestingly, however, **young people here are conceptualised as 'teenagers'**, between the ages of 13 and 19, which differs greatly from other age-related definitions. **Whilst the overall message of this passage is that most teenagers/young people are happy and desire to live fulfilling lives, three phrases strongly imply that the positive news being shared by the government in this policy document should be surprising to its audiences – 'widely held prejudices;' 'if sometimes anxious;' and 'more in common…than many believe.**' These three phrases each explicitly link the identity of young people to problems to and differences from adults. The rest of this sub-section balances general concerns about young people's 'choices about risky behaviours' with perceived progress in terms of statistical figures around educational attainment, teenage pregnancy, and alcohol or drug use, all key policy priorities under the previous (New) Labour governments, and areas into which funding had been routed at unprecedented levels until the arrival of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition.

It is not clear how much direct consultation with young people and families underlies the UK-wide national youth policy documents. Further subsections of *Young People Today* draw on research[19] to explore the issues facing young people – including, for example, influences on young people, which it defines as parenting, family, culture, ethnicity, socio-

[19] Including a University of Hertfordshire 2011 study on health behaviours of school-aged children; an 2011 National Health Service (NHS) study on smoking, drinking and drug use among young people, and Department for Education (DfE) reports on participation in education, GCSE results country-wide, and internal analysis of a 2011 citizenship survey performed by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG). (see UK Government, 2011, p. 3)

economic factors, and peers. Notably, a subsection entitled 'Key issues for young people and their parents' claims to present direct views from young people and parents that were gathered in the *Positive for Youth* consultation – however in doing so, no direct quotes are offered and instead these views can be read as the government telling readers what they think that young people and parents told them.

In *2010-2015 Government Policy: Young People*, young people are conceptualised in conflicting frames. They are initially **presented in terms of what outcomes are desired *for* them**: increasing the quality of education, preparing young people for further/higher education and work, and providing 'high quality options' (UK Government 2013, p. 1) for their education. The document also invokes equality of opportunity through giving young people 'tools and opportunities they need to fulfil their potential, regardless of background or life circumstances' (Ibid, p.1). It is, however, **very explicit in suggesting that the fulfilment of potential is the job of young people themselves**. The document announces government's support of young people's input into and consultation on policies for and about them: 'We also want to encourage young people to have their say on issues which matter to them; and decision-makers at local and national levels to listen to them' (Ibid, p. 1) but does not specify how young people will be consulted or how decision-makers will access and/or use these views.

Alongside this positive framing of young people's participation and outcomes is a conception of young people/teenagers as needing to be moulded and/or controlled into being positive citizens. The framing of what kind of society is desired for youth attests to this: 'We believe that all young people should have access to local and national opportunities to develop skills for life and work and to create a more *responsible, engaged and cohesive* society [emphasis added]' (UK Government 2013, p. 1). Young people are seen as needing to have the terms of their participation in education managed and controlled by adults:

We will: raise the participation age so that young people are required to remain in some form of education or training for longer. Those pupils who left year 11 in summer 2014 are the first cohort required to continue until their 18th birthday. (UK Government 2013, p. 4)

There is a contradiction between the emphasis on independence and youth voice, and the emphasis on controlling young people's mobility and time through the making compulsory of education or training schemes, with no guarantee of paid remuneration or maintenance grants.

Further, it appears from this document as if young people have hitherto been unable to find suitable and sustainable work due to a lack of information: they therefore need to be guided to a better understanding of employment and careers: 'We will: make sure that young people receive careers advice that **opens their eyes** to the world of work [emphasis added].' (UK Government 2013, p. 4). Again, this targeting of advice would suggest that young people are conceptualised as being in the 15-19 age bracket or thereabouts, and teenagers at the widest, rather than in the 15-25 age bracket. The issue of how to approach older young people from 19-25 in order to deliver careers advice, or give them access to careers advice, is not addressed in the document.

In the *Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales,* young people are mainly conceptualised as passive recipients of government protocols that will protect the nation from the threat of terrorism. They are almost entirely objectified by virtue of their age and status, and defined in terms of their vulnerability.

Overall, then, the UK national policy documents on young people conceptualise them in four ways, as: a) surprisingly more positive human beings than adult citizens might expect (and we are led to believe) given the various representations of young people but also unsurprisingly vulnerable to victimisation or being led astray; b) as being in need of 'choice', 'tools' and 'opportunities' to become fully functional citizens who contribute to the life of the country c) in need of constant guidance, surveillance, and initiatives from governments, schools, families and others in order to prevent them from falling out of education, employment and training or to prevent them becoming indoctrinated by terrorist ideologies and actions; d) requiring punitive regulation and legislation under the age of 18 to enforce their presence in schools or training.

Regional

Of the analysed documents, **Northern Ireland** has the most explicitly rights-based approach to its representation and conceptualisation of children. In a section entitled 'Underpinning Values,' *Our Children and Young People* dedicates an entire page to presenting its core values in regards to children and young people, who are thought to:

- Have **dignity** as human beings and are **respected;**
- Have **rights as individuals**;
- Need **loving and supportive families or carers**;

- Are **unique** individuals each with a **valuable and diverse contribution to make** to society;
- Are **active participants** in society;
- Are **important in their own right** both now and in the future;
- Are entitled to both adult **protection** and opportunities to exercise their **independence**;
- Are entitled to live in a **peaceful and non-threatening** environment;
- Are entitled to **educational opportunities;**
- Need support to explore and achieve their **individual potential;** and
- Need **support and encouragement through the transition from childhood to adulthood** enabling them to express respect for others and take increasing responsibility for their actions and decisions.

(Northern Ireland Government, 2006, p. 11, emphasis in original)

The principles above express a strong conceptual link to the United Nations Charter on the Rights of the Child, which have been theorised as offering three 'P's' for children: provision, protection, and participation (Alderson, 2008). Beyond a human rights framework, **young people are conceptualised in other ways as well that link to rights**; for example, as unequal in terms of their experiences and outcomes. In the Minister for Children and Young People's foreword, emphasis is placed on equality of opportunity and outcomes; as in the national policy document, the first sentence indicates a desire to fulfil the 'potential' of all children, and goes on to specify further how the policy should be tightly focused on inclusive practices: 'we will strive to produce improved outcomes for **all** children and young people [emphasis in original]. We also want the gap in outcomes between those who do best and those who do worst to narrow. This will mean the provision of high quality universal services, supported by more targeted responses for children and young people who fare worst.' (Northern Ireland Government, 2006, 1st page of foreword). In order to fully understand the implications of this paragraph, a comparison with the phrasing of the UK national policy document is necessary. Here we have an explicit commitment to the provision of universal services by the Welsh government. In the previous documents the UK government's commitment is only to ensuring that young people have a 'choice' of 'high quality' education and training, for instance, with not even a minimal commitment on the part of government to ensure that young people can access this provision. **The neoliberal economic agenda of the coalition and current conservative government is further evidenced in the explicit naming of the types of schools that government wishes to encourage**: public-private partnerships or the

removal of control of schools from local municipal hands in the form of 'academies and free-schools' where public buildings and resources are handed over to be managed, often for profit, to private companies, with selective entry policies and no commitment to national staff conditions.

For **Scotland**, *The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014* outlines the Scottish Government's conceptualisation and provision of children's services in terms of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It does so thoroughly and using complex language that demonstrates how the UNCRC is used as a grounding framework for implementing children's policy. In Part 1 of the Act ('The Rights of Children'), children and young people are conceptualised in terms of how they are regarded in the UNCRC. The Scottish government's priority here appears not simply to be to meet its duty to fulfil the requirements of the UNCRC, but to actively seek to improve upon them:

The Scottish Ministers must— (a) keep under consideration whether there are any steps which they could take which would or might secure better or further effect in Scotland of the UNCRC requirements, and (b) if they consider it appropriate to do so, take any of the steps identified by that consideration. (Scottish Government 2014a, Section (1)(a)(b), p. 1).

Children are thus immediately conceptualised as important government priorities. Later in the document (Section 3) they are also framed as rights holders who should be made aware of their rights alongside the rest of the public, and who should be involved and consulted in the formulation of plans for and about them. Children and young people are thus seen as constituents and citizens who are entitled to receive coordinated government service. Young people are also described as being occasionally in need of government intervention or protection.

In the second Scottish policy document we reviewed, *Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland: National Youth Work Strategy 2014-2019,* young people are conceptualised rhetorically across a number of positive dimensions – as partners; as rights holders with a voice; as learners; as empowered agents; and as citizens who are entitled to have expectations about what the government should be doing for them. There is a subtle difference between the UK policy documents' language which talks about the potential of young people and the services which will enable young people to fulfil this potential, particularly through educational achievement, and the language of this document which is about what young people can and should expect from their government: 'This Strategy is about the potential and possibilities of

what young people can expect through our collective efforts.' (p. 10). **The fulfilment of potential for young people is thus part of an on-going collective commitment rather than just dependent on the 'provision of tools and opportunities' by government, and in the school system**. Here, a **youth and child-centred approach to policy**, that is consistent with the UNCRC, is presented as critical to success: 'In keeping with Article 12 of the UNCRC, we support and promote the active participation and engagement of young people in the planning, delivery and management of services' (Scottish Government, 2014b, p. 19, emphasis in original). Overall, the language of this youth work policy is strongly grounded in youth-centred principles of empowerment, and working in partnership with young people, in order to increase equality of opportunity and positive outcomes for youth.

In **Wales**, young people are characterised in the Youth engagement and progression framework as **highly motivated but lacking skills**, and some are represented in terms of **a progression deficit clearly linked to socioeconomic and personal life circumstances**: 'We recognise that economic and personal circumstances present some groups of young people with huge challenges to progression and we are passionate about tackling these barriers, particularly for those who need support the most' (p. 2). This rhetorical commitment on the part of the Welsh government to providing opportunities by acknowledging and working to remedy socio-economic and personal barriers and difficulties faced by children and young people is very significant. It is precisely such a commitment which appears to be missing in the UK Government documents, which primarily locate the responsibility for closing gaps caused by deprivation with the school system, non-governmental organisations and local policy authorities. Further, in Wales' *Youth Work Strategy*, **children and young people are viewed in terms of their status as children first and foremost, in the context of their rights as children**:

The fundamental principle which has underpinned our approach to youth justice to date is treating those involved in offending behaviour, or at risk of offending, as children and young people first. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). In 2011, the Welsh Government introduced the Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure, 2011. This measure places a duty on Welsh Ministers to ensure due regard to the rights and obligations in the UNCRC.

It presents young people in terms of their identity as children and their rights as citizens:

. Young people are children first, offenders second;
. Young people in the youth justice system have the same access to their rights and entitlements as any other young person;
. The voice of the young person is actively sought and listened to;
. Services focus on early intervention and holistic multi-agency support;

. Promotion of a culture where identifying and promoting effective practice is fundamental to improving outcomes for young people;
. Services are held to account for addressing the needs of young people;

. The youth justice sector is supported to develop the knowledge and skills to understand and address the needs of young people;
. The voices of victims are heard, and they are provided with the opportunity to share their views and take part in restorative approaches." (Welsh Government 2014, p. 5)

Local

The Mayor's Youth Offer in London presented young people:

- As requiring intervention/action in order to increase positive participation/behaviours, and decrease negative behaviours/non-participation
- As capable of agency and self-determination/empowerment in the delivery of youth-specific services (Section 2.24, p. 16; Section 4.2, p. 30, Section 9.3, p. 101)
- As a decreasing percentage of NEET and criminals (p. 19)
- As children guided by national children's policy (section 3.1.1, p. 19)
- As youth guided by national youth policy (section 3.1.2, p. 20)
- As offenders between 10-17 years old, and in terms of accusations levelled against them (section 3.3.5, p. 26)
- As vulnerable and at risk of poorer life chances (p. 12)

Non-Governmental Organisation/Charity

In *Youth Services in England: The State of the Nation*, **young people are conceptualised by NYA in relation to a gap between how they are regarded in national policy, and how such policies are actually delivering on stated intentions**. For example, the document identifies a government conceptualisation of young people as 'making sure [they are] heard in local decision-making,' before concluding that 'there are some

doubts about the extent to which formal structures were representative of the full range of young people' and sharing their preferred methods of including young people's voices (commissioning and co-production, youth councils and participation structures) (National Youth Agency, 2013, p. 18). Overall, for NYA the conception of young people is tied to assessing the performance of services for them as full citizens; however, they are frequently referred to as 'vulnerable,' and their 'needs' are highlighted.

Overall, while there is a common policy theme about support, potential, success, and full citizenship through education and work in all the documents, the tone of patronage, regulation, delegation (to local authorities, schools and teachers) and control (through legislation) reflected in key passages of the UK government policy documents on young people is, for the most part, absent in the regional and charity documents. Further, the emphasis of UK Government policy documents reviewed that 'background and circumstances' should not be barriers to success does two things: First it moves the responsibility for closing gaps caused by widespread poverty, discrimination and inequality onto the shoulders of teachers, educational leaders and schools; and second it suggests that by the time young people have finished compulsory schooling, whatever the disadvantages of their 'backgrounds' if they and the schools have done everything they should, and taken up all of the opportunities and tools offered to them by the government, there will no longer be any barriers to successful engagement in the labour market or political sphere of citizenship. Unlike Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish government policies which maintain their own responsibility and commitment for ensuring equality of opportunity beyond the period of compulsory education and in realms such as social class and the criminal justice system, the overall UK national policies implicitly construct young people who are NEETs, or who have become involved with 'radical' organisations, as having failed to fulfil their potential. On this note, we turn to section 3.

Young people's problems in society - society´s problems with young people

National

There are **contradictory rhetorical pulls evident in the language used to describe young people's problems or to frame (some) young people as a problem** in these documents. Nationally, young people's problems are characterised directly and vaguely as 'risky behaviours' (UK Government 2010, p. 3), but also referred to indirectly, and repeatedly, as a means of affirming the fundamentally positive nature of young people. For example, the ministerial foreword outlines how *Positive for Youth* will be positive about young people in response to perceived generalisations in the British public about young people – thus invoking the implicit notion that an 'accepted' definition of young people is a negative one, while also explicitly calling attention to an example of problematic youth behaviour:

I reject negative stereotypes of teenagers and believe that 99% of our young people are already responsible and hard-working and want to make the most of their lives and make the world a better place. This policy document is not a knee jerk reaction to the summer 2011 disturbances but a sustainable long term strategy from a Government that is unashamedly positive about our young people. (UK Government 2010, Ministerial foreword, no page number)

The embedded assumptions of this statement also speak to the government's feeling that policies it develops on/for youth could potentially be considered a 'knee jerk reaction' to what has been represented by their own spokespeople and by the national media as extremely negative youth behaviour. The invocation of the 'summer 2011 disturbances' are direct references to the London- and UK-wide riots and protests that followed the killing in Tottenham, London, of a young black man Mark Duggan by the police. The reference reminds readers that young people were closely associated with these events, tacitly disavowing the role of older adults, and those in authority, both in the killing of Mark Duggan, and in the protests and riots that followed.

Specific examples of young people's problems are further highlighted, and in one salient instance compared directly to the problems of European young people:

The UK still has amongst the highest levels of underage drinking in Europe, particularly getting drunk and 'binge' behaviour. Rates of teenage births and sexually transmitted infections remain too high. Many young people are still not getting the support they need to develop

positive relationships free from coercion and pressure. (UK Government 2010, p. 4)

Saliently, again, the language in this passage suggests that non-positive relationships, teenage pregnancy, and binge drinking, which have high rates in the UK have not been explained by research in relation to any particular social factors: however, **the non-delivery of the 'the support young people need' is detached from the government, yet vaguely identifies others as being to blame**. In addition to the problems of alcohol abuse, pregnancy, and negative influences identified in the above quote, problems of youth were defined in other ways: in relation to vague 'mistakes' and also to more generally perceived structural disadvantages and vulnerabilities:

Some young people, however, are disadvantaged because of their backgrounds or vulnerable because of their personal circumstances or behaviours, and find the changes in the teenage years much more difficult. A minority engage in behaviour that harms themselves or others and which may have further-reaching consequences. Individual young people may move in and out of being at risk of poor outcomes as they develop and as their circumstances change." (UK Government 2010, p. 9)

The UK's *Prevent Guidance* mainly focuses on **the problem of terrorism as it relates to youth**, and indirectly characterises young people as being potentially problematic (via susceptibility to terrorist views/ideology) should they be insufficiently protected by government. Worryingly, the use of the vague word **'backgrounds' in conjunction with disadvantage, with no mention of socio-economic circumstances and barriers**, **suggests ethnicity and religion even while it does not name these explicitly**. This absence of attention to social class in the UK national policy documents is fully in line with the government's continuing ideological disavowal of social class as a structural factor in young people's lives.

It is important to note that of the three UK documents examined here, *Positive for Youth* has a notably more complex and nuanced understanding of young people and their lives and concerns than the other three documents. This view is sometimes contradictory (young people as empowered agents, young people are helpless victims), and sometimes ideologically inflected by other UK government policies on education, culture or economic policy, but does make an effort to incorporate case studies, research reports, and psychologically informed advice from parents and stakeholders in the youth policy delivery field.

However, the emphasis on 'teenagers' and adolescence as a period of youth might act as a barrier for those attempting to recognise and serve the needs of younger children or older young people.

Regional

According to the **Northern Ireland** youth policy, the problems that youth encounter include poor health and educational outcomes; safety and security; poverty; and distressful and unwelcoming environments. Some concrete problems are cited – e.g. a 20% increase in youth defendants entering youth courts (Northern Ireland Government, 2006, p. 88). Several portions of this document present statistics that depict children and young people as being negatively affected by specific issues, e.g. teenage pregnancy (p. 2); drugs/alcohol/tobacco (p. 24); the (political) 'troubles' and trauma related to the troubles in Northern Ireland (p. 30); bullying and/or domestic violence (p. 49). Young people are also seen throughout the document as potentially needing help (which is mentioned 14 times throughout the policy in relation to young people), and being vulnerable (Northern Ireland Government, 2006, foreword, p.3, p. 70, p. 71).

In **Scotland**, 220,000 children are identified as living in poverty; socio-economic inequality is also cited as a problem. The circumstances of children in low-income households are also cited as problematic, with correlations made between low-income households and an increased likelihood of 'poorer health, lower educational attainment and reduced life expectancy' (Scottish Government, 2014b, p. 7).

Wales' National Youth Work Strategy identifies youth offending and risks of re-offending as youth-related problems it is addressing. It also identifies early disengagement from education and cites this as a reason that young people cannot successfully 'transition into adulthood and the world of work' (Welsh Government, 2014, p. 2).

Some might argue that the emphasis on vulnerability, trauma and the necessity of support in some of the regional documents constructs young people as too passive in relation to their own lives and as potential beneficiaries of a benevolent state. There is also **an assumption in these documents that poverty disadvantages young people in multiple ways and impacts their future life chances**, which UK government ministers would contest. However, the regional documents also contain evidence of a view of government as bearing overall responsibility for redressing economic imbalances, and of young people as partners in solving problems caused by economic imbalances, with solutions to be supported

and implemented by national and local government. We might characterise **this rhetorical balancing as a pre-neoliberal, welfarist commitment to acknowledging, and taking responsibility for, the structural inequalities** which form the backdrop to many young people's lives and choices.

Local

The London MYO identified key problems for youth to be the absence of education, training or employment in their lives, and crime: young people who were either at risk of offending or had offended in the past.

Non-governmental Organisation/Charity

For the National Youth Agency, in *Youth Services in England: The State of the Nation* the problems of youth reflect those identified by government, including **teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, or youth offending** (p. 21). Interestingly, **a problem identified in this study was reduced funding for government youth programmes**, suggesting that **one of young's people's problems in not having an adequate level of governmental support**. This is clearly a veiled reference to the highly politicised austerity agenda of the coalition and Conservative governments since 2010 which has seen the unprecedented closure of youth services across the United Kingdom, the cutting of youth participation teams and budgets in local authorities and regional bodies, as well as the loss of direct funding to young people.

What solutions appear to be wise and reasonable, and what are left out of the agenda?

National

The solutions presented by the UK government in *Positive for Youth* that appear wise and reasonable are those that a) **de-centralise** service delivery to local and voluntary bodies, but **link up** various strands of UK government policy in coordinated partnerships; b) make local and voluntary bodies involve young people either consulting on policies or working alongside local structures to commission services; c) delegate local bodies or educational authorities in support for families and parents; involve other local youth-focused bodies and prioritise cross-sectoral partnerships; and d) continually produce new regulations for schools and teachers, for instance in relation to the curriculum, and to compulsory educational qualifications. In both of the analysed national policy documents, high quality education and youth work are presented as two

prominent solutions to improving the experiences and outcomes of young people. Responsibility for delivering services appears to sit with individual educational and local authority stakeholders or with voluntary and private sector bodies. In relation to the delivery of youth services, there is a strong emphasis on tendering and payment by results for services rendered rather than on trained bodies overseen by government and building youth service capacity: 'The government will pay [bodies who win tenders for youth service delivery] on the basis of the results they achieve to ensure good value for money' (2010). Implicitly then, the national government policy documents on youth encourage an atmosphere of market competition between youth service deliverers and stakeholders, with no guarantees of payment, and a construction of young people as **consumers and customers**.

Regional

In the foreword for the **Northern Ireland** policy, young people's involvement in policy is considered to be an important aspect of success: 'Partnership working will be key. **We must also ensure that children and young people are involved every step of the way, that their voices are heard and their views and opinions given due weight**' [Emphasis in original]. This emphasis is taken further by the policy's articulation to develop a culture of involving children and young people, suggesting sustained practices rather than occasional or infrequent consultation between government and young people. It also cites the policy itself as evidence that young people offer invaluable input into youth policy solutions, noting the involvement of young people's input in the creation of the document – however, it does not provide any evidence as to how young people were involved.

The articulation of supporting themes succinctly highlights what the Northern Ireland government considered wise solutions:

. the need to adopt a **'whole-child' approach**, which gives recognition to the complex nature of our children's and young people's lives;
. **working in partnership** with those who provide and commission children's services, taking account of the future arrangements following the Review of Public Administration in Northern Ireland;
. **securing and harnessing the support of parents, carers and the communities** in which our children and young people live;
. **responding appropriately to the challenges we face as a society emerging from conflict** and recognising that our children and young

people are key to securing a more stable and peaceful future for us all;

- Making a **gradual shift to preventative and early intervention approaches** *without compromising those children and young people who currently need our services most;*
- Developing **a culture where the views of our children and young people are routinely sought** in matters which impact on their lives;
- Ensuring the **needs of children are fully assessed using agreed frameworks** and common language and that the **services they receive are based on identified needs and evidence about what works**; and
- Driving towards a **culture which respects and progresses the rights of the child.**

In **Scotland**, solutions are seen as being driven by strong partnerships and strong structures for encouraging partnership. The Scottish Youth Work Strategy focuses on five solutions some more vague than others:

(a) Ensure Scotland is the best place to be young and grow up in
(b) Put young people at the heart of policy
(c) Recognise the value of youth work
(d) Build workforce capacity
(e) Ensure we measure our impact

Solutions are also presented as being guided by a strong set of principles derived from universal human rights and the UNCRC. Both Scottish policy documents link the delivery of youth policies to the UNCRC. In Scotland's Children's Act, for example, adherence to UNCRC requirements appears to drive the relationship between Scottish government and young people. E.g. Part 1/Section 2 'Duties of public authorities in relation to the UNCRC' (Scottish Government, 2014a, p. 2).

Wales' Youth Work Strategy recommends solutions that focus on **effective partnerships between government departments who have a youth remit,** alongside **supporting local efforts**: 'Locally we will continue to support multi-agency holistic arrangements which plan and coordinate resettlement and reintegration support for young people' (Welsh Government, 2014, p. 24). Implicit in the phrasing of this passage is a notion that the young people who are the focus of concern are not settled or integrated. This, of course, begs the question: What are the overall policy commitments and practical arrangements for maintaining the

integration and motivation of young families, children and of young people who have not thus far been excluded, entered care or the justice system, or found themselves in need of serious social support.

Non-governmental Organisation/Charity

In assessing the state of youth services provision, *Youth Services in England: The State of the Nation* reviews a number of policy solutions, including: funding and service delivery, partnership and commissioning, partnership working, monitoring and quality assurance, and young people's voice and influence. The presentation of each of these areas as individual sections for review does not offer any value judgements about which methods are preferred, and instead focuses on summarising a range of activities within each approach.

Overall, it is quite notable that **there are no references or few references to Europe or to European citizenship as part of a solution to young people's development and participation** in the UK. Proximity, locality, partnership, increased regulation from national government, service commissioning and monitoring with input from youth, and increased funding for youth services are all presented by different stakeholder documents as relevant solutions to youth problems.

Responsible actors - What actors appear to be authorities and problem solvers?

National

At the national level, the government's policy approaches, are key to setting the agenda, but **individual parents and families, local bodies such as educational institutions, local authorities, voluntary bodies, private companies, social enterprises, and other youth stakeholders including teachers and youth workers appear to be the key responsible actors** for implementing both youth policies examined. The media are also named on several occasions as providers of frameworks within which young people aspire and attain, and as shaping outcomes and public perceptions. The national government's intention to control these processes, and their content through regulatory documentation and reduction in national budgets, is evidenced in passages like: 'to help local decision-makers we will set out our national priorities, strategic guidance on how best to commission effective services, and a programme of support. This support will include maximising the potential of the voluntary sector and social finance' (UK Government, 2011, Ministerial Foreword, no page number).

For the *Revised Prevent Guidance*, government and its supporting policy structures and coordinating bodies/partners are considered to be key authorities in the setting national counter-terrorism strategy, while for young people themselves, **it is schools who are identified as the main authorities for ensuring that political and policy strategies around counter-terrorism are properly implemented**. Partnership with local and regional bodies, strategic coordination, and enforcement/enactment of government-mandated requirements by local stakeholders concerning safety and security (anti-terrorism) are presented as the most effective measures to achieve the goals of the *Prevent* agenda as it relates to youth policy. **The most important actors are the institutions and 'specified authorities' within those institutions who will implement the government agenda, in the case of youth, particularly the Youth Justice Board**. They are tasked with vaguely monitoring 'the flow of young people through the Youth Justice system [and] identifying the needs and behaviours of young offenders' (UK Government, 2015, p. 19). We are also told (2010, p.10) that 'the services that are offered locally have the best chance of making an impact'. While it may well be the case that local services and contact with young people has the best chance of reaching the target subjects, overall, it appears that the UK national government will control and set the youth strategic priorities and the policy agenda. Meanwhile almost sole responsibility for delivering a wide range of youth services, and implementing the reduced budgets, and youth policies set, will fall to a range of bodies of differing sizes, and with differential amounts of power and funding, from regional and local government, to schools, governors of schools, universities, the youth justice board and prison authorities, and also inclusive of voluntary and community organisations, and the private sector.

Regional

In **Northern Ireland** the relationship between government actors and young people is described as open and inclusive of the views of government departments and bodies, civil society organisations, and young people and their families, suggesting that there are a range of responsible actors that go beyond the government.

In Scotland the *Children and Young People's Act* outlines the duties of Scottish authorities to children across a number of areas, including: children's services planning; childcare; early learning and education; various forms of child welfare (aftercare, continuing care, kinship care);

and child protection/legal processes. A section on Corporate Parenting[20] highlights the key role played by local authorities:

'It is the duty of every corporate parent, in so far as consistent with the proper exercise of its other functions—

- to be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of children and young people to whom this Part applies,
- to assess the needs of those children and young people for services and support it provides,
- to promote the interests of those children and young people,
- to seek to provide those children and young people with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing,
- to take such action as it considers appropriate to help those children and young people—
  - (i) to access opportunities it provides in pursuance of paragraph (d), and
  - (ii) to make use of services, and access support, which it provides, and
- (f) to take such other action as it considers appropriate for the purposes of improving the way in which it exercises its functions in relation to those children and young people. (Scottish Government, 2014, Section 58(1), p. 32).

Wales' Youth Work policy identifies government, and civil society, and private sector involvement as representative of key actors, recommending 'a tiered approach whereby public, private and voluntary sector organisations establish strategic and operational partnerships' (p. 21). The implications of private sector involvement are not discussed or considered.

Local

In London on the MYO, local authorities and councils are seen as being primarily responsible for implementing policies that will benefit young people; however, there is significant focus on the inclusion of strategies

[20] In Scotland, Corporate Parenting is defined as "the formal and local partnerships between all services responsible for working together to meet the needs of looked after children, young people and care leavers". From:http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/protecting/lac/lacimprovingoutcomes/corporate-parenting

that will foster youth empowerment, give young people a role in developing and designing their own youth provisions. This suggests that the overall division of labour is not entirely adult-centric although balanced more towards adult-led labour to achieve outcomes.

Non-governmental Organisation/Charity

Youth Services in England: The State of the Nation largely adheres to the government's framing of responsible actors in its review of government youth service provision, but as the document was drafted in consultation with the Local Government Association, and as the NYA also works extensively with local authorities, there is a strong focus on how national policies are being interpreted and enacted in local contexts.

What roles are young people ascribed?

National

Explicitly, young people are given roles of valued **consultants** whose input into policies, and support of policies, is needed to ensure their empowerment. This is done in the context of the UK's commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:

A cornerstone of this statement is the engagement of young people in local democratic processes – so that young people have a sense of belonging, communities become stronger, and the services that are offered locally have the best chance of making an impact. This is in line with the Government's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and its determination to ensure that young people's views are listened to when making new policy and legislation, and that young people respect the rights of others. (UK Government 2010, p. 1)

This statement appears to directly link the involvement of young people to increased chances of success ('the best chance of making an impact'). The types of ways in which young people can become involved is further detailed later in the document:

Young people can shape their own lives and be positive influences in the lives of their peers, they can act to help others – including through volunteering. They can be creative, enterprising, and entrepreneurial. We can have high expectations of teenagers' ability to take responsibility, to demonstrate leadership, and to succeed. We can look to young people to value and take advantage of the opportunities open to them. We can

expect them to learn to respect others and to recognise authority and boundaries. Teenagers should be enabled to speak up on issues that concern them, both nationally and locally – including to challenge negative media reporting when they believe this is unfair. **They can be involved and add value throughout the commissioning process including in identifying needs, delivering services to their peers, auditing the quality of services, and training adults to make services more young person friendly**. (UK Government, 2010, p. 13, emphasis added)

The government's suggestions for young people's involvement span several approaches: **partly aspirational (young people shaping their own lives, being creative, enterprising and entrepreneurial), partly prescriptive (volunteering, taking advantage of opportunities), partly structured by expectations of law-abiding behaviour (recognising authority and boundaries), and partly rights-based (enabled to speak up, involved and adding value)**. In this sense many competing roles are ascribed to young people, who are meant to simultaneously recognise boundaries but also challenge those circumscribed by media where they believe it is unfair. Alongside all of this, it appears, that local authorities and commissioned bodies including private and voluntary providers, are given the responsibility not only for delivering services to young people, but also for ensuring that their voices and concerns are heard and addressed in the delivery of these services. While there is the occasional mention of national consultations with youth, there is no mechanism specified other than through local authorities for young people to take a role in their own empowerment. While it is important that young people have a say in setting up priorities and evaluating services for themselves, the emphasis here on young people participating in ***commissioning*** services for other young people and in ***auditing*** the delivery of these services sits well with a neoliberal business rhetoric of 'value for money'.

Crucially, **despite rhetorical commitments to youth voice in the two previous documents, when it comes to counter-terrorism, the roles ascribed to young people are those of passive recipients of government and other adult authorities' efforts** to prevent them from becoming subsumed by a so-called terrorist ideology. In *Revised Prevent Duty Guidance,* there is no discussion of how young people can work towards these goals either on their own or by working in collaboration with authorities. Rather, their role is to receive policy and be positively affected by government action towards them.

Regional

In Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, young people are clearly ascribed the role of citizens with rights, and partners, a conception which across all three regions is rooted in a commitment to the UNCRC and its principles concerning children and young people.

Local

According to the evaluation of the London Mayor's Youth Offer, young people are ascribed roles of active partners, and the report evaluates the extent to which participating London boroughs were 'involving and supporting young people in designing or delivering activities' (Ecorys, 2011, p. 101).

Non-governmental Organisation/Charity

Youth Services in England: The State of the Nation mirrors the government's language on the roles of young people, referring to them as consultants and identifying several fora in which they could consult government – e.g. 'formal mechanisms such as youth councils or shadow boards linked into council structures and scrutiny processes, a youth mayor role with a high profile across the borough and young inspectors' (National Youth Agency, 2013, p. 18). Commissioning and co-production are also mentioned as potential roles for young people, along with staff support - e.g. the creation of 'a dedicated 'voice and influence' team working across the integrated youth support service supporting a range of local democratic initiatives' (Ibid, p. 19). Examples of how these potential roles may be put into practice are given to highlight the ways in which youth services in England are currently including youth. Notably, however, very little specific information is given on where these examples are taking place, and are instead referred to generically: 'in one authority,' 'in one city,' 'in some areas' (Ibid, p. 19).

Are any words and phrases repeatedly used in the framing of youth policy?

National

Throughout *Positive for Youth,* the word **'local'** is repeatedly used to indicate the where the locus of youth-focused activity does and should occur. One or more mentions of the word 'local' can be found on 81 out of the 104 pages of the document. *2010-2015 Government Policy: Young People* also uses 'local' frequently, promoting 'local decision making,' 'support for local youth councils,' and help for 'local authorities' as part of its strategy for increasing opportunities for young people (UK Government 2013, p. 5)

Positive for Youth also uses the word **'commissioning'** frequently throughout the document (on 17 pages) as a way to frame effective service delivery (see p. 71, section entitled 'Good commissioning'). Commissioning is presented as a comprehensive approach for service delivery that goes beyond 'processing' and 'outsourcing' to structure service delivery as a four-stage process (understanding, planning, doing, reviewing) – according to the policy, 'young people should be involved at every stage of the commissioning process' (UK Government, 2011, p. 71). How young people could be involved in such a detailed and bureaucratic service delivery process is not explained.

Notably while **youth, young, young people and children** occur unsurprisingly throughout all the documents, **teens** also occurs very frequently (see below), and is the one reference, other than **NEETS (see below)**, to a specific sub-group of young people in the UK government documents. Other phrases appearing often in *Positive for Youth* that signify ideological positioning include:

- 'positive' – on 66 pages
- 'reform' – on 28 pages
- 'improve' – on 43 pages
- 'intervention' – on 27 pages

Overall, the focus of national policy documents seems to be aimed at framing efforts in terms of and devolving responsibility to the local level, while the language most often used to denote action – commissioning – is technical, bureaucratic language again reflective of a neoliberal positioning of government services. The contrast between the government's rhetorical commitment to framing its youth policies as **'positive,'** and its use of **'reform,'** 'improve' and 'intervention' to clearly signal a need to change current policy and practice, could be said to implicitly characterise its past youth policies (and by extension, youth) as negative. But more importantly, using 'positive' so frequently also acts to

paint all of the government's actions as benevolent and head off potential criticism.

Regional

Northern Ireland frames its youth policy in terms of 'rights' (29 mentions across 13 pages), 'partnership' (9 pages, 12 mentions), and 'vision' (6 pages, 8 mentions). 'Shared vision' appears exactly half of the instances in which the word 'vision' is mentioned (3 pages, 4 mentions). Inclusivity is a strong framing feature of the document: 'views' is found on 4 pages and mentioned 7 out of 8 times in the context of considering children's views, while 'participation' is mentioned 9 times in terms of youth participation and the establishment of a participation hub/network. Finally, 'culture' is mentioned 8 times; all but one of these mentions refers to a youth-centred culture: 'culture which respects and progresses the rights of the child,' 'culture where the views of our children and young people are routinely sought,' or a 'culture of engaging with children' (Northern Ireland Government, 2006, p. 13, 22).

In **Scotland**'s National Youth Work strategy, the word 'ambition' is frequently used, found on 11 of the 36 pages of the document and included in the title. 'Local' is also regularly mentioned (5 pages, 21 mentions), while 'partnership' also appears throughout (9 pages, 29 mentions). Scotland's *Children and Young People Act 2014* refers to the phrase 'rights of children' 11 times in the document, and includes a full section (Part 1) on the rights of children. 'Wellbeing' is frequently used to frame efforts for children throughout the document, in 41 instances.

The most frequently used words in **Wales'** *Youth Justice Strategy* are 'local' (16 pages, 36 mentions) and 'partnership' (13 pages, 31 mentions). 'Improve' is used 14 times on 13 pages to frame efforts for young people. Similarly, its *Youth Engagement and Progression Framework* also repeatedly uses 'local' to frame its efforts (50 pages, 251 mentions); 'improve' is the next most frequently used word to describe youth policy (13 pages, 15 mentions), followed by 'partnership' (4 pages, 6 mentions) and 'well-being' (8 pages, 4 mentions).

Although there are clear similarities in terms of a collective focus on 'local,' and 'partnership,' the differences between the regional and national approaches are notable. In these regions, **'rights,**' (specifically youth-centred) '**culture**,' and '**well-being'** are all regular features of the policies, but at the national level are either given cursory mention or excluded outright.

Local

Analysing the frequency of words used to frame youth policy was less straightforward for a programme evaluation that assessed rather than stated policy, but *Evaluation of the Mayor's Youth Offer: A Report to the London Development Agency January 2011* nonetheless contained notable word frequencies that corresponded with the other policy documents analysed. **'Local'** was again the most frequently used word to describe youth policy efforts (49 pages, 117 mentions), with **'improve'** (23 pages, 38 mentions) and **'partnership'** (19 pages, 41 mentions) other examples of repeated words.

Non-Governmental Organisation/Charity

Because of its focus on local implementation of national policy, *Youth Services in England: The State of the Nation* 'local' is the most frequently used word in the document when referring to youth policy implementation, 88 times on 20 of the 24 pages of the report and used in a number of ways to indicate the level at which policy action is focused. 'Commissioning' is also extensively used throughout (11 pages, 23 mentions) 'Partnership,' 'participation,' and 'consult,' are other words that appear with relatively similar frequency to each other, but less than 'local' and 'commissioning.'

Looking synoptically across all the documents, the following patterns emerge in relation to keywords.

Teen- (including: teen, teenager, sixteen and seventeen year olds): found in 51 sections of 6 documents. **Teenage** is frequently affiliated with the phrases 'teenage parents,' 'teenage pregnancy,' 'teenage births,' 'teenage mothers' (*Positive for Youth* p. 4 provides the most frequent and varied number of examples. P. 22 provides more on teenage mothers, and p.48 more on teenage pregnancy; p. 7-9 sections on 'changes in the teenage years' and 'risks in the teenage years' also notable)

- National Youth Agency (3pg, 8x)
- Wales youth justice strategy (1pg, 2x) only "sixteen and seventeen"
- Scotland act (2pg, 6x) – only "sixteen"
- NI ten year strategy – (1pg, 3x) only in reference to teenage pregnancy or teenage parents
- Positive for youth – (30pg, 78x)
- London MYO (15pg, 18x)

NEET Found in 71 sections of 4 documents:

- NYA (on 2 pages, 5 times) [hereafter 2pg 5x]
- London MYO (49pg, 100x) **pp. 48, 71**
- 2010-2015 Govt policy (4x)
- Wales youth engagement progression (20pg, 53x) **pp. 7, 10, 14, 41**

Success (59 sections of 8 docs)

- NYA (12pg, 17x) **p. 4**
- Wales youth justice strategy (2pg, 2x)
- Scotland youth work strategy (5pg, 7x)
- NI ten year strategy – (4pg, 5x)
- Positive for youth – (13pg, 14x) **p. 87**
- London MYO (13pg, 18x)
- Wales youth engagement progression (9pg, 11x)
- Prevent guidance (1pg, 1x)

Failure (11 sections of 5 docs)

- Positive for youth – (5pg, 7x) **p. 85**
- London MYO (2pg, 2x)
- Scotland Children's Act (2pg, 4x)
- Wales youth engagement progression (1pg, 2x) **p. 6**
- Prevent guidance (1pg, 1x)

Voice(s) (29 sections of 8 docs)

- NYA (8pg, 12x) – **p. 18**
- Wales youth justice strategy (1pg, 2x)
- Scotland youth work strategy (1pg, 1x)
- NI ten year strategy – (2pg, 2x)
- Positive for youth – (13pg, 18x) – **p. 45, 88**
- London MYO (2pg, 2x)
- 2010-2015 Govt policy (1pg, 1x)
- Wales youth engagement progression (1pg, 1x)
-

Engagement (111 sections of 9 docs)

- NYA (4pg, 7x)
- Wales youth justice strategy (2pg, 2x)
- Scotland youth work strategy (5pg, 6x)
- NI ten year strategy (2pg, 2x)
- Positive for youth (9pg, 24x)
- London MYO (18pg, 30x) **p. 106**
- 2010-2015 Govt policy (1pg, 2x)
- Wales youth engagement progression (67pg, 154x) – NB: many of these are "youth engagement and progression framework" document title footers on each page
- Prevent guidance (3pg, 3x)

Participation (87 sections of 8 docs)

- NYA (5pg, 9x)
- 2010-2015 Govt policy (1pg, 5x)
- Scotland youth work strategy (5pg, 8x)
- NI ten year strategy (3pg, 10x)
- Positive for youth (22pg, 36x) **p. 88**
- London MYO (44pg, 116x) **p. 23**
- Wales youth engagement progression (4pg, 6x)
- Prevent guidance (2pg, 2x)

Poverty (23 sections of 6 docs)

- Wales youth justice strategy (2pg, 2x)
- Scotland act (2pg, 3x)
- Scotland youth work strategy (2pg, 2x) **p. 7**
- NI ten year strategy (4pg, 12x) **p. 48**
- Positive for youth (7pg, 8x) **pp. 9, 17, 48, 71**
- London MYO (4pg, 12x)
- Wales youth engagement progression (4pg, 8x)

Deprivation (5 sections of 4 docs)

- NYA (1pg, 1x)
- NI ten year strategy (1pg, 1x) **p. 46**
- Positive for youth (2pg, 2x)
- London MYO (1pg, 1x)

Socioeconomic (2 sections of 1 doc)

- London MYO (2pg, 2x)

Class – (as in social class, excludes school class): (1 mention in 1 doc)

- London MYO (1pg, 1x)

Ethnic (12 sections of 3 docs)

- NI ten year strategy – (2pg, 2x) **p. 83**
- Positive for youth – (4pg, 4x)
- London MYO (6pg, 9x)

Ethnicity (6 sections of 2 docs)

- Positive for youth – (4pg, 4x) **p. 5**
- London MYO (2pg, 2x)

Race (2 sections of 1 doc)

- Positive for youth – (2pg, 2x)

Gender (12 sections of 4 docs)

- Scotland youth work strategy (1pg, 1x)
- NI ten year strategy – (1pg, 4x) **p. 76**
- Positive for youth – (6pg, 6x) **pp. 9, 17, 52**
- London MYO (4pg, 4x)

Girls (7 sections of 2 docs)

- NI ten year strategy (1pg, 1x) **p. 76**
- Positive for youth – (6pg, 9x) **p. 36, 54**

Democracy (4 sections of 2 docs)

- Prevent guidance (3pg, 4 x) – defined in terms of 'fundamental British values,' **p. 12, 21**
- MYO (1pg, 1x)

Citizens (4 sections of 4 docs)

- Scotland youth work strategy (1pg, 1x)
- NI ten year strategy – (1pg, 1x)
- Positive for youth – (1pg, 1x)
- London MYO (1pg, 1x)

Citizenship (7 sections of 4 docs)

- Scotland youth work strategy (4pg, 6 x) – 'global citizenship, **p. 14;** active citizenship, **p. 11**
- Positive for youth – (1pg 1x)
- London MYO (1pg 1x)
- 2010-2015 Govt policy (1pg 1x)

The salience of the terms which are rarely used compared to the ones which are frequently used cannot be understated. Words which connote the heterogeneity of young people such as social class, socio-economic, race, ethnicity and gender/girls/boys are rare or absent, suggesting that **differentiated approaches are not systematically written into policy** across the UK currently, or only rarely so, whatever the actual practices on the ground. Only with regard to two groups, 'teens' and NEETs, do we find any significant targeting, and this is as often about risks and controls, as it is about support and differentiated intervention.

Similarly, words like **democracy and democratic, citizen and citizenship**, which might have been expected to play a role in relation to participation and engagement, are so rarely used as to be evidence of a serious lack of attention, or a deliberate de-linking from children and young people in the UK.

Overall, keyword searches of the documents reveal **a high usage of buzz words such as partnership, participation, commissioning, voice, and success**. More evidence would be necessary to examine exactly the extent to which the words are linked to events and processes taking place on the ground.

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Appendix A

All surveyed UK Youth-related Policy Documents

Policy Level	Date	Document Name	Author	Type of policy document	Policy Area
Selected documents for analysis					
National	2011	Positive for Youth: A new approach to cross-government policy for young people aged 13 to 19	Government – HMG	Other - Policy paper	General Youth
National	2013	2010-2015 Government Policy: Young People	Government – HMG	Other - Policy paper	General Youth
National	2015	Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales – Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales on the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism	Government – HMG	Other - Policy Paper	Counter-terrorism
National	2013	Youth Services in England: The State of the Nation	Agency - National Youth Agency; Local Government Association	Other - review of government policy	General Youth
Regional	2006	Our Children and Young People – Our Pledge: A TEN YEAR STRATEGY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND 2006 - 2016	Government - Northern Ireland Department for Education	Other - Policy Paper	General Youth
Regional	2014	The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014	Scottish Government	Act	General Youth
Regional	2014	Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland: National Youth Work Strategy 2014-2019	Government – Scotland	Other - Policy paper	Youth policy / youth work

Regional	2014	Children and Young People First: Welsh Government/Youth Justice Board joint strategy to improve services for young people from Wales at risk of becoming involved in, or in, the youth justice system	Government – Wales	Other - Policy paper	Youth policy / youth work
Regional	2013	Youth engagement and progression framework Implementation plan	Government – Wales	Other - Policy Paper	General Youth
Local	2011	Evaluation of the Mayor's Youth Offer: A Report to the London Development Agency January 2011	Agency - Ecorys research organistation	Other - evaluation	General Youth
Other documents sourced during search					
National	2011	Children and young people's involvement in formal meetings: An extended practical guide	Umbrella Youth Org - Participation Works	Other - Guidelines	Youth voice / political participation
National	2011	Positive for Youth Discussion Paper May 2011: Young People's Involvement in Decision Making	Government – DfE	Discussion Paper	Youth voice / political participation
National	2011	What's Changed For Children And Young People – Working In Partnership With Local Authorities	Agency - National Youth Agency; Local Government Association	Report	Youth voice / political participation
National	2011	Re-engaging Young People in Voting: Learning from the evidence	Agency - National Youth Agency; Local Government Association	Other - Report	Youth voice / political participation
National	2011	The Framework for the National Curriculum: A report by the Expert Panel for the National Curriculum review	Government – DfE	Other - Report	Education
National	2011	Review of the National Curriculum in England: Report on subject breadth in international jurisdictions	Government – DfE	Other - Report	Education

National	2012	Social enterprise and youth policy paper	Agency - Social Enterprise UK (National body for Social Enterprise)	Other - Policy paper	Labour / social enterprise
National	2012	Children & Young People's Strategy & Improvement Plan - 2012-2013	Government - Ministry of Defence	Other - Strategy and Improvement Plan / Policy Paper	Youth services
National	2012	Review of the National Curriculum in England: What can we learn from the English, mathematics and science curricula of high- performing jurisdictions?	Government – DfE	Other - Policy paper	Education
National	2013	Positive for Youth: Progress since December 2011	Government – HMG	Other - Policy paper	General Youth
National	2013	Hidden talents: national programmes for young people	Agency - Local Government Association	Other - Report	General youth / youth participation
National	2013	Youth Participation in Democratic Life: Final Report February 2013	Other - University (LSE Enterprise)	Other - Research Report	General youth / youth participation / EU
National	2013	Youth work in a changing policy landscape: the view from England	Other - Bernard Davies (Academic)	Other - Academic journal article	Youth policy / youth work
National	2014	Report of the Children and Young People's Health Outcomes Forum 2013/14	Government - Children and Young People's Health Outcomes Forum	Other - Report	Public health
National	2014	Youth services in England: Changes and trends in the provision of services	Agency - National Youth Agency; Network of Regional Youth Work Units England	Report	Youth services
National	2014	DfE Child Poverty Strategy 2014-17	Government – DfE	Other - Policy paper	General youth
National	2011	Prevent Strategy	Government – HMG	Other - Policy paper	Counter-terrorism

National	2007	Aiming high for young people: a ten year strategy for positive activities	Government – DCFS	Other - Strategy and Improvement Plan / Policy Paper	General Youth
National	2009	Young people's views on finding out about jobs and careers	NGO - British Youth Council / NCB	Other - policy brief	Youth employment
National	2013	UK Youth: UK Youth Voice Evaluation	Other - Indicate/Hall Aitken	Other - evaluation	General Youth
Regional	2015	Newcastle Children and Young People's Plan 2015 - 2020	Newcastle City Council	Other - Policy paper	General Youth
Regional	2015	For Aberdeen's Children: Integrated Children's Services Plan 2011-2015 - Year 4 update (2014-2015)	Government – Scotland	Other - Policy paper	General Youth
Regional	2008	Involving children and young people in decisions about their education second edition	Agency - Enquire, the Scottish Advice Service for Additional Support for Learning	Other - Policy paper	Youth participation
Regional	2012	Getting it right for children and families	Government – Scotland	Other - Policy paper	General Youth
Regional	2015	Preventing Offending: Getting it right for children and young people	Government – Scotland	Other - Policy paper	Youth policy / youth work
Regional	2012	Action for Jobs - Supporting Young Scots into Work: Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy	Government – Scotland	Other - Policy paper	Youth policy / youth work
Regional	2009	Making Amends: restorative youth justice in Northern Ireland	NGO - The Prison Reform Trust / The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund	Other - Research Report	Youth Justice
Regional	2010	ASK FIRST! - Northern Ireland Standards for Children & Young People's Participation in Public Decision Making	Government - Northern Ireland	Other - Policy paper	Youth participation

Regional	2005	Strategy for the Delivery of Youth Work in Northern Ireland 2005-2008	Government - Northern Ireland Department for Education	Other - Policy paper	Youth policy / youth work
Regional	2012	Priorities for Youth: Improving Young People's Lives through Youth Work	Government - Northern Ireland Department for Education	Other - Policy paper	Youth policy / youth work
Regional	2012	Wales Youth Work National Occupational Standards	Government – Wales		
Regional	2010	Summary Report: Local Authority Youth Service contribution to the work of 14-19 Networks, Children & Young People's Partnerships, Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Partnerships, and Community Safety Partnerships November 2010	NGO - People and Work Unit	Other - Research Report	Youth policy / youth work
Regional	2013	The contribution of youth work to the Programme for Government in Wales	NGO Forum - Youth Work Alliance Wales (YWAW)	Other - Policy paper	Youth policy / youth work
Regional	2013	Youth Work in Wales: Principles and Purposes	Other - Youth Work in Wales Review Group (NGOs and Government)	Other - Policy paper	Youth policy / youth work
Regional	2008	Youth Participation in the North West - Improving Youth Participation	North West Regional Youth Work Unit / Liverpool Youth Service Youth Engagement Team	Other - Policy paper	Youth participation
Regional	2015	A Guide to EU Youth Opportunities in the East Midlands	Other - Emma McClarkin MEP & Andrew Lewer MBE MEP	Other - Policy paper	Youth participation
National	2015	Delivering differently for young people: transforming local authority services for young people through new delivery models	Government - Department for Communties and Local Government	Other - Programme Prospectus	Youth services

Local	2009	The Nottingham Growth Plan	Nottingham City Council	Other - Policy paper	General
Local	2009	Street – Based Youth Work Derbyshire Youth Service	Derbyshire Youth Service / Wiltshire County Council Youth Service	Other - Policy paper	Youth policy / youth work
Local	2015	Service Overview: Youth Service, Play Service, Youth Employability Service Youth Advocacy Project	Brighton and Hove City Council	Other - review of government policy	General Youth
Local	2008	Mayor of London - London Youth Offer	Government - Mayor of London	Other - Policy Paper	General Youth
Local	2015	Who stands for youth? A call for better collaboration to influence youth policy in London	Umbrella Youth Org - Partnership for Young London	Other - Policy Paper	General Youth