



**Report on the Active Inclusion Learning Network:
Disaffected Youth Platform 2 Transnational Event
Rome, 04 - 05 December 2014**

Overview:

The event focussed on

- Youth Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
- Youth Inclusion and Empowerment

21 experts, from 11 different nationalities, participated in the event. The event was hosted by ISFOL.

9 project partners also attended to facilitate, question and scribe the workshop. Dr Ioan Durnescu attended the event in the capacity of the researcher to observe. The Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion, who are evaluating the Network observed and invited feedback from delegates via a questionnaire.

Presentations were given by Francesca Emmett, Project Manager, Dr Ioan Durnescu on the Systematic review, and Giovanna Mangano from ISFOL.

Aim and format of the event

The aim of the event was to identify key points of the inventions which had been identified by previous analysis by an expert panel in the Platform Level 1 meetings.

Participants had been sent the written overview and original questionnaire of each practice, and were asked to read these prior to the event.

Francesca Emmett opened the event with a presentation on the state of play of project and what was expected from the day. She then presented information about the project partners, background to the project, a summary and the website to be produced for the network before the final conference in May 2015.

Francesca explained why new partners were at each Platform 2 meeting to keep the views fresh and offer different perspectives on the best practices that are in attendance.

Ioan Durnescu then presented on the systematic review and explained that what we know so far is that there has been a culture change that incorporates youth views. The review has shown that sport is a way of engaging with the young but it should not stop there. State power in other areas can undermine youth work and so Dr Durnescu recommended to listen more to the youth. There is lots of rhetoric questions without any action and few concrete mechanisms for connecting with them.

Ioan's review from the Platform 1 meetings also shows that innovation is important to engaging with disaffected youth. There are not many national evaluations or studies on the subject of disaffected youth. Working with the youth is difficult and takes trained people. There are no quick fixes. The involvement of the family is also

important. In his interviews with experts that took part in the Platform 1 analysis experts emphasised the need of ideas from other studies

The invited interventions presented their approach to the workshop. All participants were asked to draw upon their own experience and knowledge of best practice to draw out the key points for each practice using the four themes of:

- Innovation,
- Transferability,
- Learning and;
- Finance.

Unfortunately due to illness and other commitments, not all invited practices were able to attend. Those marked as ~~strike through~~ on the tables below did not attend although a video was shown for the Toolkit for Life intervention and the written overview was also discussed for the Youth Advocate Programmes intervention.

The workshop was facilitated by Francesca Emmett, NOMS, UK, and the scribe was Mark Rowlandson, NOMS, UK:

<u>Intervention name</u>	<u>Survey code</u>	<u>Country</u>
Toolkit for Life – Video	NEET6	UK
Unga In Swedish Public Employment Head Office	IE32	Sweden
Stepping Stones Programme for Educationally and Economically Disadvantaged Youth – SPEED Youth Programme	NEET29	Northern Ireland
Choices Programme/ Programa Escholhas	IE26	Portugal
Experimentation in the field of Social Farming	NEET31	Italy
Youth Advocate Programmes	IE15	Ireland
Missing Link – an comprehensive guidance for hard to reach young people	NEET39	Belgium
The Chrysalis Programme	IE9	UK
Job in sight	NEET13	Sweden
Youth Active	IE12	Germany

A common theme in all the presentations was the need to involve the family and also political awareness. As the systematic reviews shows these two aspects are vital to the success of getting youth engaged and having a successful outcome. If the youth has been in care then family may not exist but in these terms their family could be having a good relationship with their social worker or community. For example with the Social Farming project in Italy, the success of the project is determined by how well the community functions, this in some terms could be deemed to be the family. Also political aspects could affect funding or for some youth anything that is related to political agendas or funded by government may hold a stigma with them and therefore they would not be willing to participate, this is why many projects like Unga in Sweden go out and look for the youths in need and use peer engagement to help them engage.



On day two, a plenary discussion was held where participants were asked to discuss the key points from the four themes. This was facilitated by the Francesca Emmett and partners to allow discussion. Participants were asked to discuss in small groups the key points for each of the four themes of innovation, learning, transferability and finance. There then followed a facilitated plenary discussion where feedback from the post it notes was summarised into important factors. This was felt to have the advantage of utilising the expertise and experience from all delegates across all interventions from both workshops.

Group discussions

The group discussions produced a lot of useful results which are shown below in the four key themes of innovation, transferability, learning and finance.

Innovation key points:

- Power – empowerment about power – create conditions for them to take control themselves / complex issue – realise own power they already have – don't create dependency on worker
- Active listening / respecting individual
- Future empowerment – developing skills needed for future
- Self-sustainable social enterprise
- Social farming = real jobs/profit making can own – not supported employment
- Peer mentoring – peers acceptance – self-esteem – also encourages other
- ESF – working off profits – problematic structure of funding. Create difficulties for social enterprises
- Power – Change – Transition
- Recognise and trust in people's potential – Holistic Approach
- Universal toolbox

Transferability key points:

- Cast – key aspect to transferability – experience limits possibility
- Context – cultural/economic realities
- Autonomy/adaptability – flexibility
- Web based tools
- Sport as a basis for engagement
- Explorator – schedule life domains of people. Name is why they choose what they want to give priority too
- Paid – Mentors not often properly supported. Semi professional increase reliability and professionalism
- Accessibility – professional and flexible pathways

- Evidence based credibility

Learning key points:

- Star method – measure soft outcomes
- Networking actual collaboration between local and regional level – working for beneficiary
- FE – what happens only because of ESF? – much is not level – sustainability? / allows people to try new things even if they fail?
- Initiative bonuses for attendance – a lot rely on it – motivational
- Proven practice – build on best practice
- Best practice – creates condition for transfer don't move evaluation from learning – also useful to learn from best practice.
- Structured guidance
- Quality of relationship
- Sustainability – ESF mainstreaming
- Voice of the beneficiary
- Incentives – bonus for attendance = motivational

Finance key points:

- In kind funding – anyone can contribute to project
- No consistency with what different funders want – beneficiary can be enormous for small projects – need to create posts just to deal with it
- Element of risk in innovation
- Simplified cost options – encouraged
- Permission to fail – EC tasks social innovation but also very outcome/target focused – miss targets – punished / contradiction between innovation and target based management. Managing authorities
- ESF – underline all should follow emphasis of ESF core values. Recognition of added value made all happen.
- Multiple sources of funding
- Mixture between public and private finance
- Proposal: umbrella web based measurement of outcomes – challenge for small organisations



What worked well

The splitting of participants into groups to work on Key points on day two was of great importance. This is because each of the four groups selected three key points for each of the four themes of innovation, learning, transferability and finance so

during the plenary session there were just 12 key points to be debated for each topic and discussion was more manageable than in Brussels (Troubled Families PL2) where there were more key points on the board.

Conclusions

The Platform 2 event in Rome on disaffected youth was a success and provided a lot of key points above to be incorporated into the final report. The third and final platform 2 event will be held in February in Bremen for the sub theme of Marginalised in Communities. Once this event is complete the systematic review and final report will be pulled together using all the findings to present recommendations at the final conference for the best way forward.

In the group discussions the importance of partnerships was stressed as many projects would not have taken place without them. Also the possible failure of projects and innovation balanced with EU performance reviews are complex for Managing Authorities.

Many participants expressed their thanks for being involved in this event and wanted to keep involved about the progress of the network and discussed the project with their colleagues upon return to their workplaces.

