STUDY ON THE SOCIAL VALUE OF YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

Editorial team

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1. FOREWORD

Every day, youth organisations in Europe help to build our societies and make them stronger. How would our society look like if youth organisations were solely valued in terms of production and consumption? To argue that youth organisations need a solid theoretical and empirical framework and that they have to prove their social value, is based on a false premise. Similarly to philosophy, dance, music, literature, and so on, are youth organisations and civil society on a slippery path? Why does everything have to be more scientific? If we put a value on everything then we open up the possibility that everything, therefore, becomes devalued.

Is "the social value of youth organisations" something measurable in an "objective and well-conducted" research? In my view this is an almost impossible task. For me youth organisations per se are valuable!

The European Youth Forum (the main partner of the EU Institutions in the youth field) is 20 years old and dares to undertake this task!

An increasing number of studies demonstrate the key role played by voluntary workers in our societies. From an economic point of view, they are now being regarded as fully-fledged members of the workforce, indicating that they perform a productive activity providing useful services to the public, especially when their work supports that of the non-profit sector in areas as diverse as social action, health, education, culture, and so forth. Against this backdrop, the International Labour Organization (ILO) became interested in the quantitative assessment of voluntary work, publishing in 2011 the Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work with the assistance of the Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, USA)[1]. The global Red Cross network of volunteers carried out nearly 4.4 billion euros[2] of voluntary work in 2009 working in 186 countries.

We all know the work and achievements of young people and those active in youth work and youth organisations deserve greater recognition in order to enhance their value and visibility. The work they do should be taken into consideration by employers, formal education and civil society in general.

Non-formal and informal learning in the youth field take place in a wide and varied range of settings and specific and appropriate methods and instruments are required for the self-development of young people and their social, cultural and professional integration.

The social and economic importance of the youth sector is clear, given the potential impact

1. http://ccss.jhu.edu/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2011/09/Manual_Development_TEG_2010.pdf
2. Study of the economic and social value of Red Cross volunteers carried out by Dalberg. http://dalberg.com/blog/?p=187

on the development of key competences that are of practical relevance to the labour market. Furthermore youth work fosters participation, active citizenship and social responsibility.
We must not only allocate the necessary resources in such a context, but there is also a need for better recognition of youth work, both inside and outside the structures of youth policy. This is necessary if we are to achieve a virtuous circle of quality, skills and to ensure better practices. This calls for strategies for the recognition and validation of youth work at European, national and local level and sometimes at the organisational level. Whatever the tools, however, that are being developed for the recognition, certification and valuation, there remain key questions about usage, currency and credibility.
This new study from the European Youth Forum shows that the social value of volunteering is invaluable. Active youth workers and youth leaders active are simply vital!

Jan Vanhee
International Youth Policy, EU Youth Affairs Attaché, Department for Culture, Youth, Sports and Media & PR of Belgium to the European Union - Flemish Representation

There are always quizzical questions asked about the value and impact of youth work and youth organisations – both for young people and for the wider society. Here we have a modest but important report outlining some of the answers. Not all will necessarily be persuaded, but at least we have an informed framework for thinking through the issues.
Regrettably, though predictably, the conclusion, overall, is that "the evidential base is weak". This is hardly surprising. Not only has there been little systematic research, particularly regarding outcomes and impact, in the youth field, but youth organisations themselves are characterised by diversity across many fronts. Trying to establish cause and effect, rather than simply correlation, is a challenging task.

2. FOREWORD

Nonetheless, the picture is promising. Youth organisations, in their many forms, have an important role to play, both for the personal and social development of individuals, and for the subsequent civic and 'political' contribution of those individuals to their communities and society.

The distinctive feature of youth organisations is their anchoring philosophy of youth participation. It is within those contexts that young people's voice is brought to bear on a range of issues of concern to them and then often articulated well beyond. Whatever else takes place in youth organisations (and it can be quite a list: education and learning, experience and opportunity, advice and guidance), they are associational spaces for young people to come together and learn and work together.

Perhaps they should do more, broadening the territory on which they work (to address the pressing youth issues of our time, such as employment, health and housing) and motivating more young people to take part. But they do a great deal already – in service to others, campaigning, and informing better youth policy and practice. We just need to work harder to demonstrate those facts.

Dr Howard Williamson
Professor of European Youth Policy
University of South Wales

3. INTRODUCTION

The European Youth Forum is the platform for youth organisations in Europe. The European Youth Forum is committed to advocate towards the recognition of the values and contribution of youth organisations to the wellbeing of our society and they commissioned this study to collect evidence on the value youth organisations bring to the social development of young individuals, communities and societies through youth work and youth participation.

Youth Organisations

For the purpose of this study, youth organisations are defined as: "those social organisations (associations, clubs or movements) that are set up to serve young people and where young people are in charge of the organisational structure" and "which are democratic, non-governmental and not for profit" (Souto-Otero, et al, 2012, p.27).

There are a wide range of organisational structures and purposes among youth organisations: for example, Quintelier (2008) differentiates between expressive (sport, hobby clubs); youth (youth groups, clubs); culture (music, theatre); helping (environmental, peace); deliberative (political party, citizen assemblies); and religious-ethnic organisations. The examples discussed in this study help to illustrate the sector's diversity.

The European Youth Forum itself represents 101 youth organisations, including national youth councils (whose structure and size differs markedly) and international non-governmental youth organisations which range from, for example, Active - Sobriety, Friendship and Peace, a European umbrella youth organization which promotes a lifestyle free from alcohol and other drugs, to the World Organisation of the Scout Movement. European Youth Forum members include religious and non-religious organisations, organisations working with young people in rural and urban areas, and organisations working with different groups of young people who have differing interests and needs.

This study

Robust evidence to demonstrate the value of youth organisations is needed to underpin greater recognition of the sector's social value. A better understanding of the potential contribution of youth organisations, their actual contribution, and of the types of value they offer, can also inform efforts to enhance the sector's positive impact. In response, the main objectives of this study are to:

- gather evidence from existing research on the role youth organisations play in both developing the potential of young people as members of society and in terms of the impact they make on society;
- collect evidence that may support the work of the European Youth Forum in raising societal interest around the role of youth organisations;
- collect evidence on the costs and benefits of investing in youth organisations; and
- collect evidence on the social impact of the educational role of youth organisations.

The review of existing evidence

There is a large but disorganised body of literature discussing the value of youth organisations. This study seeks to systemise that evidence, by mapping it and identifying the key themes in the literature. The study also seeks to assess the "added value" that youth organisations bring when, for example, practising youth work or youth participation (practices which are not unique or limited to youth organisations). The literature reviewed therefore focuses specifically upon youth organisations, but reference is made, where appropriate, to the wider literature on, for example, the social value of youth work or youth participation (whether practiced by a "youth" or "non-youth" organisation). The examples used in the study to illustrate the findings are drawn directly from the search of literature and from interviews and discussions with representatives of the sector.

This report

Following this introductory section:

- section four of the report summarises the way literature was searched to assess the social value of youth organisations;
- section five describes the key "mechanisms" - the ways in which youth organisations create social value;
- section six describes the types of personal and social outcomes associated with the work, for youth organisations;
- section seven describes the types of civic and political outcomes associated with the work, for youth organisations;
- section eight discusses differences in outcomes, related to differences in context, organisational type and the young people themselves;
- section nine discusses the evidential base and development of indicators to measure the social value of youth organisations;
- section ten discusses the evidence of the cost and benefits of youth organisations;
- section eleven outlines the conclusions of the study; and
- the appendix includes further details on the search and review strategy and the definition of "youth organisation" used for the study.

4. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This was a primarily desk-based study, based upon a systematic review of published (academic) and unpublished (grey) literature. Figure one (on the next page) outlines the process and further details on the search and sift are included in the appendix.

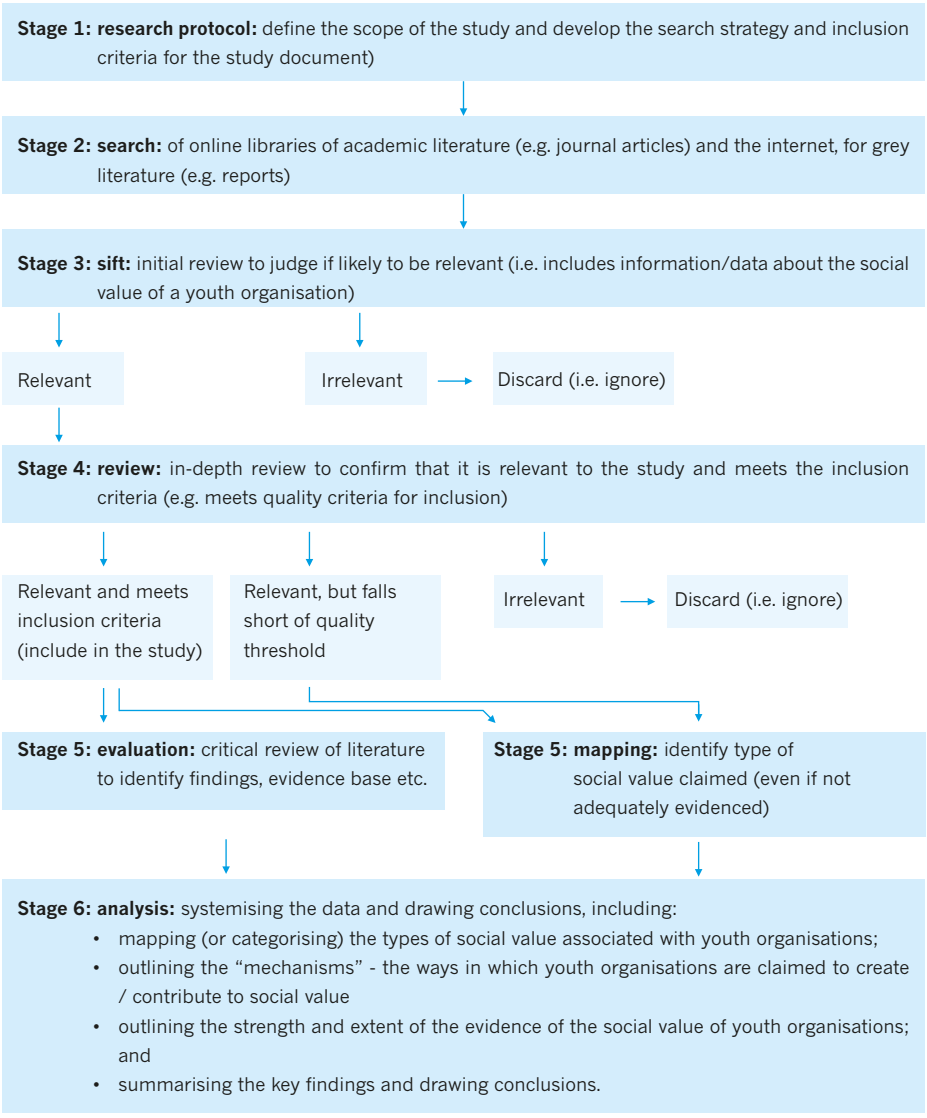
The search of academic literature focused upon online libraries of peer reviewed journals and publications covering the following disciplines: Anthropology, Business, Economics, Education, Geography, Government, History, International Relations, Journalism and Communications, Law, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Public Health, Recreation and Sport, Religion, Social Sciences, Social Welfare and Social Work, Statistics and Women's Studies. This identified over 7,000 items, such as journal articles and reports.

The search of primarily unpublished (grey) literature was based on Google searches focused upon 13 countries in the Council of Europe area: Finland, Denmark, Estonia, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Serbia, Austria, France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Romania and the United Kingdom (UK)[3] and an open call to members of the European Youth Forum to submit reports and evidence of their social value. This identified over 100,000 items, such as reports.

After sifting the articles and reports identified by the searches for relevance, the study focused upon 41 reports or articles, which provide the basis for this report's findings. The desk-based study was complemented by discussions with members of the European Youth Forum and a small number of interviews (n=4) with stakeholders in the field. These helped the research team explore some of the themes identified through the literature review and identify examples of practice to illustrate the report findings.

3. The selection of countries was intended to include a broadly representative sample of countries of differing size, wealth and regime type, covering differing geographical areas in Europe.

Figure 1 overview of the study



5. MECHANISMS: HOW YOUTH ORGANISATIONS CREATE SOCIAL VALUE

Introduction

The study identifies five key mechanisms - five ways - through which youth organisations create social value:

- youth participation;
- youth work and formal, non-formal and informal education;
- experiences and opportunities;
- places and spaces for young people to meet and make social relationships: and
- information, advice and guidance.

These mechanisms often overlap (and are not mutually exclusive): for example, youth organisations may practise youth participation and provide places and space for people to meet. The mechanisms may also be mutually reinforcing, so that, for example, providing places and space for people to meet can make it easier for youth organisations to get to know and become trusted by young people, thus making it easier to provide information, advice and guidance to young people.

Understanding mechanisms and young people's choices are important. It can aid impact attribution where theory-based approaches to impact evaluation[4] are used and it can help inform practice in this field (e.g. by illuminating how and why some youth organisations contribute to particular outcomes, whilst others do not).

4. Theory-based approaches to impact evaluation focus upon understanding how and why outcomes are generated, using approaches such as "logic models" to test the relationship between an organisation's inputs (such as staff time) and activities (such as a youth work methodology) and outputs (such as numbers of young people supported) and outcomes (such as numbers of young people whose self-confidence increased). Approaches to impact evaluation are discussed further in section seven.

Youth participation

The active participation of young people in decisions and actions within youth organisations is a defining feature of youth organisations[5]. Many youth organisations also support young people's involvement in decisions and actions beyond the organisation. This includes, for example, the work of organisations like local and national youth councils (such as those in the UK, discussed in the boxed text) which focus upon young people's participation and political engagement (political engagement and activism) and those focused upon enabling local, national or international action by young people (civic engagement and activism).

Youth Councils in the UK

There have been three distinct historical waves of support for youth councils in the UK. The first in the 1940s and 1950s aimed at promoting character building and social education (Butters and Newell, 1978); the second, in the 1980s, sought to encourage young people's participation in decision making (Department of Education and Science, 1982); while the third wave, in the early 2000s, had a more distinctly local focus, and has seen youth councils promoted as the most favoured means of engaging young people.

There is considerable diversity in the structure and organisation of youth councils across the UK; for example, lead organisations can include: youth services or other youth organisations, community organisations or partnerships, or local authorities, and their structures can include:

- feeder organisations, which often fit within community regeneration strategies and contribute to existing decision-making bodies;
- shadow organisations which mirror existing, often adult-led, participatory structures, such as community councils; and
- consultative organisations which aim to consult with young people in advance of starting new activities or securing new resources, in order to ensure their relevance to young people's needs and aspirations.

Evaluation of a small number of youth councils (in the UK) identified that young people participating in the youth councils reported benefits to their sense of self worth and found the experience enjoyable. However, where the aims and structure of the council were unclear, some young people reported feeling a sense of disempowerment.

Adapted from Matthews (2001)

5. Ref: our definition and point on young people's involvement.

As the example of UK youth councils illustrates, the process and experience of engagement and activism can contribute to personal and social outcomes, such as increases in young people's human and social capital (discussed in section four).

By enabling and encouraging young people's involvement in decisions and actions that affect them, youth organisations can contribute towards changes in young people's civic and political engagement, such as volunteering (Powell and Bratović, 2007) and voting (Quintelier, 2007). This can in turn contribute to social outcomes, such as changes in policy and improvements in the provision of services to others; for example where young people volunteer to help other young people through their work with a youth organisation, as described in an Austrian context (Frenzel, 2014) (discussed in section five).

Youth work, non-formal and informal education

Education, be it non-formal, informal, or very rarely, formal, is also a defining feature of youth organisations. Many youth organisations, like BeLong To (see boxed text) and the Scout Movement practise youth work, using a non-formal education approach, and, as the European Youth Forum Policy Paper *Youth Work in the European Youth Forum and Youth Organisations* [6] identifies:

"youth work and non-formal education (NFE) are inherently linked when happening in youth organisations in particular. Youth work often uses non-formal education as a methodology when conducting its activities." (European Youth Forum, 2014, p 3)[7].

BeLong To: peer education

BeLong To undertakes peer education activities within a critical social education model of youth work in Ireland. It focuses upon personal development, empowerment, participation, social change, and lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights. Young people are supported to build confidence in public speaking, and undertake formal training in needs analysis, SWOT analysis and facilitating skills, allowing them over a 12 month period to become youth facilitators. It aims to enable young people to become agents of social change and "social entrepreneurs".

Adapted from Dunne, et al, 2014a

6. http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2014/12/PP-Youth-Work.pdf
7. Smith (2001) highlights the importance of "informal" education and "association" (or group or joint work) as key features of much youth work.

For those youth organisations that do not practice youth work, non-formal and informal education is, however, inherent in their work with young people and can support young people's formal education. Although youth organisations rarely practice formal education, they can support and contribute to it.

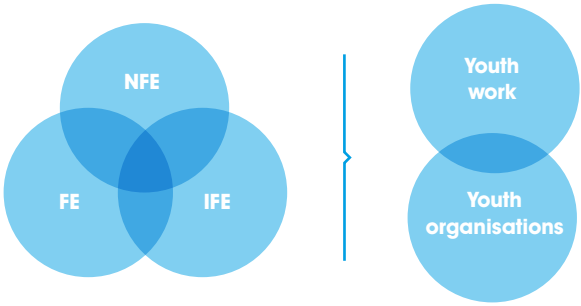
Youth Work in the Scout Movement

In the Scout Movement, youth work is provided through the Scout Method, a non-formal self-education system composed of different elements that, combined, provide a rich, active and fun learning environment. In every activity, young people are encouraged to be consciously and actively involved in their own development. It enables them to progress in their own way and at their own pace, to gain confidence and to recognise the progress made. The progressive scheme, which sets goals for each age group, is the main tool used to support this element of the Scout Method. The outdoor environment provides an ideal setting for developing physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual potential.

(Source: YFJ, 2016a).

As table one below illustrates, there is an overlap between formal, informal and non- formal education and the boundaries between categories are often blurred. It describes the range (or spectrum) of education that youth organisations may practise and support. Crucially, although formal, non-formal and informal education may differ in terms of focus, settings and the competences they promote, they share a common aim or purpose; empowering young people. As such they complement each other and should not be considered substitutes or competitors. Whilst having much in common, each helps support the other and fill gaps between them.

Figure 2 the relationship between formal, non formal and informal education



Youth work and youth organisations both enable non formal and informal education

Table 1 youth work, non-formal, informal and formal education

Elements	Non-formal education	Informal education	Formal education
Focus	Centred around people (of any age) and intended to address their interests and learning objectives	Centred around people's experiences and interactions in day-to-day life and often unintended	Centred upon institutions (e.g. school, further and higher education); for people aged 5-25 (although can include younger and older age groups). Hierarchical and curriculum-led
Process	Organised educational activity outside the established formal system; typically non- credential based; voluntary; often short-term, part time, flexible, and specific	Lifelong process whereby people learn through their experiences and interactions	Hierarchical, structured long term, teacher/pupil relationship; credential- based; typically mandatory until the age of 16, voluntary after this; typically full-time.
Setting	Can be a formal educational, social or community setting	Everywhere and anywhere	Formal educational setting
Examples	Youth work	Getting to know people unlike yourself; new experiences, such as travel	School and college education
Competences	Social and emotional skills	No intended outcome	Academic skills (e.g. cognitive, literacy and numeracy skills)
Purpose	Empowering young people so that they live a fulfilled life at professional, personal and societal level and become active citizens in society		

Adapted from European Youth Forum (2014) and Fordham (1993)

Empowering young people through educative experiences, youth work and formal, informal and non-formal education, can contribute to changes in:

- personal and social outcomes in a wide range of realms including, most notably, increases in their human capital (discussed in section four); and
- civic and political outcomes by, for example, increasing their awareness of local and international issues and empowering them to take action (discussed in section five).

As the following example of the Youth Voice Editorial Board illustrates, the extent and the type of outcomes generated by youth work and formal, informal and non-formal education depends on the type of educative experiences offered: for example, a focus upon global citizenship may have a greater impact upon civic and political outcomes, while a focus upon outdoor activities may have a greater impact upon personal and social outcomes.

The Youth Voice Editorial Board: media literacy and citizenship

The Youth Voice Editorial Board is a voluntary, free time activity project in Helsinki, were young people produce news for mainstream media. The project aims to draw the attention of adult journalists to issues important to young people, so as to include the voice of young people in mainstream media and to encourage cross-generational discussions with adults.

Evaluation of the project identified that youth citizenship can be strengthened by media literacy education; that young people acquired civic media literacy skills as they were involved in all stages of media production; and young people also acquired an experience of societal influence as they got involved in issues that mattered to them.

Adapted from Kotilainen (2009)

Experiences and opportunities

Youth organisations can offer young people the opportunity to "experiment" and do things that that they would otherwise not be able to do including, in some cases, travel nationally and internationally (mobility) (Taru, 2013). Many of these experiences and opportunities facilitate informal learning and/or may be linked to youth work or non-formal education. These experiences can contribute to personal and social outcomes in a wide range of realms such as human capital, education and employment and health and well-being (discussed in section four), and civic and political outcomes, such as changes in young people's sense of a European or ethnic identity (discussed in section five).

Intercultural Students exchange programmes

Annually, European Educational Exchanges - Youth for Understanding arranges for about 4,000 15 to 18 year olds to have the opportunity to live in a foreign country with a volunteer host family and attend school. This [is reported to have]...a positive impact on the individual exchange participant, the host family and the local community where they live. This form of youth work develops intercultural competences, linguistic skills and promotes intercultural dialogue.

Source YFJ (2016a)

Experiences and opportunities can often offer young people the chance to meet people that they would not otherwise meet. This can help young people to develop social networks and social capital, another key personal and social outcome, and contribute to changes in young people's attitudes and behaviours toward others (including, for example, attitudes toward other genders (see e.g. ALEG, 2014) and ethnicities (see e.g. Markus et al., 2009), a key civic outcome.

The extent and the type of outcomes depend on the type of experiences and opportunities offered and taken up by young people. They also depend upon the ways in which young people use those experiences and opportunities and, as a consequence, outcomes for different young people exploiting the same opportunity may differ markedly. Crucially, the resources, such as human and social capital, that young people bring to youth organisations, can determine both the degree to which they choose to get involved and the ways in which they get involved (and therefore potentially benefit).

Youth organisations often actively seek to reach out to those with fewer resources, such as ethnic and linguistic minorities (see for example, the discussion of engagement of ethnic Russians in Estonia in Bogdanova, 2013, p.19-20) and excluded or marginalised young people (see boxed text below), and, by engaging them, empower them, aim to increase their resources. However, those starting with more resources may get more out of their involvement in youth organisations, because they are better placed to exploit those opportunities (creating a virtuous circle). A young person with greater self-confidence may, for example, get more out of the opportunity to travel than those with less self- confidence, because they feel able to do more and experience more during their travels. Yet equally, a young person with low self-confidence, travelling abroad for the first time, may find the experience transformative in a way that a seasoned traveller probably would not.

The Austrian Muslim Youth Organisation: developing soft skills

The Mustafa project of the Austrian Muslim Youth Organisation was developed to address the barriers to finding employment faced by young Muslims in Austria. The project began from the recognition that young Muslim men had limited understanding of the expectations of potential employers around language or behaviour in the workplace. The Muslim Youth Organisation seeks to imbue these young people with soft skills delivered in a way that encourages discussion and reflection within group settings, and seeks to promote greater understanding across cultural boundaries. In addition to supporting young people to look for employment, the cultural awareness developed through the project promotes greater civic and political awareness http://www.mjoe.at/projekte/mustafa/ .

Adapted from Frenzel (2014)

Therefore, it is not just the resources that young people bring, but the extent to which the experience and opportunities youth organisations offer match the abilities and interests of young people, that determine outcomes. The opportunities that youth organisations give to young people in offering new and challenging experiences, and the support youth organisations offer to young people to exploit and make the most of those opportunities, is therefore also important[8]. Young people are likely to get more out of new experiences which enable them to extend or deepen their experiences and learning[9].

In a few cases, "discrimination" based upon young people's skills or social networks is inherent in the structure of the organisation. Sometimes young people have to demonstrate their potential to meet the demands of involvement in the youth organisation before they can take part: for example, where the focus is upon international exchange, or where they stand for election by their peers (Wyness, 2006). This does not devalue the work of youth organisations, but it illustrates that youth organisations may not be able to help every young person.

In some cases, excluded or marginalised groups have set up their own youth organisations. This has helped ensure a better match between the experiences and opportunities offered and their (i.e. young people's) interests and needs.

8. Within education, the concept of "scaffolding" - associated with Vygotsky (1979) but coined by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) - offers a helpful analogy, illustrating how learners can be supported to develop skills which they would not have been able to manage on their own, which in turn provide a basis – or scaffold – for further progression.
9. An analogy could be drawn with vertical progression in formal education - progressing to higher levels stretches and challenges learners, increasing their skills and knowledge. Conversely, horizontal progression – akin to repeating experiences - may bring diminishing marginal returns (i.e. each time it is repeated, the value gained from the experience lessens).

Places and spaces to meet

Youth organisations can offer valuable supportive and "safe" places and spaces for young people to meet and socialise, without the pressures normally found in school or family life (see e.g. Forkby and Kiilakoski, 2014; Youth Council for Northern Ireland, 1998). By enabling young people to share experiences and ideas with others, these places and associational spaces can contribute to personal and social outcomes in a wide range of realms such as human and social capital and health and well-being including, in the simplest sense, fun and enjoyment (discussed in section four). By encouraging young people to mix with others (see boxed text on places for integration), they can also contribute to civic and political outcomes, such as changes in young people's attitudes, values and behaviours toward others (see e.g. Thomas, 2011) (discussed further in section five).

Places for integration

The General Secretariat of Gypsies Foundation (Youth Sector), in co-operation with the Institute of Youth, works to support the social participation of Gypsy / Roma young people by facilitating spaces where young people can socialize and engage in activities of interest to them (seminars, cultural activities, training workshops). Over a three year period (2000-2003), it enabled over 9,000 young people of diverse ethnicities (albeit the majority of whom were Roma young people) and backgrounds to take part in their activities promoting social participation. By using a model of intercultural participation it has integrated large numbers of young people from different backgrounds and helped address common prejudices toward Roma youth.

Adapted from Perea (2004)

The type of outcomes generated will depend upon a number of factors, including those whom young people meet and interact with and what they choose to do during their time in the place and associational spaces, youth organisations offer: for example, some studies highlight:

- the way the social relationships young people form through their involvement in youth organisations contribute to changes in their values, attitudes and behaviours (Coalter, 2012; Merino, 2007). This means that the length of time a young person engages is important, as it takes time to form social relationships and for these social relationships to influence young people's values, attitudes and behaviours (ibid.); and
- how impact depends in part upon how diverse youth organisation are (and therefore the opportunities to mix) and also the willingness of those within the organisation to mix: for example, some studies identify how "cliques" (small close-knit groups of people who do not readily allow others to join them) within youth organisations can work against this (Forkby and Kiilakoski, 2014). See also Matthews (2001) on the impact of friendship groups within organisations and Wyness (2006) on selecting youth council members by application rather than peer election.

Information, advice and guidance

Youth organisations can provide places to develop relationships of trust and understanding of young people's lives, and offer the knowledge and expertise necessary to underpin the provision of information, advice and guidance (Williamson, 1997; Sildnik, 2015). Effective information, advice and guidance can facilitate access to services and inform changes in young people's attitudes, thinking and behaviour. These can contribute to personal and social outcomes such as increases in human capital, participation in education, training and employment and improvements in health and well-being (discussed in section four).

Models such as mentoring and youth work (Henderson, 2005; Hirsch, 2005), like the Junior Mentor project (see boxed text below) are also highlighted as ways in which information, advice and guidance is provided to young people through an ongoing relationship with a young person. It has been suggested that youth workers develop more 'peer-to-peer' types of relationships with young people than the adult-peer relationships often developed by teachers or other adults working with young people (Dunne, et al, 2014b). Moreover, while adult-led support and learning can broaden the knowledge available to young people, there is a risk that this can create adult-led agendas (Forkby and Kiilakosky, 2014). Peer support and peer learning can therefore enable youth organisations to maintain their

independence as well as their relevance to the community of young people that they work with (Frenzel, 2014).

The Junior Mentor Project

The Junior Mentor Project, provided by a youth centre in Wales, UK, aims to address the needs of marginalized young people and the issues they may be confronting, such as low self-esteem, antisocial behaviour or poor diet, by developing their skills, knowledge and competencies through mentoring (building and developing trusting relationships).

Parents and mentees involved in evaluation of the project highlighted how it helped improve concentration, prevent antisocial behaviour and improve attitudes toward education. Parents and carers also identified that mentorship provided a structure, improved confidence, fostered healthier relationships and helped young people solve problems. However, it was also noted that given the importance of the relationship, it took time for the positive impact of mentoring to be realised.

Adapted from Greenop (2011)

The wider literature upon peer education, much of it from the field of health, suggests that peer education can influence young people's attitudes and behaviour. However, it also suggests that much depends upon the quality of work (including support and training for peer educators) and finds that peer educators themselves may gain more than those they are educating (see e.g. Adamchak, 2006). The role of adults, who typically have different knowledge and better access to resources than young people, in providing information, advice and guidance, and in supporting peer educators and mentors, is also highlighted in some of the literature as important here (ibid; Sildnik, 2015; Dunne, et al, 2014a; Morton & Montgomery, 2013). In response, some youth organisations actively promote and support young people, developing their skills, attributes and attitudes so that they are better able to provide support to other young people (Dunne, et al, 2014a).

6. THE IMPACT OF YOUTH ORGANISATIONS UPON YOUNG PEOPLE AND SOCIETY: PERSONAL AND SOCIAL OUTCOMES

Introduction

A number of studies highlight the increasing complexity of modern life, depicted by Ulrich Beck in his seminal text, *Risk Society* (1992); the increasing demands placed upon young people; their choices; and the skills and competences they need to exploit opportunities and manage risks. Youth organisations can help young people gain skills and make choices. They are associated with a range of personal and social outcomes and this section outlines (maps) the range of positive outcomes claimed for youth organisations and then discusses the strength of evidence supporting these claims.

Human capital: social and emotional skills, skills for life/work

Through educative experiences, such as enabling and encouraging people to experience new things and people, youth organisations can foster a range of social and emotional skills[10] and dispositions, including:

- self-awareness – understanding of one's self, abilities (e.g. self-confidence and self-efficacy), and emotions/feelings;
- mood management - capacity to manage one's emotions (e.g. the ability to exercise patience, to calm oneself down, shake off anxiety) and to respond appropriately to others (e.g. not getting angry/irritated with them);

10. The list is adapted from Goleman (1995)

- empathy - understanding of others, recognising their emotions and responding appropriately (e.g. offering support);
- handling relationships – including "social competence", the ability to work with (teamworking), communicate and socialise with others, negotiate, persuade and achieve consensus; and
- self-motivation - the ability to focus upon a task, show interest, put in effort, not to get distracted, to defer gratification (Merino, 2007).

These enable "personal growth" and "development" (as interviewees put it). As the example of the JUSTament project (see boxed text below) illustrates, these outcomes can also contribute to other positive outcomes by, for example, enabling young people to take up employment, education or training opportunities. For example, Merton et al's 2004 study identifies how by contributing to 'personal' change, youth work can contribute to 'positional' change, such as accessing education, training or employment opportunities. As such these type of outcomes can be considered both ends in themselves (final outcomes) and also means to other ends (intermediate outcomes).

JUSTAment: supporting young people's progression in education and employment

JUSTAment is a project of the Frankfurt regional branch of the Verein f. Internationale Jugendarbeit, an association of civil society groups belonging to the Diakonie, the social branch of the German Evangelical Church.

The project aims to support young people in the vocational streams of German lower secondary education to develop confidence, skills and orientation to access upper secondary education (only 10% of those in the vocational stream typically go on to do so). The project demonstrates strong outcomes in this regard, with every young person in the programme sourcing an apprenticeship placement, well above the normal success rate for vocational learners. The project has also been recognised for its work with older people, as the mentoring schemes that form a core of the programme's provision utilise the skills and experience of older and retired professionals.

Adapted from Dunne, et al, 2014a

Youth organisations can also foster a range of skills for life, including skills needed for independent living, education and employment, such as:

- creativity and problem-solving skills;
- critical thinking skills;
- literacy and numeracy;
- an understanding of the importance of punctuality and appearance;
- personal skills needed in the private sphere to sustain friendships and relationships (Kiilakoski, 2015)[11].

By enabling and encouraging travel and mobility, youth organisations can increase the value young people attach to learning other languages and provide opportunities for young people to learn other languages (Taru, 2013).

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon human capital

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon young people's human capital is moderate overall:

- one study provide "strong" evidence (Powell and Bratović 2007;
- eight studies provide "moderate" evidence (IJAB, 2014; Bogdanova, 2013; BeLongG To, in Dunne, et al, 2014a; Merino, 2007; Morciano, et al, 2013 ; Greenop, 2011; Kotilainen, 2009; and Lähteenmaa, 1999); and
- two studies provides "weak" evidence (Frenzel, 2014; and Asociatia Stea, 2012).

11. The study uses Honneth's (2005) social theory, in which the ability to act in society requires competences for the private sphere, (love, friendship), in the political sphere (political and civic engagement) and in the economic sphere (entrepreneurship, work).

Social Capital

By enabling young people to develop wider and more diverse social networks and by fostering trust and norms of reciprocity between people, youth organisations can contribute to the creation of social capital. This in turn can, for example, support young people's transitions from school to further education, training and employment (Merino, 2007) and make important contributions to young people's well-being and resilience (their ability to cope with adversity), by enhancing their access to advice and support from others (Loncle, n.d). As such they can be considered as both intermediate and final outcomes. Increases in social capital can also be considered both a personal (and individual) and societal benefit given, for example, the contributions that social capital makes to economic growth and social cohesion (Temple, 2001; Putnam, 1993, 2001).

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon social capital

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon social capital is moderate overall:

- one study provided 'strong' evidence (Powell and Bratović 2007);
- three studies provide 'moderate' evidence (IJAB 2014; Taru 2013; and Merino, 2007); and
- three studies provide 'weak' evidence (Frenzel 2014, Federal Ministry of Families and Youth of Austria 2015; and Asociatia Stea, 2012).

Promoting positive choices: young people's attitudes, values and behaviours

Youth organisations can contribute to preventative work (helping young people avoid risks/risky behaviours) and promote positive changes in young people's behaviour, such as stopping or moderating risky behaviours like drug and alcohol misuse, by, for example:

- increasing young people's knowledge and understanding (e.g. of the risks associated with certain behaviours), through information, advice, guidance and educative work (see e.g. Henderson, 2005);
- enhancing young people's social and emotional skills, including increases in young people's self-esteem and self-awareness, helping provide the motivation and self-confidence young people may need to make positive, but sometimes difficult or challenging choices (see e.g. Asociatia Stea, 2012); and
- extending young people's social networks, enabling them to form new friendship groups and facilitating social integration (Kiilakoski, 2015; Perea, 2004).

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon young people's attitudes, values and behaviours

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon young people's attitudes, values and behaviours is moderate overall:

- two studies provide 'strong' evidence (Kokko 2015 and Powell and Bratović 2007);
- seven studies provide 'moderate' evidence (Sildnik 2015; Horton and Montgomery 2013; Taru 2013; Coalter, 2012; Greenop, 2011; Bosisio, 2008; and Perea, 2004); and
- three studies provide 'weak' evidence (Frenzel, 2015; Asociatia Stea, 2012; and Loncle, n.d.).

Employment, education and training

By contributing to increases in human and social capital, and therefore to young people's skills and to improving access to information about employment, education and training opportunities, youth organisations can contribute to a range of positive outcomes including:

- increases in the numbers of young people in work and in the quality of their work (e.g. moves toward more highly skilled and more highly paid work, with better progression opportunities) (Sildnik, 2015; Merino, 2007); and
- increases in the numbers of young people in education and training and progression within education and training (toward higher levels) (Taru, 2010; Merino, 2007).

As the example of the Walkers Cafés (see boxed text below) illustrates, a number of studies discuss youth organisations' preventative role (concerning early school leaving) (Sutton et al., 2004). One study also highlights the role youth organisations can play in providing an "early warning network" that can help identify young people at risk of disengagement, ensuring that they can then be referred on for advice and support (Frenzel, 2014).

Preventing alienation: Walkers Cafés

The chain of 24 walkers cafés, alternative youth work settings, were set up by Aseman Lapset (Children of the Station) to affect and prevent the alienation of young people in society. The cafés have working volunteers aged 18 to over 60, to promote "functional interaction" between young people and adults in order to help prevent and reduce alienation. It aims to create a secure and cosy atmosphere for young people under 18 years old. Evaluation highlighted how, in particular, volunteers were able to experience a sense of community and togetherness.

Adapted from Lähteenmaa (1999)

Like increases in social capital, increases and improvements in young people's employment, education and training can be considered both a personal (or individual) and a societal benefit (given its contribution to economic productivity and growth) (Baro, 2013).

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon employment, education and training

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon employment, education and training is moderate to weak overall :

- three studies provides 'moderate' evidence (Kiilakoski 2015; Merino, 2007; and Hooghe, et al, 2004); and
- three studies provide 'weak' evidence (Frenzel 2014; Bogdanova, 2013; and World Vision Romania, 2012).

Health and well-being

Youth organisations can contribute to increases in young people's sense of subjective well-being. This can flow from, for example:

- the enjoyment that involvement in youth organisations (frequently expressed in terms of "fun"), can bring (Gretschel et al., 2014; Frenzel, 2014);
- the extension and deepening of social networks – such as friendships (Kiilakoski, 2014);
- the sense of purpose and achievement that civic and political activism (discussed in section five) can bring (Cicognani et al., 2015);
- the sense of community and belonging that involvement can foster (ibid.); and
- the sense of empowerment young people can experience as their skills develop (discussed above), enabling them, for example, to access and progress in education, training and employment.

Like increases in social capital, increases and improvements in young people's health and well-being can be considered both a personal (or individual) and a societal benefit (e.g. given the societal benefits of better individual health) (WHO, 2001).

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon health and well-being

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon health and well-being is moderate to weak overall:

- one study provides 'strong' evidence (Kokko 2015);
- Three studies provides 'moderate' evidence (Cicognani, et al, 2015; BelonG To, in Dunne et al 2014a and Morciano, et al, 2013); and
- six studies provide 'weak' evidence (Frenzel 2014; Asociatia Stea, 2012; World Vision Romania, 2012; Comisión De Las Comunidades Europeas, 2009; Dirección General de Juventud, 2009; and Loncle n.d.).

One study suggested that the potential for youth organisations to deliver health promotion messages is underdeveloped (Kokko et al., 2015), although examples of youth work specifically focused upon this (such as "Voilà", discussed below, and "Animateurs de Santé" in France) and youth organisations engaged in health promotion (such as Asociatia Stea Romania) were also identified (Asociatia Stea, 2012; Comisión De Las Comunidades Europeas 2009; Loncle, n.d.).

Swiss National Youth Council - cSaJ/SaJV

Voilà

Voilà is a peer training programme, organised by The National Youth Council of Switzerland. Focused upon youth leaders, it aims to help them include health promotion in holiday camp activity programmes. Youth leaders are trained, through a regional programme, and then give special attention to integrating health promotion in their camps. In this way thousands of children and young people are exposed to health promotion messages each year.

Adapted from YFJ (2016a)

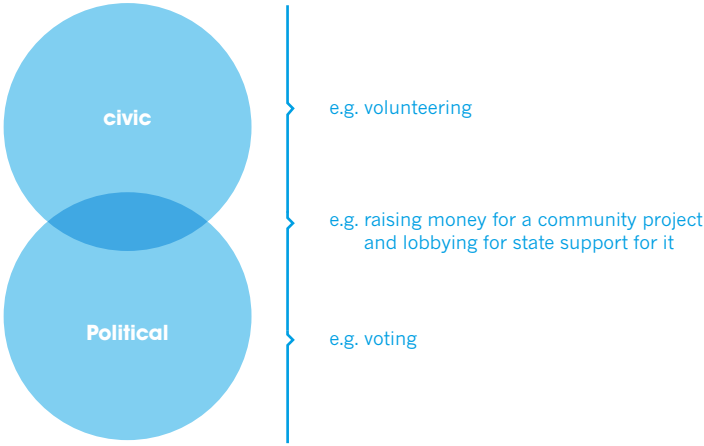
7. THE IMPACT OF YOUTH ORGANISATIONS UPON YOUNG PEOPLE AND SOCIETY: POLITICAL AND CIVIC OUTCOMES

Introduction

There are concerns about young people's disengagement from institutional politics (Deželan 2015). A number of studies (included in this report) highlight concerns about declines in young people's political engagement (Cammaerts et al., 2014). Some balance this with a discussion of how young people may be switching to other forms of non-traditional and political engagement (e.g. direct action) and/or civic engagement (e.g. volunteering) (Quintelier, 2007). This section discusses the contribution youth organisations can make to young people's civic and political attitudes, engagement and activism. It outlines (maps) the range of positive outcomes claimed for youth organisations and then discusses the strength of evidence supporting these claims.

For the purpose of this study, "political" describes young people's engagement with the state, through both formal processes, like voting, and more informal processes, like protesting. "Civic" is used to describe non-state action where, for example, young people get involved with their school or community. The distinction is not absolute. Even very local community level activity may lead to or require political change or support from the state to succeed.

Figure 3 the relationship between civic and political engagement and action



The outcomes discussed in this section include both attitudinal and behavioural changes (engagement and activism) which can accrue to both individual young people involved in youth organisations (personal outcomes) and also to other people who are not directly involved (social outcomes).

Civic and political attitudes and values

As the example of anti-racism work (see boxed text below) illustrates, by encouraging and enabling young people to interact with young people (and older adults) different to themselves, (e.g. in terms of class, gender, ethnicity or age), youth organisations can contribute to openness and tolerance of difference (Kiilakoski, 2015; Thomas, 2011; Dirección General de Juventud, 2009; Murakas et al., 2010; Powell and Bratović 2007). This can also contribute to changes in the attitudes of those young people supported by people they come into contact with (e.g. fostering more positive attitudes toward young people amongst older adults and vice versa) (Dunne, et al, 2014a).

Building solidarity and tackling racism through youth work

Ungdomsringen, The Danish Organisation of Youth Clubs, runs a number of projects which focus on building solidarity between young people with disabilities and the general population, by running peer support projects where young people with disabilities are supported by those without.

The Bede House Anti- Racist Detached Youth Work Project was based in south London and aimed at building relationships with young white people who held extreme racist views. The Bede House team used "traditional" youth work methods to engage these young people within the community. This led to the establishment of a platform where issues about race could be examined openly.

Adapted from Thomas (2011) and YFJ (2016a)

Youth organisations can also promote more positive attitudes towards democracy, such as higher levels of satisfaction, greater "political saliency" (an increase in the relative importance attached to politics compared to other matters) and greater interest in politics (Van Deth, 2010; Hooghe et al., 2004). They can, for example, help young people understand how government and politics works and appreciate its importance and impact upon their lives.

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon political and civic attitudes and values

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations political and civic attitudes and values is moderate overall:

- two studies provides 'strong' evidence (Van Deth, 2010; and Quintelier 2008);
- Twelve studies provide 'moderate' evidence (Cicognani, et al, 2015; Kiilakoski 2015; ANACEJ in Dunne, et al, 2014a; Cammaerts et al 2014; Gretschel et al 2014; Thomas, 2011; Taru, 2010; Murakas et al 2009; Kotilainen, 2009; Quintelier 2008; Wyness 2006; and Hooghe, et al, 2004); and
- four studies provide 'weak' evidence of this (Frenzel 2014; Dirección General de Juventud, 2009; Konig-Georgiades 2009 and Mathews & Limb 2003).

Some studies suggest that youth organisations with a civic aim are associated with a greater impact upon "social well-being" (Cicognani et al., 2015) and others highlight how, for example, organisations with a focus upon deliberative participation are associated with higher levels of political participation than other types of youth organisation, such as

"expressive organisations" (Quintelier, 2008). This is consistent with a broader theme within the literature that youth organisations achieve the outcomes they programme for (Powell and Bratović, 2007). Equally, some studies suggest positive impacts are more even across different types of youth organisation (Van Deth, 2010). The difficulties of assessing impacts associated with different types of youth organisation are discussed further in section seven.

Political engagement

As the example of Otpor, Kmara and Pora's work illustrates (see boxed text below), by contributing to changes in young people's attitudes toward political engagement and by, for example, increasing young people's understanding of political systems and processes (e.g. through educative experiences) youth organisations can contribute to increases in young people's political engagement in both formal politics (e.g. voting) and more informal politics (e.g. protesting).

Otpor, Kmara and Pora: mobilizing for peaceful revolution

Otpor, Kmara and Pora, described as youth NGO's and civil society NGO's, were set up by young people and the majority of volunteers were students. They aimed at making politics "cool" and targeted political apathy amongst young people. These youth organisations also offered support to the democratic opposition in Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine. They all provided the necessary structure and purpose for youth movements that lead to democratic revolutions. These youth organisations proved to be successful in their strategy of adopting non-violent manners and enabling massive street protests.

Evaluation of their work highlighted how, although multiple different factors played a major role in building a regime change (such as elites), young people provided a bottom up approach by overcoming fear, apathy and personal differences and mobilizing support among different parties and the older generations.

Adapted from Kuzio (2006)

Youth organisations can also contribute to "negative" outcomes where, for example, young people have negative experiences (e.g. because they feel their views are not take into account) and become disillusioned or cynical (Morciano et al., 2013).

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon political engagement

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon political engagement is moderate overall:

- two studies provides 'strong' evidence (Van Deth, 2010; and Quintelier 2008);
- eight studies provide 'moderate' evidence (Kiilakoski 2015, Cammaerts et al 2014, ANACEJ in Dunne, et al, 2014a, Gretschel et al 2014; Morciano et al, 2013; Murakas et al. 2010; Wyness 2006; and Hooghe, et al, 2004); and
- three studies provide 'weak' evidence of this (Frenzel 2014; Konig-Georgiades 2009; and Mathews and Limb 2003).

Some studies (e.g. Quintelier, 2007) highlight barriers to young people's political engagement, such as a lack of faith in the political system and lifecycle and generational effects which have left young people less likely to obtain stabilising elements of adult life, such as home-ownership and having children, which often promote political engagement. While youth organisations may seek to change young people's views (and faith) about the political system, they may not be able to address lifecycle and generational effects, thus limiting their impact.

Civic engagement

As the examples of the Adolescents, Life Context & School Project and 72 Stunden Ohne Kompromiss (72 Hours without Compromise) (see boxed text below) illustrate, youth organisations can promote range of civic engagement, including volunteering (both within youth organisations themselves and also with other organisations) and a sense of civic responsibility (Dallago et al., 2009). The experience of, for example, volunteering can contribute to personal outcomes, such as increases in social and emotional and skills, (discussed below) and can also contribute to social outcomes, such as increases in inter-cultural dialogue (discussed above) and service delivery (where, for example, young volunteers help deliver a service for others).

Promoting civic activism: the Adolescents, Life Context & School Project

The Adolescents, Life Context & School Project was a participatory project managed by the research team and operated in a number of schools in a suburb of Padova, Italy. The project involved young people taking part in workshops to outline the impact of school and their local area on their lives and to identify ideas about future participation and about changes that could be made in their communities.

The outcome evaluation of the project demonstrated a statistically significant impact in relation to young people's feelings of civic responsibility towards the neighbourhood. It also identified that the project led the local council to create a formal youth affairs council as a result of collaborative working within the programme between the local council and young people.

Adapted from Dallago et al. (2009)

Some studies describe youth organisations' social contribution (increased civic and political engagement and activism) and other factors like social integration, inter-cultural understanding, social acceptance and social coherence in terms of youth organisations' contribution to enhancing "social well-being" (Cicognani et al., 2015).

72 Stunden Ohne Kompromiss (72 Hours Without Compromise)

72 Hours Without Compromise is a country-wide volunteering action organised in Austria every two years by Catholic Youth (Katholische Jugend). It is part of the international initiative Stunden Ohne Kompromiss which also works in Hungary, Switzerland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany and the Czech Republic.

The goals of 72 Hours Without Compromise are: to improve living conditions and human situations through the development and implementation of specific projects; to promote volunteering all over Europe; and to put the commitment and action of young people in the spotlight.

Adapted from YFJ (2016a)

By promoting a sense of responsibility through, for example, education for sustainable development and global citizenship, youth organisations can encourage young people's civic and political engagement and activism (Murakas et al., 2010; Kotilainen, 2009). Initial engagement can deepen young people's civic and political engagement and activism (creating a virtuous or self-reinforcing cycle of activism and engagement) (Cicognani et al., 2015; Lähteenmaa, 1999). Civic and political engagement and activism may therefore be mutually reinforcing, in that one leads to the other. However, they may also compete for young people's time and interest and one study (Cammaerts et al., 2014) suggests that young people's rejection of political culture may lead them to focus upon civic engagement (which youth organisations are well positioned to facilitate).

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon civic engagement

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon civic engagement is moderate overall :

- three studies provide 'strong' evidence (Taru 2013; Dallago et al. 2009, and Powell and Bratović 2007);
- ten studies provide 'moderate' evidence (Cicognani, et al, 2015; Kiilakoski 2015; Cammaerts et al 2014, Gretschel et al 2014, ANACEJ in Dunne, et al, 2014a; Taru, 2010; Quintelier 2008; Wyness 2006; Perea, 2004; and Lähteenmaa, 1999); and
- six studies provide 'weak' evidence of this (Frenzel 2014; Stunden Ohne Kompromiss, in Dunne, et al, 2014a; Cammaerts, et al, 2014; Comisión De Las Comunidades Europeas, 2009; Konig-Georgiades 2009, Mathews and Limb 2003).

Policy making

As the example of Dialogue Days illustrates, youth organisations can provide ways in which young people "voice" their views and enable their preferences to be expressed and articulated. This can be particularly important when other ways in which young people "voice", such as voting, are either restricted (e.g. on the basis of young people's age) or are unattractive to young people (e.g. because young people feel there are not effective ways to make their voice heard) (Quintelier 2007).

Dialogue Day

Dialogue Days was a two year participation project co-ordinated by Alliansi, the Finnish Youth Co-operation. The project involved the setting up of discussion forums attended by young people and municipal politicians. Young people involved were either active or not active in existing youth fora and organisations. Dialogue Days offered young people a chance to collaborate in discussions amongst themselves and to put ideas and suggestions to politicians. 81 discussions were held with a reach of 2,500 young people. There was positive feedback from both politicians and young people. However the evaluation noted that there was mixed uptake of recommendations by politicians.

Adapted from Gretschel et al. 2014

As the work of Belong To (see boxed text below) illustrates, by enabling young people's voices to be heard and articulated to policy makers and politicians, youth organisations can contribute to better informed policies (a social outcome).

Influencing policy: BeLong To

BeLong To undertakes peer education activities within a critical social education model of youth work in Ireland. The organisation had a direct impact on policy making when its campaign work led to special reference to LGBT young people within Ireland's National Suicide and Self Harm Strategy. The organisation won funding from the Health Service Executive to fund research and fund the Network Manager role within the organisation, which aids with the creation of LGBT youth groups in partnership with local steering groups throughout the country.

Adapted from Dunne, et al, 2014a

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon policy making

The evidence of the impact of youth organisations upon policy making is strong to moderate overall:

- one study provide 'strong' evidence (Murakas et al 2010);
- seven studies provide 'moderate' evidence (Frenzel 2014; ANACEJ in Dunne, et al 2014a, BelonG To in Dunne, et al, 2014a, Dinamo in Dunne, et al, 2014a; Gretschel et al 2014; Thomas, 2011; and Wielermans & Hierpelink 2000); and
- three studies provide 'weak' evidence of this (Cammaerst et al 2014; Andreu, 2009; and Roger 2007).

8. DIFFERENCES IN OUTCOMES

Introduction

There are a range of factors that impact upon outcome, including differences in organisations, contexts and young people themselves, which are discussed in this section.

Organisational differences

As outlined in the introduction, there is huge diversity across the youth organisational sector. Organisational differences related to their aim, structure, development, quality and scale, all contribute to differences in the contribution they make to outcomes for young people and society. This diversity is the strength of the sector; it helps ensure it meets the needs and interests of different groups of young people, but means the impact of youth organisations differ.

Organisational aim

Outcomes typically reflect the aims or purpose of youth organisations; for example, as one study observes, youth organisations only get the outcomes they programme for (Powell and Bratović 2007). A broad distinction can therefore be drawn between youth organisations directly focused upon political engagement and less "political" youth organisations. Those organisations directly focused upon youth participation and political engagement are more associated with civic and political outcomes, whilst more apolitical organisations, such as interest groups, are more associated with personal and social outcomes.

Organisational structure

Different youth organisations can be placed on a number of spectra reflecting, for example, the degree to which they are led and controlled by young people or adults and the degree to which they offer more or less structured and formal activities. Greater structure[12] is generally associated with stronger outcomes (Feinstein et al., 2005)[13], but interviewees also stressed how structure can also limit the type of young people who participate and the type of outcomes generated (LLUK, 2010).

Organisational development and quality

Outcomes often differ for organisations at differing stages of development; for example, in the early stages youth organisations may be more focused upon establishing themselves and recruiting young people. This can also curtail the activities and experiences that youth organisations can offer young people when compared to more established or mature organisations.

The quality of work with and for young people can also impact upon outcomes; for example, although social and emotional skills associated with positive outcomes can be fostered through association (Smith, 2001), the quality of association is crucial (Robeson and Feinstein, 2007; Margo and Dixon, 2006). There are also debates within the literature about the impact of "professionalisation", which may increase quality, but can also reduce flexibility and may lead to the deployment of more service-centred, rather than youth-centred organisations (see e.g. Forkby and Kiilakoski, 2014).

Organisational diversity

Organisational diversity affects both who benefits (discussed below) and also the opportunities for young people to interact with people unlike themselves. As outlined in sections three, four and five, the opportunities to interact with others can contribute to personal and social outcomes such as increases in social capital and greater openness and tolerance of difference. The degree of diversity helps determine who young people interact with.

Scale and scalability

There are almost always limits on the numbers of young people youth organisations can work with, given limited human and financial capital and structural constraints (some models, such as youth councils, may be able to directly involve only a limited number of young people). Differences in capital and structure therefore contribute to the scale of impact and scalability (the scope to "scale up" organisations and their impacts).

12. i.e. "defined activities which have an underlying purpose and goal and which are facilitated by a trusted adult or older peer" (LLUK, 2010).
13. Feinstein et al. (2005) suggest that those participating in more "structured" activities (activities in which adults have clear authority, there are clear rules and expectations and goals, and support and encouragement are offered) gain more, in social and emotional terms, than those participating in looser, more unstructured activities.

Contextual differences

Differences in the contexts within which youth organisations work also contribute to differences in outcomes. The marked increases in opportunities, risks and the pace of societal change has increased (Beck, 1992) effecting young people across Europe. Nevertheless, the scale and type of risk and opportunities young people are exposed to and the pace of change differs across Europe. For example, youth unemployment is a bigger challenge in some parts of Europe than others; the ways in which youth organisations can help people into work also differ, as do the impacts of youth organisations on young people's prospects for finding employment. As a consequence, the outcomes of youth organisations' tackling youth unemployment in Austria are likely to differ with those in Greece.

The role of the state also differs across Europe. These differences are important because state support or state opposition to youth organisations can support or curtail their development and also their independence. In some countries such as Austria, there was evidence of the state "crowding out" the voluntary sector. Equally, the withdrawal of the state in countries like Estonia can create space for the voluntary sector to grow. However, because many youth organisations rely upon state support, when withdrawal includes cuts in funding this can undermine the sector. The impact of the current era of austerity upon the sector is therefore likely to be significant, but does not feature prominently in the literature, most of which predates the economic crisis in late 2000s.

History and culture are also important. The openness of state institutions at all levels to the influence of young people can vary. This is particularly important for more political youth organisations, such as youth councils. For example, the experience of national youth councils in countries like Finland and Luxemburg, with a long-established democratic culture, is markedly differently to that of national youth councils in countries like Belarus (Holtom et al., 2016.). Similarly, attitudes toward young people themselves vary, with young people often characterised as either a "resource" or a "problem" (ibid).

Differences in young people and the distribution of outcomes

Who participates?

Because participation in youth organisations is by definition voluntary, young people need to be both interested and therefore motivated, to take part and also able to take part and not be constrained by barriers that stop them. Just as young people's interests are many and varied, the range of youth organisations they choose to engage with are many and varied (and this is a key strength of the sector). Identifying what young people are interested in, be it in relation to the media (Kotilainen, 2009), sports (Coalter, 2012) or culture and ethnicity (Perea, 2004), is therefore vital to the success of youth organisations, as young people will get involved in the issues and activities that matter to them. Indeed one study (Matthews and Limb, 2003) identified that enjoyment was the outcome (associated with the youth organisation studied) that young people valued most. Equally, studies highlight that this enjoyment can come from helping others ("hedonistic altruism") or making a difference (Stunden Ohne Kompromiss, 2014; Lähteenmaa, 1999).

Potential barriers to accessing youth organisations, which mean young people's interest in a youth organisation cannot be fulfilled, are also highlighted in the literature and through interviews; these include:

- situational barriers linked to young people's circumstances, such as caring responsibilities or the demands of education, training or employment, or their physical distance from youth organisations (which may be a particular issue in rural areas);
- financial barriers, linked to the cost of participation in youth organisations;
- institutional barriers linked to the culture and structure of youth organisations that may block some people's involvement; and
- psychological barriers linked to young people's perceptions of what is demanded by their involvement in youth organisations (e.g. in terms of the knowledge and skills required), which can also put some young people off participating (Cammaerts et al., 2014).

Many youth organisations strive to be more inclusive and often actively seek to engage marginalised or vulnerable groups, such as disabled young people or young people from ethnic minorities. In some cases this is through partnership with other (non- "youth") organisations such as organisations working with people with disabilities (of all ages) (Dunne, et al, 2014b). The type of young people involved, and therefore their starting point (or "baseline"), their capacity to exploit the opportunities youth organisations offer and the

challenge they need help with all differ, and therefore their outcomes also differ; for example, because few youth organisations work with homeless young people, outcomes in terms of reduced homelessness are rare[14] .

In order to promote diversity and inclusivity, both the literature and the interviews stress the action many youth organisations take to minimise barriers by, for example:

- developing flexible, informal and welcoming provision that can help address situational, psychological and institutional barriers (Wyness, 2006); and
- offering financial support, such as scholarships, to help address financial barriers.

As the example of the De Realisten project (see boxed text below) illustrates, much of this action is intended to increase involvement of young people from more excluded or marginalised communities, who tend to be under-represented in youth organisations.

The De Realisten Project: working with disabled young people

De Realisten is a project run by the youth branch of the Dutch trade union, CNV Jongeren. The project works with young people classed under Dutch law as partially unable to work due to a disability. The project trains young people in labour market skills and demonstrates to employers the value of these young people as employees. Participants undertake training and are involved in networking activities with potential employers. Evaluation of the project highlighted increases in young people's confidence as a key outcome.

Adapted from Dunne, et al, 2014a

Overall, despite their efforts, the research reviewed for this study indicates that youth organisations are most likely to involve "privileged" youth and least likely to involve so called "problem" youth (such as young people in contact with the youth justice system)[15]. As outlined in section three, some studies suggest that outcomes depend as much on what young people bring to the youth organisation (e.g. in terms of skills and knowledge), as what the youth organisation offers them. One study (Dunne, et al, 2014a) identified that: **"**long-term outcomes were determined by youth councillors' backgrounds as much as the experience on the youth council". Although other studies, including meta reviews, have not identified systemic differences in outcome for individual young people from different socio-economic groups (Powell and Bratović 2007), socio-economic differences effect the number and type of youth organisations that young people can access – with more opportunities generally found in more advantaged areas (ibid).

14. One study, an annual report of Asociatia Stea (2012) (Star Association) in Romania aims to reduce homelessness by tackling at-risk youth, however their capacity is limited by being able to work with only six young people at a time during the final stage of their initiative (which is also the most important one in tackling homelessness).
15. There are examples of youth organisations working with "at risk" young people (see e.g. Coalter, 2012).

....and for how long?

The length and type of young people's involvement also differ. Shorter and/or intermittent involvement is associated with poorer outcomes (Merton et al., 2004). Conversely, longer and more intensive involvement provides more opportunities for youth organisations to offer experiences and opportunities to young people. Memberships of more than one youth organisation is, in particular, associated with a higher level of political participation, as young people get to meet more people within different organisations[16] (Quintelier, 2008).

Research and interviews suggest that in general, older young people are less involved in youth organisations, given an expansion of opportunities and demands upon their time as they get older (Merton et al., 2004). Young people aged 16 to18+ may prioritise looking for work over involvement in a youth organisation, as they may not understand or appreciate the ways in which their involvement in a youth organisation can help them find work. Also, as interviewees observed, peer pressure which suggests involvement with a youth organisation is not seen as "cool", is also a factor.

Differences in outcome over time

Very few longitudinal studies were identified that would enable impact over time to be assessed. This makes it difficult to draw conclusions about the sustainability of outcomes over time. Those studies that do (e.g. Cicognani et al., 2015; Powell and Bratović, 2007) have explored how experiences in youth, such as increases in civic and political engagement, are often sustained in adulthood[17].

16. The study also identified that increased time spent in youth organisations, i.e. the time spent with the same contacts, did not amount to increased political participation.
17. e.g. Cicognani et al. (2015) describe organisational membership as a "precursor" to adulthood civic and political participation.

9. THE ECONOMIC COST AND BENEFITS OF YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

Very few studies focused upon the economic cost and benefits of youth work. The main exception was a study commissioned by the National Youth Council for Ireland (NYCI, 2012) which aims to provide: "a comprehensive and rigorous economic assessment of youth work" in Ireland (ibid., p. 8).The study focuses upon those "youth organisations" "undertaking youth work".

Their study included a literature review, which identified (as with this study) a range of positive outcome associated with the work of youth organisations practising youth work, such as: "reductions in criminal activity and anti-social behaviour, increased numbers of young people in education, employment or training and reductions in substance abuse" (ibid., p.16), together with benefits such as: "improved confidence and self-esteem, decision-making abilities, personal development and meeting new people". However:

"overall, the review indicated that although extensive research on various aspects of youth work has been completed internationally, including evaluations of specific programmes in areas such as health, education and welfare, very limited research exists on the economic benefits of youth work" *(ibid., pp. 16-17)*

In response, the study undertook a cost-benefit, comparing funding for the sector with the:

- direct benefits of youth work, such as the economic value of volunteering and paid employment (as a result of youth work) and the multiplier impacts of youth organisation expenditures; and
- indirect benefits, based upon estimated cost savings to the state in areas such as youth justice, health, education and welfare costs.

The study identified that, if the direct and indirect benefits were added and compared to costs, over a ten year period the financial benefits of youth work programmes would exceed the financial costs by a factor of 2.22 over this period (ibid., p. 18).

A number of other studies that have not focused specifically (or exclusively) upon youth organisations, but upon related areas of work such as youth work, have sought to compare (and contrast) the often relatively modest costs of youth work type interventions with the potentially large cost savings generated by reducing harm to society (see e.g. NEF/ Catch 22, 2011; NAO, 2010; Romeo, Knapp and Scott 2006). However, these studies face a number of key challenges which make it difficult to attribute costs savings to their work, including:

- the often weak evidence linking interventions to positive outcomes, such as young people entering employment, given weakness in both the measurement of outcomes and impact attribution, discussed further in section seven;
- the difficulties associated with estimating the impact of something that did not happen (and which therefore by definition cannot be directly measured), such as a young person not committing a crime or engaging in risky behaviour such as drug and alcohol misuse; and
- the often small numbers of young people engaged in negative behaviours, which means that the numbers of young people youth organisations need to work with in order to contribute to reductions in negative behaviours, is often very high[18].

18. Even targeted work can suffer from the "prevention paradox", in which many of those supported do not benefit.

10. DATA AND INDICATORS

As outlined in sections five and six, the evidential base is weak overall. This reflects weakness in the measurement of outcomes and in the approaches taken to estimate impact.

Measuring outcomes

Robust measurement of the social value of youth organisations requires robust measurement of outcomes – i.e. what changed. As outlined in sections five and six, this includes, for example, changes in young people's attitudes, values and behaviour. However, many organisations do not systematically or robustly collect data on outcomes. As a consequence, a study of the value of youth work in the European Union, focused upon Austria, (Frenzel, 2014) identified that:

"the outcomes and impacts of youth work in Austria are not systematically assessed" *(ibid., p.26)*

Similarly, in their evaluation of youth services in England, Merton et al., (2004) conclude that:

"there is little in the way of rigorous research into youth work or reliable data about youth work outcomes" *(ibid., p. 143)*

And in their systemic review of "youth empowerment programmes" (Morton and Montgomery, 2013) conclude that the evidence base is too weak to draw definitive conclusions of impact and consequently identify the need for further and more rigorous research and evaluation in this area.

There are a range of approaches that youth organisations could use to measure outcomes; these should include:

- measurement of change over time (e.g. the "distance travelled" by a young person) using, for example, base and end line measurements;
- triangulation of different types of data, such as subjective data (e.g. how young people think and feel) and more objective data (such as changes in young people's behaviour); and
- triangulation of data from different sources, such as self-reported data from young people; observational data from those working with young people; and administrative or secondary data (where available) such as data on young people's educational or employment outcomes.

These approaches are reflected in the quality criteria used to assess the evidence in the literature reviewed (discussed in the appendix).

Impact attribution

Correlation is not proof of causation. Therefore, the observed change in, for example, a young person's skills during the time when they were involved in a youth organisation (a correlation), does not provide robust evidence that the youth organisation caused or contributed to that change (causation). In most cases, multiple factors including, but not limited to, involvement in a youth organisation will have contributed to the observed changes.

Impact attribution focuses upon trying to identify the contribution the youth organisation made, usually through an estimate of the counterfactual – what would have happened if the young person had not been involved with the youth organisation. As outlined in section six, there are two main approaches to estimating the counterfactual: theory based approaches[19] and empirical impact evaluation[20].

19. Theory-based approaches to impact evaluation focus upon understanding how and why outcomes are generated, using approaches such as "logic models" to test the relationship between an organisation's inputs (such as staff time) and activities (such as a youth work methodology) and outputs (such as numbers of young people supported) and outcomes (such as numbers of young people whose self-confidence increased). Approaches to impact evaluation are discussed further in section seven.
20. Empirical impact evaluation typically involves some measurement of outcomes for a comparison group.

A key weakness has been the failure to develop effective approaches to evaluate impact; for example, a study: *the impact of long-term youth voluntary service in Europe: a review of published and unpublished research studies* (Powell and Bratović 2007) identified that:

" very few of the studies that they reviewed used either control group methods (5 of 40) or pre- and post-intervention measures (2 of 40). This leads to a weakness in the data and therefore in the measurement of impact."

Morton and Montgomery (2013) systemic review of "youth empowerment programmes reached similar conclusions.

Moreover, even where impact evaluation has been built into the research or evaluation (using approaches such as control groups), this study illustrates the difficulties in impact evaluation; for example:

- there are multiple factors that contribute to the outcomes associated with youth organisations, making it hard to isolate the contribution of a youth organisation, and in many cases young people participate in multiple youth organisations, making it difficult to isolate the impact of an individual organisation (Coalter, 2012; Merino, 2007);
- often little data is available about outcomes for young people who choose not to take part in youth organisations (limiting the scope to, for example, use control or comparison groups[21] to estimate the counterfactual); and
- small effect sizes relative to other factors also make it difficult to isolate impact. They also make it difficult to assess the impact of different types of youth organisation[22].

As a consequence of these weaknesses, as a systematic study of the impact of a youth empowerment programme (Horton and Montgomery, 2013) identified:

"of the studies that met the review's criteria, none demonstrated measurable impacts on young people's self-efficacy or self-esteem."

21. E.g. outcomes for a "treatment"' group - young people involved with a youth organisation- could be compared with outcomes for a "'comparison" group - young people not involved in a youth organisation.
22. As a consequence, most studies identifying a difference in outcomes between, for example, young people participating in youth organisations and those not, find the differences to be small (see Merino (2007) on the impact of youth organisations upon the acquisition of skills; Taru (2010) on the impact upon multi-culturalism).

Weakness in the availability of data and/or study design means that many studies offer evidence of correlation or associations, rather than evidence of causation. This was most apparent in studies focused upon societal impacts, where, for example, evidence of decline in youth organisations is advanced as a cause for declining levels of mental and physical health amongst young people (Slowinski, 1999) or anti-social behaviour, racism and violence (Thomas, 2011).

Strengthening approaches to impact evaluation is therefore important. This would complement work to improve measurement of outcomes. This should include identification of a strategy to estimate impact using, for example, a theory-based approach and/or data on outcomes for a comparison group.

Rigorous impact evaluation is often challenging and costly and it is important that approaches are proportionate, or "good enough", but need not go beyond this; for example, where the relationship between a youth organisation's work and a valued outcome is close and well-understood, a sophisticated impact evaluation may not be warranted (See e.g. McNeil, et al, 2012). Instead, evidence of correlation that, for example, a young person's self-confidence has increased during their involvement with the youth organisation, coupled with supporting evidence from young people that they believed that their involvement had contributed to this outcome and a coherent account of how the youth organisation contributed to the change, may be sufficient.

Where the relationship between the work of the youth organisation and the intended outcome, such as increased participation in the labour market, is more distant and with many contributory factors, different approaches are needed. It may, for example, be more appropriate to focus upon rigorously measuring intermediate outcomes such as increases in self-confidence and self-motivation and knowledge of local labour markets which are likely to contribute to the final outcome, rather than expending time and money trying to directly measure the contribution of the youth organisation to longer term (final) outcomes, like increases in employment. There may also be opportunities to exploit "natural experiments" where, for example, a phased roll-out to differences in practice creates groups of young people who are similar, but who have and who have not been "exposed" to the work of the youth organisation.

11. CONCLUSIONS

Creating social value

As outlined in section three, the ways (mechanisms) in which youth organisations create social value are well-understood and documented. The report focuses upon five overlapping and complementary mechanisms:

- youth participation;
- youth work and formal, non-formal and informal education;
- experiences and opportunities;
- places and associational spaces for young people to meet and form social relationships; and
- information, advice and guidance.

These represent the key mechanisms through which youth organisations create social value. Each is related to a range of personal, social, civic and political outcomes, which we discuss further below.

None of these mechanisms is unique to youth organisations and there is little evidence in the literature reviewed that youth organisations practise them markedly better – or worse – than other organisations. It is therefore the combination of youth participation (one of the defining features of youth organisations) with these other mechanisms that creates the added value of youth organisations. The integration of these different mechanisms creates the potential for powerful synergies. There is scope to enhance this further through partnership with other (youth and also non-youth) organisations to exploit the potential youth organisations can offer for working with young people. This could include, for example, developing youth organisations' role:

- as providers of information, advice and guidance to young people in a range of areas such as health, employment and education;
- as educators, in areas like citizenship and sustainable development; and
- complementing the opportunities formal education offers, with non-formal educative experiences, that can extend young people's learning, in ways which formal education struggles to do (see e.g. Williamson, 2016).

The social value youth organisations create: personal and social, civic and political outcomes

The outcomes associated with young people's involvement in youth organisations are also understood and documented. The report focuses upon two broad types of outcome:

- personal and social outcomes; and
- civic and political outcomes.

Personal and social outcomes

Personal outcomes include increases in human capital (most notably the strengthening of a range of social and emotional skills and dispositions) and social capital, and also positive changes in young people's attitudes, thinking and behaviour (such as moderating risky behaviours), increasing access to, and progression in, education, training and employment, and improvements in health and well-being.

Improvements in human and social capital and changes in young people's attitudes, thinking and behaviour can be treated as final outcomes (or ends in themselves) and also intermediate outcomes (or means to other ends) that, for example, contribute to increasing access to, and progression in, education, training and employment and improvements in health and well-being.

Similarly, each of these outcomes can be thought of as personal outcome for an individual young person, and also a contribution to societal outcomes, such as increases in economic growth and improvements in social cohesion.

Civic and political outcomes

Civic and political outcomes are fairly well documented and understood and include changes in young people's engagement and activism in civil and political society, such as increases in voting, volunteering and direct action.

Civic and political engagement and activism can both depend upon youth organisations' contributions to personal outcomes, such as increases in young people's skills and confidence, and also contribute to these outcomes.

Civic and political activism can also contribute to societal outcomes, such as improvements in policy and service delivery (e.g. as a consequence of volunteering).

These outcomes are of fundamental importance to Europe. By contributing to the acquisition of skills and changes in people's attitudes and behaviours, they contribute to personal, social, political and economic development and can help tackle the key challenges facing Europe, such as youth unemployment, the erosion of social cohesion and political disengagement. The strength of youth organisations therefore contributes directly to the social and economic strengths of Europe.

Nevertheless, youth organisations are not a "silver bullet" – they do not and cannot work with all young people or address all their needs[23]. They are an important institution but only one of many that young people and society need. Their role complements that of other important institutions, like schools, colleges, social and youth services, and should seen as neither a substitute for, nor competitor to, them.

Measuring the social value of youth organisations

Although there is commonality in the type of mechanism through which youth organisations provide social value and the types of outcome they generate, the sector is very diverse. As outlined in section six, the type and magnitude of outcome generated varies; it depends, to a large degree, upon the type of youth organisation, the context in which they operate and the young people who choose to get involved with youth organisations. Differences in these factors contribute to marked differences in the social value created by different youth organisations.

The diversity of the sector, coupled with weakness in the way outcomes are measured and impact is evaluated, also makes it difficult to definitively assess - or quantify - the aggregate social value created by youth organisations. Improving both the measurement of outcomes and impact evaluation is vital to ensure that:

- the social value of youth organisations is understood and recognised;
- organisations can be held accountable by stakeholders such as young people and their funders; and
- youth organisations can better understand their impact and how it can be maximised (see e.g. McNeil, et al, 2012).

23. Participation in youth organisations is by definition, voluntary. Some young people choose to participate, others either choose not to or cannot (e.g. because there are no youth organisations they can access locally). Personal outcomes are by definition limited to those who take part.

There is no “silver bullet” to address this weakness in measuring outcomes and in particular, impact evaluation is likely to be challenging. Nevertheless, with a few notable exceptions, the failure to address that challenge is a significant weakness across the sector. Youth organisations therefore need to think critically about how best to measure outcomes and then estimate the contribution they make to these observed outcomes.

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13. APPENDIX: DEFINITION OF A YOUTH ORGANISATION

As outlined in the introduction, or the purpose of this study, youth organisations are defined as: "those social organisations (associations, clubs or movements) that are set up to serve young people and where young people are in charge of the organisational structure" and which "are democratic, non-governmental and not for profit" (Souto-Otero, et al, 2012, p.27).

This definition is clear and straightforward, but creates some potential challenges in relation to the control of the organisation. A strict interpretation could exclude many organisations "set up to serve young people", which are "democratic, non-governmental and not for profit" and where young people have a voice, but are not completely (or wholly) "*in charge* of the organisational structure" (italics added).

It is proposed to interpret control of the organisation in terms of a spectrum ranging from complete control by young people, to no control. Arnstein's (1969)[25] ladder of participation offers a model of this (see figure one below). It proposes that the top three tiers, namely: complete control by young people; delegated power; and partnership [e.g. between young people and adults] would all count as examples where young people are "in charge of the organisational structure".

25. Arnstein, Sherry R. "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," JAIP, Vol. 35, No. 4, July 1969, pp. 216-224

Figure 4 ladder of participation (adapted)

Young people Control	
Delegated Power*	Youth power/control
Partnership**	
Placation	
Consultation	tokenism
Informing	
Therapy	non-participation
Manipulation	

Adapted from Arnstein (1969)

* Where young people have control over some, but not all decisions.
** Where decision making powers are shared between young people and adults.

Youth Movements

"Youth movements" were excluded from the study as assessing the impact of youth movements was likely to be particularly problematic.

14. APPENDIX: DETAILS OF THE SEARCH

Search of academic literature

Search terms

In order to search for literature within the selected online libraries, search terms were used. The following search terms were identified, following a focused scoping review to identify appropriate terms and piloting of search terms (including combinations of search terms).

- 'youth organisation'
- 'youth council'
- 'youth work*'

And terms relating to impact;

- 'impact'
- 'measur*'
- 'result'
- 'outcome'
- 'value'
- 'benefit'

Languages

Searches were limited to the English, French, Spanish and Romanian languages. The languages chosen reflect commonly used international languages (English, French and Spanish) as well as a national language relevant to one of the countries chosen for review (Romanian).

Inclusion criteria and first stage sift

Four key inclusion criteria were applied to the first stage "sift"[26] of "items" (e.g. the journal articles identified by the search). They were focused upon relevance. Specifically, the item must:

- be published on or after January 1st 1990;
- discuss a "youth organisation";
- discuss the impact of the youth organisation; and
- the youth organisation must either be a European or transnational organisation (i.e. covering a number of European countries) and/or be based in at least one of 13 selected European countries outlined in the appendix).

Assessment of whether the item met the inclusion criteria was based upon the item's title and summary or abstract and those items meeting these criteria would be put forward to the next stage, review, (discussed below). Those items which did not meet all four of the inclusion criteria were discarded. Therefore, for example, those articles that included no discussion of impact were discarded. Because multiple searches were conducted, sifting also removed articles that had been identified by previous searches.

Results of the initial search and first stage sift

Table 1 below outlines the results of the initial search of academic literature and first stage sift.

Table 1 search of academic literature

Terms	Results	Results post sift
"youth organisation" AND ("impact" OR "measur*" OR "result")	4933	50
"youth council" AND ("impact" OR "measur*" OR "result")	683	20
"youth work" AND ("impact" OR "measur*" OR "result")	2882	7

26. The sift process describes how "items" (such as journal articles) identified by the search, but which clearly do not meet the study's inclusion criteria, are discarded.

Search of unpublished "grey" literature

The search of unpublished "grey" literature (such as evaluations, policy documents, proposals and commissioned research from authors such as youth organisations and governments) mirrored the search of academic literature. The key differences were:

- rather than search online libraries of peer reviewed journals and articles, in order to ensure the search was comprehensive, the web-based search engine Google (with the relevant web code for each country in the long list, such as "google.fi" for Finland, and limiting results to those within the country) was used; and
- country names were included in the string of search terms in order to make the number of items identified more manageable.

Search terms

Due to Google's more complex search analytics in comparison with searches of published journals, it was possible to combine search terms into one string for each of the 13 countries on the study's long list.

- (""youth organisation" OR "youth council" OR "youth work") AND ("impact" OR "measur*" OR "result" OR "outcome") AND [country]

Results for the initial searches are shown in table two below. Given the numbers of items identified, the first stage sift was limited to the first 500 items, sorted by relevance (and all items from 501 onwards were automatically discarded).

Table 2 search of grey literature in the English language

Country	Search engine	Results	Results post sift
Finland	google.fi	5390	12
Denmark	google.dk	1680	4
Estonia	google.ee	1160	14
Luxembourg	google.lu	366	3
Slovakia	google.sk	585	5
Serbia	google.rs	851	12
Austria	google.at	4890	4
France	google.fr	8980	5
Italy	google.it	4070	12
Portugal	google.pt	838	6
Spain	google.es	4170	4
Romania	google.ro	1490	0
UK	google.co.uk	66100	14

Languages

Search results across academic and grey literature were limited to the English, French, Spanish and Romanian languages. This meant that items returned by the searches outlined above in these languages were included for review.

In addition, to capture any literature with national or transnational perspectives published not in the English language, additional searches were conducted using relevant search terms in the French and Spanish languages through the search engines google.fr and google.es. Relevant search terms were identified through documentation produced bilingually by the European Youth Forum and are detailed below, in table three.

Table 3 search terms used in French and Spanish

English	French	Spanish
Youth organisation[27]	Organisation de jeunesse	Organizacion juvenil
	Association de jeunesse	Asociacion juvenil
youth council	Conseil de la jeunesse	Consejo de la juventud
youth work	travail socio educatif	trabajo socioeducativo
impact	impact	impacto
measure	mesure	medir
result	resultat	resultado
outcome	resultat	resultado

Results of these searches are recorded below in table four. As with previous Google searches, only the first 500 results sorted by relevance were sifted (and the remainder were discarded).

Table 4 search of grey literature in Spanish and French

Search terms	Results	Results post sift
(Organisation de jeunesse OU Association de jeunesse OU Conseil de la jeunesse OU travail socio educatif) ET (impact OU mesure OU resultat)	104000	6
(Organización juvenil OR Asociacion juvenil OR Consejo de la juventud OR trabajo socioeducativo) AND (impacto OR medir OR resultado)	120000	14

27. The terminology for youth organisations in French and Spanish languages differs from English, and terms “association”/”asociacion” are more commonly used in different contexts.

Inclusion criteria

In line with the review of academic literature, four key inclusion criteria were applied to the first stage sift[28] of items. These were focused upon relevance. Specifically, the item must:

- be published on or after January 1st 1990;
- discuss a "youth organisation";
- discuss the impact of the youth organisation; and
- the youth organisation must either be a European or transnational organisation (i.e. covering a number of European countries) and/or be based in at least one of 13 selected European countries)[29] .

Those items meeting these criteria were put forward to the review stage and those items which did not meet all four of the inclusion criteria were discarded.

28. The sift process describes how items (such as journal articles) identified by the search, but which clearly do not meet the study's inclusion criteria, were discarded.
29. i.e. Finland, Denmark, Estonia, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Serbia, Austria, France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Romania and the United Kingdom (UK).

15. APPENDIX: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The review was intended to ensure that items (such as journal articles or reports) identified by the search:

- met the four inclusion criteria (outlined above) through a review of the whole item (e.g. the whole text of the article) on the basis that studies identified as relevant on the basis of title and summary may prove to be irrelevant once reviewed further; and
- met the quality criteria for inclusion in the study.

Quality criteria for inclusion in the study

The quality criteria covered two key dimensions:

- detail: is there sufficient description of the youth organisation, the context in which it works, and the way in which the organisation aims to generate social value, to enable it to be understood and described? and
- evidence of impact: is there sufficient description of social value outcomes (what changed) and of impact attribution (evidence that outcomes can be attributed to - or were "caused" by - the organisation)?

Impact attribution

Impact attribution involves two key steps: (1) measuring outcomes (what changed) - which is usually straightforward - and (2) identifying what caused, or contributed to, the observed changes in outcomes - which is typically much more challenging (HM Treasury, 2011).

There are two broad approaches to impact attribution:

- experimental or quasi-experimental methods (e.g. randomised control trials) that seek to estimate impact by estimating the counterfactual (what would have happened in the absence of the intervention - or in this case the youth organisation); and
- theory-based methods, which seek to estimate impact by systematically testing and re-fining the assumed mechanism (the way in which the intervention, in this case the youth organisation, is expected to generate or contribute to outcomes)[30].

In order to classify studies, three key measures of quality were applied:

- quality of outcome measurement (i.e. how well the study measured what changed) – see table five;
- quality of impact evaluation (i.e. how well the study evaluated impact – the difference or contribution the youth organisation made to the observed outcomes) – see table six; and
- quality of analysis – are the conclusions supported by the evidence of outcomes and impact? – see table seven.

A combined measure of each will be used to classify studies into three categories: weak, moderate and strong – see table eight. Because studies could assess different type s of outcome, the evidence in one study, could be judged for example, "moderate" in relation to one type of outcome, but "weak" in relation to another type of outcome.

30. This describes the "theory of change" – how and why the work of the youth organisation is expected to contribute to the intended outcomes.

Table 5 outcome measurement

Level	Description
0	No measurement of outcomes
1	Self reported, subjective (e.g. young person feels they have increased in confidence)
2	Self reported, behavioural (e.g. young person reports they are behaving differently)
3	Independent assessment of subjective or behavioural change (e.g. youth worker assesses that a young person's confidence has increased and/or their behaviour has changed) OR Joint assessment of subjective or behavioural change (e.g. youth worker and young person jointly assess whether a young person's confidence has increased and/or their behaviour has changed)
4	External verification/measurement of change in attitudes/behaviour (e.g. psychometric testing using a validated tool, use of administrative data on young people's participation in education, training or employment)

Table 6 impact evaluation

Level	Description
0	No approach used to evaluate impact (e.g. no baseline measurement, so no measurement of change before and after the intervention)
1	Measurement of 'base' and 'end lines'[31] (impact assumed to be the difference between base and end line)
2	Theory based approach to impact evaluation (e.g. use of logic model)
3	Measurement of 'base' and 'end lines' for a 'treatment' and 'comparison' group (impact assumed to be the difference between base and end lines for the treatment and comparisons groups)
4	Measurement of 'base' and 'end lines' for a 'treatment' and 'comparison' group, with some attempt to control for differences between the treatment and comparison group (e.g. via random allocation, as in a randomised controlled trial, or by modelling for differences between the two groups) (impact assumed to be the difference between base and end lines for the treatment and comparisons groups)

31. i.e. measurement before and after the intervention, to enable change over this period of time to be measured.

Table 7 uality of analysis

Level	Description
0	Conclusions are not supported by evidence of outcomes or impact
1	Conclusions are partially supported by evidence of outcomes and impact
2	Conclusions are fully supported by evidence of outcomes and impact

Table 8 classifying studies

Level	Description
Weak	Outcome OR impact measurement OR quality of analysis is 0
Moderate	Outcome measurement is at or above level 1 AND impact evaluation is at or above level 1 AND the quality of evidence is at or above level 1
Strong	Outcome measurement is at or above level 4 AND impact evaluation is at level 3 (or higher) AND the quality of evidence is at level 2