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REGIONE AUTONOMA DE SARDIGNA  
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## **ABOUT PROJECT:**



The project "Ambassadors for non-formal education of young people" started with the realization in November 2019. The project brought together partners from 11 countries: the Association for the Development of Volunteering Novo Mesto (Novo Mesto / Slovenia), The Future Now Association (Sofia / Bulgaria), the Kosovo Center for Diplomacy (Pristina / Kosovo), the United Societies of the Balkans Thessaloniki / Greece), Youth4Society (Tirana / Albania), Center for Intercultural Dialogue (Kumanovo / Northern Macedonia), Association for Democratic Prosperity - Wall (Podgorica / Montenegro), NGO IUVENTA (Sabac / Serbia), Turk Girisim ve is Dunayasi Konfederasyonu (Istanbul / Turkey), TDM 2000 (Cagliari / Italy), as well as LDA Mostar, which is also the project leader.

The project aims to promote participation in non-formal education activities and to promote the importance of validating and recognizing competencies acquired outside the formal educational environment using innovative methodologies.



The project aims to emphasize everything that has been done so far in the area of the participating countries, through activities organized after the kick off meeting in Macedonia.

The COVID 19 pandemic stopped the implementation of activities in one period, but through the enthusiasm of our partners and the motivation of young people, we continued with the same as soon as the conditions were created.

The project is based on non-formal education and works on developing a new methodology of “Ambassador for Non-formal Education of Youth”, trained young people who can use peer-to-peer approach providing their experience to inspire other young people and relevant participants to better value and use NFE experience.

### **WHAT WE HAVE REALIZED WITH THIS PROJECT:**

The first activity with which the project officially started was Kick off Meeting. Kick off meeting was realized in Kumanovo, in North Macedonia in January, 2020. During the kick off meeting, the partners had the opportunity to meet each other, share their experiences regarding the NFE, as well as to work together on activities that will be implemented in the coming period. The meeting was also used to better understand the project, share tasks and solve the best possible communication model.



The second activity was the official opening of the conference in 11 countries that are participants in the project. According to the situation that befell us, not all participants of the organization had the opportunity to organize a live conference, but did so through online platforms and thus invited stakeholders, young people and all stakeholders to join in presenting the project, and on the other hand and participation in the same. The conferences gathered a total of over 500 people who got acquainted with the project itself.

Something that has certainly taken a lot of attention from all partners is the third activity, namely research on existing policies on the recognition and validation of non-formal education as well as a catalog of success stories of young people through non-formal activities. It is very interesting to note



that mostly the countries participating in the project do not have developed policies that recognize the NFL, but through other activities they implement them and are recognized in some other laws. Also,

the success stories of one Isidora, Andrijana, Milos, Andjela, Ivan, Anna, Melissa, Yannis gave satisfaction and motivation to young people to apply for the project and thus give their modest contribution to a better understanding of the NFL world.



Something that everyone has been waiting for and somewhere where the continuation of the project meant is the Youth Exchange in Cagliari, Italy in the first of August 2021. YE was organized by TDM 2000 organizations who are also partners in the project itself. YE brought together about 25 young people from 11 countries with the aim of exchanging ideas, opinions, information about the NFL. During the exchange, young people had the opportunity to learn what the NFE and learning about the methods of recognizing and validating the NFL in Europe and how young people can contribute to promote the NFL in the countries that are members of the project. This training also served to create a network of young ambassadors who will be part of the project in their home country in the future.







One of the most interesting activities was Job shadowing where one young person from each country went to another country for a period of 3 weeks, with the aim of "shadowing" the work of the organization in the field and giving suggestions for future activities to be implemented. This will further enrich their journey, experience and help them learn new things and get to know a new culture. So far, 11 job shadowings have been done, so Elsa was in Istanbul, Melissa in Thessaloniki, Danielain Mostar, Natalija in Novo Mesto, Greta in Podgorica, Kamila in Cagliari, Andjela in Kumanovo, Sena in Sabac... You can read about their experience on the FB page: <https://www.facebook.com/YAMNFL>



In November 2021, a mid-term evaluation meeting was organized in Mostar, with the aim of monitoring the project on current activities and quality monitoring and organization of others. At the same time, another YE was organized which gathered about 25 participants. At the TC, the young ambassadors shared their experience on job shadowing, talked about NFE, a research that was done, and as a high light made a plan for the next activity that will be organized in 11 countries that are participants in the project and local info points and the local workshops.



In each country, local partners together with the Young Ambassadors opened local info points where young people could get information on everything related to the NFE. This, participation in the conference within the opening of the local info point could be taken by various stakeholders, young people, companies, institutions, organizations that deal with this topic or plan to deal with it in the future.

Local actions gathered more than a thousand people in 11 countries. In each country, 4 workshops were realized, with the aim of guaranteeing greater public participation, as well as to reach more rural areas where the ideas of non-formal learning are usually less known. The youth ambassadors themselves worked on the creation of workshops and implementation. In 4 different workshops, they had to involve different stakeholders: education providers (school / university), local institution and company. The workshops also served to select participants for the Youth Exchange in Istanbul.

The last YE within the project was realized in Istanbul, which gathered about 55 participants. The participants in the exchange were young people who had not been involved directly through the project before. Most of the young participants had contact with non-formal education for the first time through this exchange.

What is underway and what is currently being worked on is the drafting of the NFL Recognition and Validation Policy. After collecting ideas from young people from local activities, the young ambassadors provided additional input with their ideas regarding the recognition and validation of the NFL.



## **RECOGNITION POLICIES AND VALIDATION OF THE NFL IN THE COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN PROJECT:**

A previous publication made through the Young Ambassadors project gave an overview of the factual situation of the countries participating in the project.

To remind, the EU and the Council of Europe define non-formal education as purposeful and voluntary education that takes place in different environments and situations, for which training and learning are not necessarily their only or main activity.

Validation of non-formal education and recognition in the countries that are members of the project essentially do not exist.

### ***ALBANIA***

There is no special law on non-formal education in Albania, but it is covered as part of various national strategies for civil society education for the 2015-2020 Action Plan.

**Law No. 75/2019 "On Youth"** defines non-formal education for young people as any activity organized and adapted to young people, outside the formal education system, based on the needs and interests of young people, principles of volunteerism and active participation of young people in learning processes. for the development of personal potentials, active participation in society and access to the labor market.

**Article 7** of this law stipulates that local self-government units develop and implement local policies in the field of youth, and are responsible for: promoting youth volunteering and their non-formal education, etc.

**Article 14** Youth work is realized by engaging and activating young people in activities that reflect their needs, interests, ideas and experiences. Through this process of non-formal learning, young people acquire the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed for personal development, social integration and active citizenship.

### ***BULGARIA***

In Bulgaria, the profession of youth worker is regulated by the Law on Youth (2012), the text of which states that it is an adult who has undergone special training for working with young people. The National Youth Strategy (2012-2020) views youth workers as the primary resource for achieving youth policy goals, describing them as "specialists who play a key role in the personal, social and economic development and empowerment of young people". It was later introduced into the National Classification of Occupations and Positions in Bulgaria.

In short, the profession of youth worker is legally recognized in Bulgaria, but what is generally meant by "youth worker" is "social worker", which is a little different. One essential difference is that in





youth work young people are the main focus and there are good opportunities for preventive work, while in social work young people are more often in marginal positions.

### ***BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA***

Certification - means the publication of relevant educational documents confirming that the learning outcomes and skills acquired by a person through formal or non-formal education are verified and confirmed by the competent authorities, in accordance with pre-established criteria and standards.

After completing formal adult education programs: primary and secondary education or their individual parts, and training and retraining, participants are issued public documents - certificates and diplomas that have the same validity as if acquired during regular education or public certificates valid in completed training programs.

Adult education as well as the issuance of documents acquired by passing master's exams are regulated by regulations in the field of adult education and / or regulations on crafts.

### ***GREECE***

There is currently no comprehensive national framework for the recognition of non-formal education in Greece. A legal framework based on common principles for formal adult education and training has not yet been established, and tools for documenting the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through non-formal education and learning have not been systematically developed.

Education provided in an organized educational context outside the formal education system may lead to the acquisition of nationally recognized certificates. It includes vocational training, lifelong learning and general adult education. It aims to improve a range of skills and competencies, to develop awareness in society, to help individuals make decisions and to build self-confidence. Non-formal education should also be voluntary and accessible to all in order to continue to develop projects for such vulnerable groups.

On the other hand, in order to better understand the development of the recognition of non-formal education in Greece, it is important to highlight the definitions used in the country regarding non-formal learning compared to the one given in the 2012 Council Recommendation on the recognition of non-formal education. non-formal education does not have the same definition in Greece as in other countries.

In accordance with Greek law (Law 3879/2010), non-formal education includes:

- Initial vocational training;
- Continuing professional training;
- General adult education;
- Apprenticeship class, which is the fourth year after graduating from vocational high school;

### ***ITALY***

Law no. 92/2012 on labor market reform provides an official definition of lifelong learning: “the term lifelong learning refers to all learning activities that are formally, informally and informally carried



out during life with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences in personal, civic, social and / or employment perspective ”.

Non-formal learning is deliberately chosen learning that takes place outside the system of formal education and training. It is held in every organization for the purpose of education and training, also in voluntary bodies, national civil service organizations, private social sector organizations or companies.

Informal learning refers to activities that are carried out in everyday life, at work, at home and in leisure time, even without intentional choices.

Moreover, the same law provides for the establishment of a national public system for the certification of competencies based on minimum standards of services and uniforms throughout the country.

"Certificates that can be certified" are a structured combination of knowledge and skills recognizable as formative credits through a special procedure for the validation of non-formal and informal learning. Certification of competencies is defined as a public work that ensures transparency of learning and recognition, in accordance with the goals set by the European Union. Certification, diploma or qualification formally confirms that the assessment and validation has been performed by a public institution or an authorized entity.

## ***KOSOVO***

Kosovo has developed a national regulatory framework which is in alignment and compliant with the Council Recommendation on Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning. The main policy and legal framework is in place and the secondary legislation is implemented since 2019. The regulatory framework covers both Higher Education (HE) and Vocational Education and Training (VET), including both initial and continuous VET, but not general education.

Validation arrangements are linked to the Kosovo Qualifications Framework (KQF) and only qualifications approved and registered in the KQF can be awarded via validation of prior learning. Learning outcomes are the reference points for validation, enabling acquisition of partial or full qualifications through validation of prior learning.

***The validation process consists of four stages:***

- Identification;
- Documentation;
- Assessment;
- Certification of learning outcomes.

All these are supported by guidance and counselling by validation practitioners such as coordinators, mentors and internal and external assessors. However, the involvement of social partners is very poor, and combined with the weak commitment of the government to release resources for additional NQA staff remain the greatest challenges for the efficient delivery of the process in the future.

## ***MONTENEGRO***

The Law on State Vocational Qualifications enables individuals to acquire a state-recognized professional qualification in various ways:



- completing modules when a publicly valid educational program is based on several professional standards;
- testing knowledge, skills and competencies after the completion of the adult education program in accordance with the examination catalog;
- by checking knowledge, skills and competencies directly in accordance with the examination catalog.

Educational programs whose completion leads to the acquisition of qualifications at the level of education are based on several professional standards. Professional qualification is based on a single professional standard. If the educational program is modulated, it is possible to acquire a professional qualification by completing a certain module based on occupational standards. Thus, modularized vocational education programs enable those who have dropped out of education, adults who want to gradually acquire a level of education or students with special educational needs to acquire a professional qualification for one part of the program (module).

When we talk about the Law on Non-Formal Education, there is no special one, but through the Law on Youth it can be seen that non-formal education has a great impact on young people.

### ***NORTH MACEDONIA***

The only strategy that mentions non-formal education in Northern Macedonia is the National Youth Strategy (2016-2025). More precisely, in this strategy, one of the main goals is considered to be: "Adapt the legal framework of non-formal education in accordance with the nature of the youth sector and through the wide application of EU standards."

Several measures are listed under this goal:

- Expand the criteria for state-accredited non-formal education providers by applying European recommendations and guidelines on the identification and accreditation of non-formal education, taking into account the specifics of the youth sector.
- Accreditation of youth organizations and other civil society organizations providing non-formal education.
- Recognition, comparability and transfer of skills and knowledge using Europass-like mechanisms.
- Regular research on the social and economic impact of non-formal education.
- Support for quality improvement in the provision of non-formal education.
- Further promote the concept of non-formal education among other social partners, especially economic operators, in terms of recognizing acquired skills and competencies.

### ***SERBIA***

Despite the fact that the National Association of Youth Workers (NAPOR) has developed a curriculum for different levels of education in youth work, the NFL is still only a small part of the National Youth Law in the definition of youth work. In 2022, there will be a major revision of the National Youth Strategy and the Youth Law, where they plan to specify a different goal of the strategy (specifically only for youth work) and precisely define where youth workers could work, so NFL standards should be known.



At the NAPOR Assembly on January 29, 2022, there were plans for the future on the development and affirmation of professions in the context of youth clubs and youth centers, an educational process that will be accredited by national institutions, certificates and diplomas.

### ***SLOVENIA***

Non-formal learning responds to the need to take into account the abilities and skills acquired during life without the need for a diploma that proves it. Lifelong learning is necessary as a result of the countless changes we have to face, the numerous demands of the social context (cultural, economic, etc.). The time when education was synonymous with schooling has lagged behind, as education is reviving from the dimension of lifelong learning, becoming a key element for the development of current societies, training and knowledge societies.

In Slovenia, since the inclusion of students in school life, formal and regulated classroom education has become compatible with other non-formal education activities, such as those related to sports, culture and leisure. Both in infant and primary education, and in non-formal education activities, various methodologies and highly participatory activities are used, where the student is the main actor and in cooperation with his classmates gradually achieves self-education and matures through learning processes. cooperation and collaboration. Therefore, when they reach adolescence, they have a broad background in the use of these techniques developed in the field of education and their positive contribution to the teaching process. When it comes to activities that they practice voluntarily and out of class, students show a more positive predisposition and generally achieve very satisfactory results from an educational point of view.

### ***TURKEY***

Non-formal learning methods in Turkey are generally defined as lifelong learning. It is known for the purpose of providing vocational courses or training for women. However, non-formal learning methods based in the European Union allow people of all ages to specialize in a particular subject and qualify for an internationally recognized certificate. At the same time, it helps to make a difference in society, better internalizes the issue and allows them to express themselves freely in decision-making processes. This technique, which helps each individual to learn, regardless of age, allows the subject to be more durable and to learn by exchanging experiences. Frequent use of these methods by local, national and international organizations and NGOs makes a great contribution to young people.

## **COOPERATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN THE FIELD OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION:**

### ***ALBANIA***

In Albania, which has been selected as Youth Capital, roundtables and other joint actions are currently being organized to recognize the NFL for being a very difficult task because there is a huge gap when it comes to cooperation between civil society organizations and the government.

The Albanian government has currently taken some steps in youth development policies, but much more needs to be done on the strategy that also exists, and on recognizing the certificates given in the field of non-formal education. The Albanian government has taken some steps in development



policies for young people, but without the support of civil society organizations and those who have been working on these for many years, they can never get the real and concrete results that everyone needs.

## ***BULGARIA***

In Bulgaria, an international PISA survey from 2019 shows that 47% of ninth-graders do not cover the minimum level of literacy, which means that almost half of them do not understand what they have read. In this regard, non-formal education is seen as a long-awaited savior that will make up for the gaps and deficits of formal education.

Some of the steps taken to address these issues are:

- National Library ACT (Law on Public Chitalishte) regulates opportunities for non-formal education of children and adults.
- The Ministry of Education and Science implemented the project - "Creating a system for identification and recognition of informally acquired knowledge, skills and competencies." (2012-2014);
- Rulebook on conditions and procedure for evaluation of professional knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through non-formal learning or self-education;
- Learning for Bulgaria Foundation - creates a program that prepares, trains and supports new teachers in the Bulgarian school system. Informally, the foundation seeks to prepare teachers for work in the most difficult schools - where students lack functional literacy.

## ***BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA***

Non-formal education is closely related to the concept of social equality, that is, giving equal opportunities to all. It is important to point out that there are differences in the approach to formal education for women and men, especially those who come from rural areas. Different treatment is reflected primarily in the field of education and employment, and it is non-formal education that aims to reduce this gap and help achieve life and employment in urban and rural areas. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is a general problem that is reflected in the fact that the education system is not adapted to market needs. This problem is also reflected in the marginalization of non-formal adult education. "

Some analyzes and research have pointed out the problems that exist in the field of non-formal education in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

- a small percentage of diplomas and certificates issued by non-formal education organizations to their successful students, which are recognized;
- non-formal education is underdeveloped to meet modern labor market demands;
- strategic planning in non-formal education is insufficient, which is the cause of undefined and unplanned functioning.





## ***GREECE***

When we talk about Greece and cooperation with the Government, the situation is more or less the same as in most countries.

- According to law [4763/2020](#), non-formal education refers to learning with some kind of learning support that materializes through planned activities in terms of cognitive goals and time available for learning. It can refer to programs related to professional skills, adult literacy as well as primary education for early school leaving.
- According to law [4115/13](#), [EOPPEP](#) the EOPPEP is a national body for the accreditation of input and output values for non-formal education and non-formal learning. The EOPPEP functions as a national structure for European networks managing qualifications issues and European tools for transparency and mobility.

EOPPEP develops and implements comprehensive national systems for the accreditation of non-formal and informal learning and provides scientific and technical support in the design and implementation of national career guidance policies, as well as the provision of such services in Greece. EOPPEP aims to ensure quality in:

- a) inputs: accredited service providers conducting vocational education programs, developed according to accredited standards and specifications, based on accredited occupational profiles, employ accredited adult trainers, with the help of accredited support services experts for socially disadvantaged groups;
- b) learning outcomes: accredited knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning and certification of qualifications;
- c) professional guidance and counseling services: sustainable services and tools to support citizens of all ages, as well as educational information in line with the latest ICT applications.

Regarding the validation of non-formal learning provided for in the structures presented in this chapter, Law 4763/2020 provides for the validation of DKVM educational programs by the EOPPEP, as well as the validation of KDVM learning outcomes.

## ***ITALY***

In Italy, cooperation with the Government is a bit complicated, especially since in the area of NFE the government provides flexibility to different regions to have their own strategy on these topics.

The region of Sardinia has its own strategy on the NFE. In our case, we have talked about it several times, and currently there is a system for certification of competencies, which is very complicated and definitely not adapted to current needs and situations.



Anyway, we are in constant conversation with regional institutions to work together on recognizing youth work and the personality of the youth worker, as well as the importance of mobility actions. What is very important is that there is a very good cooperation with the University of Sardinia. A protocol for the recognition of loans through participation in non-formal learning activities abroad was signed.

The fact is that youth work is not legally recognized in Italy. At the regional level, there is a possibility to make a list of youth workers that would include relevant skills, as well as the requirements they would have to meet to be on the list of youth workers.

Also, different things are happening at the national level: to mention one, the Italian Youth NA together with the University of Naples Federico II created the first master's degree for youth workers, which means that there is an idea to further recognize this role at the national level. or at least to build the capacity of people in this area.

## ***KOSOVO***

Given that Kosovo has a developed national regulatory framework that is in line with the recommendations of the Council for the Recognition of Non-Formal Education, there is good cooperation with the Government. The government wants to make an immeasurable contribution to the development of youth policies, especially in the development of non-formal education and volunteering. In every country in the Western Balkans, we need to work on developing the highest quality education.

What is a priority in the future is that through a series of calls for young people that will exist, we directly seek the support of the Government, in order to be involved in the development of youth policies, together with young people.

## ***MONTENEGRO***

Cooperation with the Government exists in the segment to support informal activities in various ways. There are organizing round tables, participating in events that are strictly related to this topic, working groups related to the Law on Youth, Guarantees for Youth, the Law on Volunteering.

This is one of the ways where there is cooperation. A youth worker, as is the case in some countries in the region, does not exist as a pre-professional engagement. There are a lot of holes in the existing laws that need to be changed. In Montenegro, there is no longer a Ministry for Youth, but the Directorate for Sports and Youth, as it existed a few years ago. The big problem in Montenegro is the quality of education itself. Civil society organizations have a lot of capacity when it comes to this area. For this reason, better cooperation between the two sectors is needed in order to reach a better and more common solution together.



## ***NORTH MACEDONIA***

In northern Macedonia, there have been attempts to co-operate with the government to reach a solution, but nothing has been successful.

In the last few years, we have passed the Law on Youth Participation and Youth Policies in Northern Macedonia, which states that every municipality in Northern Macedonia should open a youth center.

Thus, in 2021, a call was issued for the training of youth workers to obtain certificates. A total of 14 youth workers were certified at this training. These certified youth workers will have the opportunity to work in youth centers that the municipality will open.

Another training for youth workers will be held this year. Moreover, in the past, there was a generation at one university that also studied youth work, but the number of students who studied that program is unknown.

## ***SERBIA***

The organization itself has implemented many international and national projects that have incorporated various NFL methods and practices in specific youth work environments. There were mostly organized working groups formed by the Ministry of Youth and Sports in which organizations could participate in decision-making processes related to the recognition of the NFL (2015 and now 2022). It is the same when local action plans have been revised in different communities, but the problem is that not all local municipalities have local youth action plans or even local youth offices. For example, Novi Sad, the second largest capital in Serbia, has a local youth action plan, but has not had a local youth office for more than 5 years, so there are disagreements over geography, policy development and youth activities.

According to the latest data revealed at the NAPOR Annual General Meeting (January 2022), there are more than 200 NAPOR-certified youth workers and youth leaders and more than 450 certified youth workers in previous university courses. are accredited by Jonkoping University in Sweden and implemented by the PRONI Institute for Social Education and the Center for Youth Work in Novi Sad, Serbia).

Most youth workers, due to the system and its inherent political atmosphere that does not support it, leave the careers of youth workers and change professions, which are more popular and sought after in the labor market.

## ***SLOVENIA***

Every year in Slovenia, the evaluation of knowledge, skills and competencies of adults, acquired through non-formal and informal learning, is of increasing importance for the individual and society. In 2007, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Sports, a Lifelong Learning Strategy was prepared, which defines the main measures to be implemented in order to implement the concept and strategy of lifelong learning in our living, working and education conditions (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2007 ).

In the past two decades, expert debates have been held in Slovenia with an emphasis on the identification and recognition of informally and informally acquired knowledge, in the 1990s these debates became louder and the first initiatives were formalized in 2000 by establishing a system of



verification and validation on national professional qualifications, which enables the acquisition of professional qualifications on the basis of demonstrated and proven knowledge, skills and competencies acquired by individuals outside the formal education system, most often through work experience.

The first measure that introduced the recognition and evaluation of informally and informally acquired knowledge in practice in Slovenia was the establishment of a system of verification and certification of national professional qualifications (hereinafter NPK), prescribed by the National Vocational Qualifications Act 2000.

The NPK system enables individuals to acquire a national professional qualification (gain a profession, not a diploma) based on their (work) experience, which is verified by a certain expert commission. It enables the evaluation of knowledge, skills and competencies acquired outside the formal school system by identifying, recording and evaluating with a valid document, certificate. As the certification process is faster than the formal education process, it allows for rapid adaptation to changes in the labor market, as well as greater flexibility and employability of individuals. The NPC system uses informally and informally acquired knowledge, especially in the field of labor market and employment.

In Slovenia, two legally regulated roads or two basic purposes for the recognition of informally acquired knowledge have been established, for:

- further involvement in formal education (continuing interrupted education or continuing at a higher level, changing the direction of education, etc.), and for
- recognition of professional qualifications (system of national professional qualifications) on the labor market.

## ***TURKEY***

The scope of non-formal lifelong learning in Turkey is implemented by the Ministry of National Education. The trainings are organized by the Centers for Public Education, which are also affiliated with the Ministry, in order for children, youth and adults to acquire knowledge and skills. These trainings are organized by specialized trainers.

The principles of non-formal education adopted by the state in Turkey are as follows:

- a) Accessibility;
- b) Relevance;
- c) Continuity;
- d) Validity;
- e) Planning;
- f) Openness to innovation and development;
- g) Volunteering;
- h) Education;
- i) Lifelong learning;
- j) Science and integrity;
- k) Cooperation and coordination;

Despite the systematic provision of such broad coverage to non-formal education in Turkey, the part carried out by NGOs and youth work is still not legally recognized. However, there are problems in



their professional recognition, including by state coaches, and social rights are not sufficiently developed.

Although youth work in Turkey is increasing day by day, the state still does not recognize youth workers. However, the public lacks information on the definition of a youth worker. In fact, this definition is often compared to youth leaders working within the Ministry of Youth and Sports. In fact, most people do not even see the youth worker as a profession

It can even be argued that "volunteering" in the field creates an obstacle to the recognition of youth work as a profession, in Turkish conditions. And yet, much more should be done in cooperation with the Government in order for the youth worker to gain professional recognition.

### **WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE SAY ABOUT NFE IN THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITY:**

Young people as initiators of changes in society gave their overview of the topic through local activities, which gave us additional feedback to propose them.

*In Albania*, young people believe that the NFL is the most effective way of learning because it differs greatly from the traditional learning they use in the formal system. Young people would like to be more present in activities that involve the NFL and would like to see that the NFL can be more accessible to young people themselves.

*In Bulgaria* in today's situation, where young people, teachers, educators and youth workers are often exhausted by the digital transition, young people are more likely to see NFL activities as additional tedious tasks.



Young people also see the NFL as everything outside the school curriculum: online courses, extracurricular activities, sports programs, educational courses, seminars, etc. Depending on the type





of activity, young people may think of the NFL as something fun and useful, or, as mentioned above, as something tedious and boring.

***In Bosnia and Herzegovina***, young people define the NFL as a tool that helps them improve themselves outside the school system. Many organizations provide opportunities for the NFL, but on the other hand, the great time taken by the school simply does not allow them to dedicate themselves to the NFL as much as they would like. What is definitely something that represents a collapse is that better cooperation is needed between governments and civil society organizations.



***In Greece***, young people define the NFL as an alternative / complementary form of formal education, through which they gain work experience traveling to another country, developing foreign language skills and participating in volunteer work to contribute to society. These are people who are interested in continuous learning, improving their skills and competencies. In a constantly evolving environment, the increase in knowledge is happening at an exponential pace, and the demands of the labor market are constantly changing. Therefore, training and further education are a constant priority for today's youth worker.





*In Italy*, young people define the NFL as a fun way to learn based on experience, not theory. They usually associate it with international cooperation, travel and intercultural learning because they are most often used to seeing it within Erasmus + or similar programs. There is often no difference between non-formal and informal learning. The methodology of non-formal education and non-formal learning that results from it is something relevant for life, but also for the development of the labor market. It is more interesting for young people, more engaged, it is easier to connect and learn through it and more useful. Some of the transversal skills developed through it cannot be learned in the same way as other approaches. That is why it is important to make efforts to understand how to confirm these achievements and to recognize them.



*In Kosovo* during the implementation of the local activities, the participants were asked how they define NFL and what do they know about it and there were big differences between the villages and the cities. In particular, in a small village where a local activity was implemented in the school around 5 young people out of 20 have heard the term and 2 knew what NFL is. The only reason they knew was because they were part of an international project that was implementing some activities with their school. On the other hand, at the university of Pristina in the Pedagogical department, most of the students have just heard the term without exactly knowing the meaning. Language based, they said that it is the combination of formal and informal learning, but without having in mind what that means and what activities can be included under NFL. For those people, NFL is defined as an educational process outside of the classroom/school/university, with activities that can help them grow in a personal, educational and professional way.



*In Montenegro*, young people see the NFL as a form where they can find themselves and their jobs in the future. Young people in rural areas have much fewer opportunities, but they try to show their immeasurable motivation and give themselves a chance. Work needs to be done on strengthening the institutional framework, developing youth programs and giving more opportunities.





***In North Macedonia***, the NFL is the opposite of formal and structured learning, which means it is more flexible and allows young people to learn through a variety of methods and to express their ways of learning in a more relaxed and creative way. In conclusion, the NFL helps us and young people to become a better version of themselves, however, we still have a lot to do in the field of the NFL, we have to work closely with the municipality, with the government, to find a solution to be recognized by law.



***In Serbia***, all respondents have heard about the way of non-formal education and define it as an essential part of the development of every young person and as the most valuable resource that serves young people. Through this form of learning, young people become creative and innovative and an essential part of the development of every young person due to the different approach that the NFL uses to solve problems related to formal education methods.

The production of information contained in books develops a kind of ability, while learning in an informal way gives the opportunity to learn in different ways, which are more interesting to young people. Through non-formal education, young people learn freedom of expression, which means the right to life or the right to education, but the fact is that many young people grow up not knowing these basic things. In addition, non-formal education has a much broader role, teaches us to be tolerant, allows us to meet colleagues from different countries, helps to eliminate prejudices and conflicts and leaves us with valuable knowledge as an essential characteristic. Education is structured and planned outside the formal education system, where teachers / trainers / leaders guide







participants through the learning process to achieve learning outcomes.

***In Slovenia***, there are always two sides of the coin, so we can divide them into two groups. The first group defines the NFL as a fun, interesting, enjoyable and rewarding way to learn new things and meet new people. They see it as an opportunity to learn things that interest them, so it automatically makes them more relevant. The other group may find the NFL boring, useless, and unnecessary. Fortunately, the first group is bigger and even wider, predictions are that in Slovenia the NFL will be even more integrated into the everyday life of young people. The main reason is the rapid development and evolution of the

political, social and economic space, which requires the constant involvement of young people. Young people would like the NFL to be talked about more in formal learning institutions and organizations. They expressed the need for the NFL opportunities to be brought to light more often. It is difficult for them when they have to find opportunities on their own. The synergy between the formal and the informal must become even stronger.



***In Turkey***, this new technique into other work subjects, so that I can adapt them to different topics by revising the activities we have implemented by presenting new ideas. In addition, young people stated that this is a pleasant way of learning, and since their participation is more active in the learning process, what they learn is remembered.

Incorporate non-formal education more into their learning lives. Also, increase the recognition of the competencies that non-formal learning brings them so that they can bring the impact of the NFL on their personal development and skills into their professional life.







Non-formal learning methods are equally important not only for young people, but also for adults. Personal development and learning begin in childhood, but continue throughout life. Spreading non-formal learning throughout life is important not only professionally but also for a better quality of life. In that sense, we believe that the areas of application and recognition of non-formal education should be increased, and we are fighting for that.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

In order to really have real and valued results when we talk about the NFL, we need to create better communication with state institutions and present them with a clear picture, which is why we need to have a special section in each state where the NFL will recognize.

On the other hand, we need to work on additional education of young people, explain to them that the NFL is not just a course or training, but the NFL is something that happens every day. Parents as the main point of the child must be familiar with everything. The situation in the Balkans is very specific. There are still patriarchal societies and for that reason it is necessary to provide additional education to parents.

The NFL must be supported and recognized locally as well as nationally. It must be accessible to all and covered by the government. It must be up-to-date, to cover today's needs of young people. And most importantly, the skills and knowledge gained through NFL activities must be taken into account when it comes to validation. The fact that non-formal learning should support and contribute to the requirements of formal learning speaks volumes about its importance and is an indication that formal learning alone is not enough. And especially in times of pandemic, formal education is collapsing under the burden of all the challenges that teachers, educators and young people face in today's situation. In this sense, non-formal education is seen as a long-awaited savior that will make up for the gaps and deficits of formal education that needs support, and especially inspiration.

More needs to be done to promote the NFL and young people need to be supported to continue to improve through means and methods that are effective for them. The profession of the youth worker and its importance must be recognized and these experts must be supported by the Government in order to conduct effective and useful work with young people.

A budget should be provided at the local or national level to implement NFL activities so that they are available to all and more people so that they can benefit from them. Also, such activities should be considered more deeply as part of the school curriculum because their impact is significant.

Second, cooperation between schools and educational centers / organizations in the field of non-formal learning needs to be strengthened for a number of reasons. In this way, the process of non-formal learning would be more efficient and engaging for students. Pedagogical professionals are usually too exhausted by their regular daily duties and forcing additional extracurricular activities can lead to reduced efficiency and motivation of students. Therefore, the role of educational centers / organizations is crucial to address this serious obstacle in the process of implementing useful non-formal learning activities.

The area that needs the most work and attention is the recognition of non-formal learning. The European Union supports actions that give visibility and value to skills acquired through non-formal or informal (independent) learning. This validation process is related to the introduction of a comprehensive system, including the regulatory framework, institutions, methodology for verification



of knowledge and skills, etc. Its purpose is to facilitate access to vocational training and the labor market.

At the national level, an institution should be established in each country to:

- 1) establish an appropriate regulatory framework;
- 2) creating a specific methodology for validation and
- 3) by regulating this practice and should work efficiently and usefully in recognizing non-formal learning.

Through close cooperation with the municipality, schools, other civil society organizations and various stakeholders, the situation in the NFL and the work on the affirmation of the NFL in general can be improved.

SALTO has developed a European training strategy for trainers and youth workers working abroad, but the national framework in most countries is not in line with these standards.

Some of the methods that the participating organizations recognized as important in solving this problem are:

Combined activities should be done using formal and non-formal education methods with young people in schools. Integrated curricula should be developed to be used in schools using NFE methods;

- Better cooperation with institutions;
- Better cooperation within the civil sector;
- International support for organizations and influence on national governments and later on EU institutions;
- Courses through open and distance education: courses that are similar in structure and methodology face to face, but which take place through postal correspondence or through electronic means and social networks, and which bring together instructors and students who are not together in the classroom;
- Sessions that combine theoretical instruction with practical training provided during a conference or congress;
- Due to better employment and other opportunities for young people, the NFL must have a much more structured visibility in terms of validation by various stakeholders, such as business companies, public administrations and services;
- Integrate NFL programs along with formal ones, creating mixed curricula and learning programs in specific areas;
- Codify what is already being done through non-formal learning even though it is not called this way and use it as an example;
- Create specific NFL programs for specific tasks / skills / jobs;
- Provide demonstrations of how the NFL can change lives and build careers;
- Create an ongoing panel discussion with institutions, entrepreneurs and other relevant stakeholders to discuss how to develop a recognition strategy and record steps forward.

The importance of non-formal education, as generally practiced by youth NGOs and other service providers at the national or local level, helps to provide a holistic approach to education and the empowerment of young people. Non-formal education not only complements the formal education

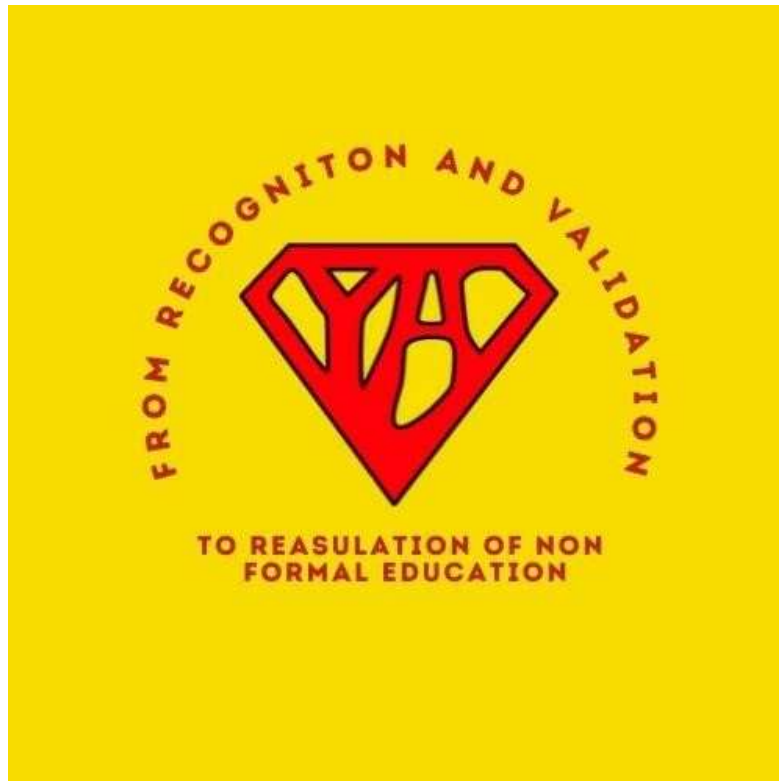


provided by schools, but can also make up for shortcomings in formal education. CSOs in cooperation with the government should work together to reach a common solution regarding the recognition of the NFL.



Organizations that participated in the production of the publication:





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