



INSPIRING QUALITY STREET WORK

Strengthening street work through
documentation and follow up

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Introduction

In November 2019 I visited youth center BOB in Ljubljana, Slovenia. I was invited to talk about quality indicators for youth work and how to use documentation and follow up for further development. After having had some nice discussions that sorted out the ideas and perspectives of this kind of work I was invited to lunch. I came to sit beside one of the youth workers, Nežka Agnes Vodeb, who also proved to be a street worker. Since I myself was a street worker back in the mid-nineties¹ we came to talk about street work, how we saw it and its various challenges. We soon realized that we, despite working in different environments and time periods, shared many experiences and looked upon street work in more or less the same way. At the same time, we both recognized that street work is very differently understood and practiced, both within countries and throughout Europe, and that there are almost as many views on street work as there are street workers. We also both saw street work as a form of youth work, but when people were asked to distinguish between street work and other forms of youth work, the borders soon became very blurred. Hence, we both recognized the need to both 'define' and further strengthen and develop street work. Taking up on our discussions before lunch we started to talk about quality indicators for street work. Having previously been part of developing a web-based system for documentation and follow up of youth work, The Logbook², I then told Nežka about my dream to apply for a project to develop a similar system for street work, based on specific quality indicators. To my great joy she immediately agreed, and that's how it all began!

¹ I worked as a street worker 1994-98 in the city district of Rinkeby-Kista, Stockholm, Sweden.

² The Logbook is used by members in KEKS (keks.se), and since Ljubljana is a member, it is also used by the youth workers in BOB.

Soon after we started to elaborate our ideas and to make a first draft of the application, focusing on the development of quality indicators and a web-based system for documentation and follow up. Given these ideas, it was easy to find partners that were eager to be part of the project. In order to make the system we wanted to create useful in different contexts we decided to choose partners from different street work traditions and environments. Hence, we invited ČAS³ from Czechia and CAI⁴ from Portugal to join the project together with our organizations, Zavod Bob⁵ from Slovenia and KEKS⁶ from Sweden and to start the process of writing an application for an Erasmus+ strategic partnership project.

Writing such an application is, especially in times of covid, a rather long and complex process, but we actually had a lot of fun when turning our experiences of street work and of running previous big projects into a new application. Our starting point and basic agreement were that we saw street work as a form of youth work and that it, building on the Council of Europe recommendation on youth work⁷, is "a social practice, working with young people and the societies in which they live, facilitating young people's active participation and inclusion in their communities ...". Based on this we wanted to address two crucial questions:

³ ČAS, Ceska asociace streetwork, is an NGO, umbrella organization and joins together more than 90 outreach youth work organizations in the Czech Republic. For more information about the organizations, please see appendices.

⁴ CAI, Conversas Associação Internacional, is an NGO providing training and team supervision for social street workers. CAI coordinates the Street work training institute, training branch of DISWN.

⁵ Zavod Bob is an NGO providing youth and street work in the city of Ljubljana, Slovenia.

⁶ KEKS is a European network of local departments for youth work and youth work providers with over 75 member organizations.

⁷ Council of Europe recommendation on youth work: Recommendation CM/Rec (2017) 4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on youth work (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 31 May 2017 at the 1287th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

- What constitutes quality in street work?
- How can we gather the information needed to assess the level of quality?

This in turn led us to aiming at two main aims and (intellectual) outputs of the project:

- A set of quality indicators on street work, presented in a booklet.
- A web-based system for documentation and follow up of street work.

In order to achieve this, we decided that each partner should assign two experienced street workers to the project, that, together with an experienced project coach, should form a team that worked together throughout the project. We felt that thorough experience and continuity in the group was crucial to achieving a good and trustworthy result. Since we wanted the project to be firmly rooted in our respective organizations and to be able to gather as many ideas and as much feedback as possible during the process, we also decided that each partner should have two reference groups, one with fellow street workers and other relevant stakeholders and one with young people in contact with street workers.

Just as important was to link our project to what has been previously done in the sector, not duplicating previous work, or creating confusion through using different terms and expressions. We therefore decided to build our project on, mainly, the following two documents:

- Quality Youth Work – a common framework for the further development of youth work⁸
- The European Charter on Local Youth Work⁹

Inspiring Quality Street Work targets everyone who is interested in street work and its further development, from street workers, managers and policy makers

⁸ Quality Youth Work – a common framework for the further development of youth work, European Commission, 2015

⁹ The European Charter on Local Youth Work. Europe Goes Local, 2019

to educators of street workers, their students and research. We hope that it will provide you with a deeper understanding of the concept of quality development, why it is important and what you need to think about when working on it. The set of quality indicators presented is our suggestion to the sector regarding what we think characterizes quality street work. We have subsequently used them as a basis for the web-based system for documentation and follow up, The Logbook Street, that we have developed as part of the project¹⁰. If you plan to create your own model for documentation and follow up, we hope that they can serve as inspiration; the more we have in common, the stronger we are. If we want to develop street work it is, regardless of system or model, the vivid and continuous discussion on what constitutes quality and how we live up to it that will make us move forward.

Inspiring Quality Street Work can be downloaded from the web pages of all partners¹¹. Our hope and ambition is that the result of this project will be used not only by the partner organizations, but all over Europe. This would mean a significant contribution to the important creation of a common ground for street work and to its further development.

When writing this introduction in early spring 2023, I can conclude that of all the projects I have been taking part in during over 40 years in the sector, this is by far the most intense, challenging, ambitious, creative, cooperative, and rewarding one. You are simply the best: Nežka Agnes Vodeb, Zavod Bob, Sara Rodman, Zavod Bob, Dora Klar, Zavod Bob¹², Eva Hejcmanova, ČAS, Jan, "Honza", Kopic, ČAS, André Sousa, CAI, (City of Porto), Helder Luiz Santos, CAI, Joel Laine, KEKS (Municipality of Partille) and Johan Andersson Berg, KEKS (City of Gothenburg).

¹⁰ The Logbook Street is accessible to members of KEKS. Please visit our web site, www.keks.se, for more information regarding us and how to become member.

¹¹ www.keks.se, www.zavod-bob.si, www.cai.org.pt, www.streetwork.cz

¹² Dora represented Zavod Bob during the first half of the project and was then substituted by Sara.

I am proud of what we have achieved together! As a team we would also like to thank everybody that has contributed to the project, especially:

Karolina Panušková, Coordinator of international cooperation at ČAS, for her help with arranging meetings and events.

Jenny Haglund, secretary general of KEKS, for her help with administration and economy.

To you who is reading this: Have a nice read and please contact any of us if you have questions regarding this booklet, our organizations or street work in general.

Castellammare del Golfo, Sicily, February 17, 2023

Jonas Agdur

KEKS, project coach



Background

Even if a lot remains to be done, a lot of progress has been made in the youth work sector over the last ten years, not the least regarding policy and political recognition. In 2017 the Council of Europe adopted a recommendation on youth work¹³, in 2019 the Europe Goes Local network launched the European charter on local youth work¹⁴ and in 2020 the EU adopted a resolution on a European youth work agenda¹⁵. These are all big steps in the creation of the

¹³ Council of Europe recommendation on youth work: Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on youth work (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 31 May 2017 at the 1287th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

¹⁴ European charter on local youth work, Europe Goes Local, 2019, <https://europegoeslocal.eu/>

¹⁵ Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the Framework for establishing a European Youth Work Agenda. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2020.415.01.0001.01.ENG

“common ground for youth work” that the sector unanimously asked for during the second European Youth Work Convention in 2015¹⁶.

However, the borders between youth work and other sectors in the youth field are still rather blurred, as for example the one between youth work and different forms of social work. Street work is an activity that is sometimes balancing on this border. At the same time, it is often unclear what distinguishes street work from other forms of youth work, such as detached youth work. As said in the introduction, you sometimes get the feeling that there are as many ‘definitions’ of street work as there are street workers, and that the role of street workers subsequently varies a lot depending on where you look.

A work role (teacher, pilot, cleaner) is basically understood through the function a person should fulfill (making people learn, move a vehicle via air, make things clean). In other words, a work role is closely connected to what should be achieved. In the case of street work this is obviously not very clear. The aims set for street work are, if they exist at all, seldom specific enough to guide what actions should be taken (and not taken), and street workers often need to set their own agenda and have their own personal way of working. With big differences in approach and quality as a given result.

This situation of course creates various problems. How should you govern and finance street work when not knowing what should be achieved? How should you evaluate it? Which competences should you ask for when recruiting street workers? Are you getting efficient street work when asking youth workers to act outside the youth centers, and are your street workers in fact doing detached youth work?

¹⁶ The 2nd European Youth Work Convention gathered national delegations from all over Europe, around 500 persons, with the purpose of working towards a common ground for youth work

These unclear roles and borders have negative effects on both the work situation of street workers and their professional status. And, even more important, it makes the support for young people at risk even more unstable and insecure. In a gradually more and more segregated society with more and more young people living in precarious situations, street workers could have an important role to play, but that role needs to be clear if it is to be fulfilled in an efficient and professional manner.

The driving force behind this project is our common will to strengthen and further develop street work, to give it a clear and easy recognizable identity. The first necessary step is then to clarify what should be achieved through street work and what principles that need to guide it if this should be obtained. Only by making this clear can we make clear the role of the street worker and what competences that are needed to do the job. Only then we know what information and knowledge we need to evaluate our work and to take the appropriate measures for improving it.

Furthermore, to work in an "efficient and professional manner" you need to have clear priorities, making it possible to make aware choices between different types of actions. Making clear what street work should achieve in relation to young people will at the same time make clear that it is these outcomes that is top priority and that they could not be allowed to be endangered by short term wishes to, for example, have fewer young people hanging around in street corners. Only when this is made clear can street workers say "this is not my job" when being asked to work as security guards, throwing young people out of shopping malls or public libraries – at the same time ruining their relations to the young people that they are supposed to support.



In street work, as well as in youth work in general, there is an obvious lack of systematic and continuous follow up¹⁷, and even some resistance towards a more structured approach that goes beyond mere story telling. “Youth work can’t be measured” is a quite often heard statement. The importance of gathering relevant information and data on street/youth work is however obvious and has gained strong support in recent years. In the report *Quality Youth Work*¹⁸ it is stated that “Working with indicators, quality tools and systems is crucial to the continuous development of youth work and has great potential to contribute to an enhanced credibility and recognition of the youth work sector as a whole”. The committee of ministers of the Council of Europe recommends the member states to support “the development of appropriate forms of review and evaluation of the impact and outcomes of youth work”¹⁹, and in the *European Charter on Local Youth Work*²⁰ it is made clear that

¹⁷ Working with young people. The value of youth work in the European Union. European Commission, 2014

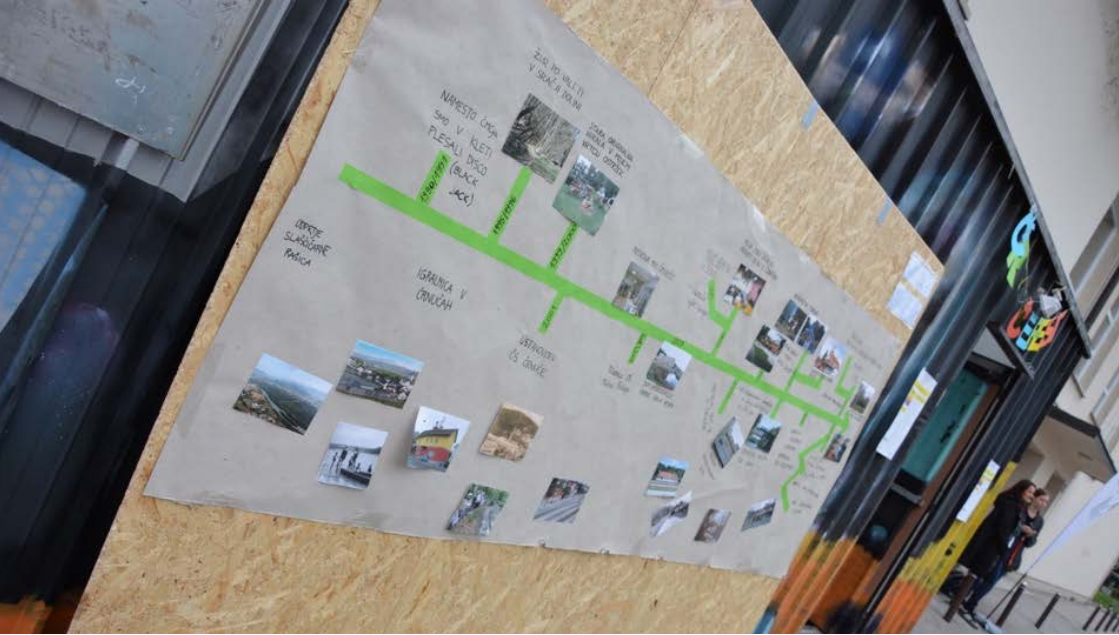
¹⁸ *Quality Youth Work – a common framework for the further development of youth work.* European Commission, 2015

¹⁹ Recommendation CM/Rec (2017) 4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on youth work (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 31 May 2017 at the 1287th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies)

²⁰ www.europegoeslocal.eu

quality development “needs a clear and comprehensive system for documentation and follow up of outcomes, preconditions and work processes in relation to measurable indicators and aims.”. Therefore, the idea and aim of our project was to formulate quality indicators for street work and to build a web-based system for documentation and follow up that would make it possible to gather the information needed to see to what degree we reached the indicators, and, in a second step, to improve.

So, in late August 2021 the team met for the first time in beautiful Bohinj, Slovenia. We were to start defining quality indicators for street work!



Quality indicators for street work?!

However, before starting we had to answer three fundamental questions:

- What do we mean when we say quality?
- What is an indicator?

And

- What are the specificities of street work?

We were of course not the first once having asked ourselves these questions, and there was subsequently an almost indefinite number of answers to be found in various books and reports. So, in order not to reinvent the wheel and to use definitions already used within the sector we decided to use the definitions from the report Quality Youth Work – a common framework for the further development of youth work, to answer the first two questions.

Q for Quality

In this report “quality” is defined as “how well something fulfils its function; to what degree the actual outcomes meet the aims.” It also states that “In a first

step the quality of youth work is therefore related to the overall aims – how well it contributes to the personal and social development of young people²¹.”

In other words, this means that “quality” is measured by to which degree the actual outcomes meet what we want to achieve. What we want to achieve can, and most likely will, have both quantitative and qualitative elements: we want to reach a certain amount of young people and we want them to, for example, develop certain skills. Hence, a certain quantity is part of the overall quality.

In the private sector you often hear that success is reached through “delivering the right goods, to the right customer at the right price”. This is basically true also when it comes to quality in street work: we need to spend our resources (time and money) in a way that has maximum desired effect on the right young people.

Defining which quantitative and qualitative outcomes that we wish to obtain is therefore crucial in a discussion about quality and how it can be improved. In a next step quality could also be related to preconditions (e.g., staff competence) and work processes (e.g., processes for documentation).

However, in order to decide which preconditions and work processes you need you must first decide what outcomes you want to achieve. It is no point in deciding on the means before knowing the aims²².

I for Indicators

Indicators are “points of reference in relation to which reality can be compared, analyzed and assessed”²³. They are the answers to the question ‘What characteristics are important if you should be able to see if street work

²¹ Personal and social development is seen as the overarching aim of youth work in most major European policy documents, such as the 2013 EU Council Conclusions on the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people.

²² Even if there of course are examples also of this approach...

²³ Quality Youth Work – a common framework for the further development of youth work. European Commission, 2015

is of high quality?', or put in other words, 'what would indicate (show, be a sign of, prove) the quality of street work?' This also means that indicators need to be in some way measurable, and in order to be measurable they need to be precise²⁴.

Let's take the example of participation, something that is often said to constitute a core principle and quality in youth work. Participation is, however, a broad term that is differently understood by different actors, it is not a *distinct point* to which reality can be compared. So, if you want participation as a quality indicator you will have to break it down/divide it into its smallest/basic components, turning it into a set of clearly identifiable separate parts.

Still having participation as an example such a process might start from the Council of Europe recommendation on youth work, where participation is



²⁴ Indicators related to outcomes that you cannot determine to what degree you have reached them are of course totally useless. The same goes for indicators for which it is impossible to assess what led to their fulfilment.

described as young people's "active creation, preparation, delivery and evaluation of initiatives and activities that reflect their needs, interests, ideas and experiences." Breaking this down into a set of clearly identifiable parts could lead to the following indicators:

- Young people take part in creating activities
- Young people take part in preparing activities
- Young people take part in carrying out activities
- Young people take part in evaluating activities
- Young people perceive that activities meet their needs
- Young people perceive that activities meet their interests

The sum of these indicators is then what describes quality in participation. You could then measure to what degree reality meets the indicators by asking young people to what degree they think this is the case, preferably through a questionnaire which will give you the possibility to compare results, for example over time or between different activities. This can of course also be done through for example focus groups, which might give you more information but less possibilities to compare results over time and see eventual changes.

Indicators can, in a second step, be used as a basis for setting measurable aims. Aims²⁵ are descriptions of to what degree we want reality to correspond with the indicator. An example:

- Indicator: Young people take part in evaluation
- Aim: 50 % of young people that take part in street work activities take part in evaluation

²⁵ The vocabulary concerning aims is different in different countries and sometimes rather confusing. By aim we mean a clearly observable/measurable result that someone wants to achieve. Other words used for this might be objectives or targets. You won't find any aims for street work in this booklet. To what degree you want to (or can) reach indicators often depend on for example resources and aims and must therefore often be set locally.



S for Street work

So, what kind of an activity have we tried to set quality indicators for? What frames street work and makes it a distinct practice, different from other forms of youth work and social work.

Street work is, as already stated, a form of youth work. It is "a social practice, working with young people and the societies in which they live, facilitating young people's active participation and inclusion in their communities ...", and the overarching aim is to "contribute to the personal and social development of young people".

In the European charter on local youth work you find the core principles of youth work. Just as democracy is defined by a set of principles, e.g., the freedom of speech and one person one vote, youth work is defined by a set of principles that taken together defines it and makes it to what it is. In the case of street work these core principles, in order to be clear, need to be interpreted in relation to two major specificities that, more than anything else, distinguishes street work from youth work.

- The first specificity is the target group. In contrast to youth work that targets all young people²⁶, street work targets only a specific group. This group is often labeled “youth at risk”²⁷. This means that they are behaving in a way, or live under personal circumstances, that risks hampering their future possibilities to live a good and constructive life as part of society, not being able to reach their full potential as individuals and citizens.
- The second specificity is that street work has its starting point and takes place outside the institutions and actively reach out to young people where they are.

Based on these delimitations, the core principles of youth/street work can be understood as follows²⁸.

Youth/street work needs:

- to be based on voluntary participation – on young people being active in youth work out of their own will and motivation;
 - Street work can never be a coercive measure. It can only support young people that want to be supported. Enhancing the motivation of young people at risk to strive for change is a core task of street work.
- to be based on and respond to the needs, interests, ideas and experiences of young people as perceived by themselves, thus bringing added value and/or joy in life;
 - Street work can never be done top down. It can inform about risks and worries, but it is young people’s perception of these risks that needs to be the starting point for actions.

²⁶ See for example The Council of Europe recommendation on youth work.

²⁷ This is not the same as “marginalized groups”. You might be marginalized due to for example ethnic background or sexual orientation, but this does not mean that you act in a self-destructive way. Risk in this case refers to behavior, not to who you are.

²⁸ Bullet points taken from the European charter on local youth work

- to be created, organised, planned, prepared, carried out and evaluated together with or by young people;
 - Street work is done together with young people. It needs to involve young people in the process that moves them away from risks if it is to be successful.
- to contribute to the personal and social development of young people through non-formal and informal learning;
 - Street work strengthen young people in a way that makes them more resilient to negative influences. It does this by assisting young people in developing (new) attitudes, values, skills and knowledge, helping them to better understand and handle themselves and their relations to others.
- to strive to enhance young people's self-determination, autonomy and access to rights;
 - Street work support and trust young people in making their own decisions. It makes young people aware of their rights and how they can be executed.
- to have a holistic perspective on young people and meet them where they are, as capable individuals and primary resources in their own lives and for society as a whole;
 - Street work takes the whole life situation of young people into account and relies on their own will for change. It makes young people see how they themselves can contribute to changes in their lives and in society.
- to promote critical thinking and creativity, as well as human rights, democratic values and active citizenship;
 - Street work is based on a reflective and value-based dialogue with young people. It constructively challenges young people's thoughts and opinions to support them in finding themselves and their relations to others.
- to be actively inclusive and offer equal opportunities to all young people.

- Street work is about the (re-)inclusion of young people into constructive life paths and society. It supports young people in getting access to the same opportunities as their peers.

Taken together, these core principles define street work. Another, complementary, way to define street work is to make clear what function it is supposed to fulfil. If the function of a pilot is to move a vehicle from point A to point B via air, what is the function of street work? The function of youth work,



as described in the Council of Europe recommendation, is “to motivate and support young people to find and pursue constructive pathways in life, thus contributing to their personal and social development and to society at large.”

In accordance with this you can say that the function of street work is to support young people at risk in developing a constructive self-image and relation to the world around them, this way strengthening their capacity to shape their lives based on their own personal preconditions, abilities and ideas.

What street workers *do*, what actions they take, to fulfil this function (and live up to the core principles) is something else. They can have individual talks, have group activities, walk the streets, run trainings and much more, but so can also other professions. The question (that street workers constantly should ask themselves) is why they are doing it, what function their actions are

supposed to have and what principles that are guiding them when performing them.

Talking about street work without also relating it to other forms of youth work is, however, impossible. There are a lot of different labels used for more or less similar work and some of them are more or less overlapping. Many of them are also differently used in different youth/street work settings.

Other forms of youth work that acts outside the institutions are²⁹:

- Detached youth work – running youth work activities outside of youth centres, where young people choose to gather.
- Outreached youth work – meeting young people where they choose to gather to inform them about youth centres and other youth work activities and to encourage them to take part.
- Mobile youth work – running a youth centre ‘on wheels’ or taking youth centre equipment to various facilities as ‘pop-up’ youth centres.

What primarily distinguishes these forms of youth work, defined as above, from street work is that they target all young people, regardless of eventual risk behaviour. Sometimes outreached youth work is used as an umbrella term for all youth work that takes place outside youth centers. We, however, think that the terminology becomes clearer if youth work is the umbrella and various niches/specialities that falls under this umbrella has their own names and definitions. With a clear and elaborated definition of street work (and what constitutes quality within it) there will hopefully be less need for semantic discussions.

²⁹ Detached and outreached youth work, Method and resource handbook for youth work practitioners in Wales. <https://www.cwvys.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/HB-Detached-and-Outreach-Youth-Work.pdf>



P for Purpose

The main purpose of working with quality indicators, documentation and follow up must always be development. Doing documentation and follow up in relation to indicators should help those involved to understand the actual outcomes, why they occurred and what measures are needed to improve. Documentation and follow up must hence be designed in a way that it gathers the necessary information on both the quantitative and qualitative variables described by the indicators. This information (statistics, answers to questionnaires, etc.) must then be turned into knowledge/understanding through a thorough process of analysis and reflection.

The important point is, however, that this information and the analysis of it should lay a solid ground for

- Understanding why things turned out the way they did
- Identifying needs for development of
 - competences
 - methods and work processes
 - organisation (economy, structures, etc.)
- Setting aims and priorities for the future

- Mutual learning and exchange of experiences with other actors
- Identifying relevant and adaptable good practices
- Knowledge based information and advocacy

In order to obtain this there is, however, also need for information not always directly linked to quality indicators on outcomes. To be able to plan and do good street work we also need to know/keep track of

- Where we encounter young people – are we walking the right streets?
- When we encounter young people – are we there at the right hour?
- Which young people we encounter – are we reaching the right group?
- Which risks young people are in – are we dealing with the right issues?
- How young people perceive us – are we using the right approach?

We also need to know if we are prioritizing our work in the right way, spending our time in the best possible way between different kinds of street work activities. The three main kinds of activities that we have identified in the project are

- Street based activities
- Group activities
- Individual activities

These three main categories are of course most often linked, but it is important to find the right balance between them, and they might have different outcomes. Besides these activities, street workers also have to do a lot of other, more or less necessary, things, like planning and informing about their work, going to meetings and taking part in educational activities. That is to say, things that are supposed to create the right conditions for street work but aren't street work in themselves.

In our project we have (after discussing what we need to know, how to structure the information and defining indicators) developed a web-based

system for gathering statistics and running questionnaires to young people being in contact with street workers, The Logbook Street. The information gathered through a system like this can of course be obtained in other ways, e.g., through using Excel-sheets and keeping notes of focus groups discussions. However, we sincerely believe that uniform statistics and questionnaires gives a more reliable and trustworthy material, that can in a second step be used as a basis for discussions and reflection together with young people. It also creates a more solid ground for benchmarking and mutual learning/sharing of experiences between street workers.

To achieve this, we have developed a system that, through documenting

- which young people we work with (gender, etc.)
- where we meet them
- for what reason we interact (kind of risk)
- what actions we take
- how they perceive us

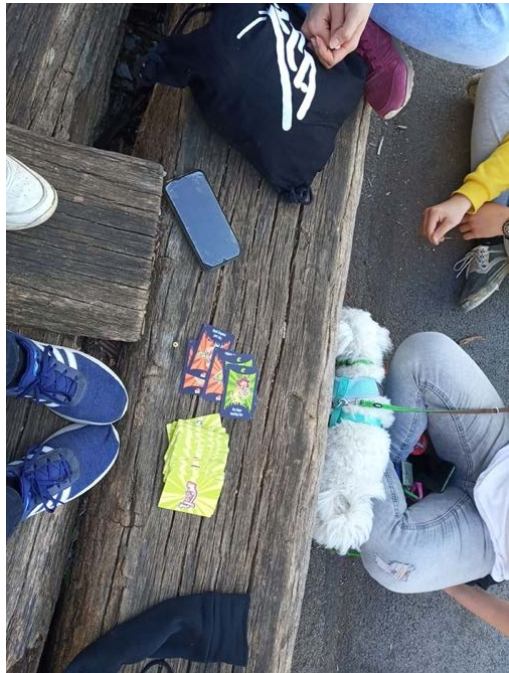
and

- how our work has affected them

will enable us to evaluate our work based on facts and take knowledge-based actions for further development and when planning our everyday work.

This system can of course also be used for monitoring, but since it is based on quality indicators linked to the core principles and function of street work it is to a high degree protected from the kind of misuse that systems developed solely for monitoring and 'from above governance' often suffers from. It is also well known that systems that concentrate on short term measuring of quantitative figures lead to stagnation and even manipulation of results to look good or to keep funding. The fear for being victims of new public management when using our system should therefore be minimal.

However, in view of the raising demand for proof of impacts and effects of youth work and other social services, there must be an awareness of what kind of evidence this kind of work can provide, not over-claiming what it proves and risking a backlash. The indicators that we have developed and the outcomes that you can see through our system can't be directly linked to aims regarding less drug abuse or lower crime rates. This for the simple fact that it is impossible to establish a distinct causal relationship between actions taken by street workers and, for example,



less drug abuse among young people in the community where they work. Street workers might for instance do a great job, but if there is an increase in youth unemployment and lowered prices on drugs, drug abuse might still raise.

Our indicators are built on the theory that if young people develop better self-esteem, better self-understanding and social skills like the ability to take responsibility and cooperate, they get more resilient towards negative influences and less likely to put themselves at risk. This theory has strong support in health and resilience research and is also, to be frank, pure common sense. What we, if this is the case, will be able to prove is that young people after having been in contact with street work has developed (new) self-perceived capacities that will help them to better cope with their future lives. Some of them will still get into more or less serious trouble, but the likelihood for it has, according to theory, diminished.

When developing street work and doing advocacy the above theory must be our starting point and the outcomes we can show our best arguments. We know that promotion leads to prevention.

- Youth work promotes all young people's personal and social development, leading to fewer young people at risk.
- Street work promotes the personal and social development of those at risk, leading to them taking fewer risks.

Developing indicators

Developing indicators on what we want to achieve in relation to young people, what effect street work should have on them, has been an exciting but far from linear process based on intense discussions. Since these effects are not possible to see or measure by eyesight (young people hopefully grow, but mainly on the inside) the degree to which we meet these indicators must be measured by asking young people. Hence, they need to be formulated in a clear and simple language, possible to put as questions. Secondly, if they are to be followed up through questions to young people there could not, for practical reasons, be too many of them.

This has led to many discussions over both content and wording, and numerous revisions of previous proposals. We especially want to thank those street workers and others who have helped us through answering our web-based questionnaire, giving valuable feedback. We also of course want to thank our reference groups, both young and old ones, for their efforts and support in this matter.

Our proposal for quality indicators for street work are that the young people we work with:

- have enhanced their self-understanding
- have enhanced their self-control
- have become better at handling conflicts
- have become better at explaining themselves
- have become better at taking care of themselves
- have become better at handling their everyday duties
- have become more aware of their rights
- have become better at understanding others
- have become better at cooperating
- have developed new interests
- have become more engaged in society
- have enhanced their self-esteem



To see to what degree we reach these indicators we have created a questionnaire to young people that you will find in the appendices.

The second important quality indicator in street work is of course that we reach our target group, that we work with the right young people. This group is, as previously stated, "youth at risk". Which means that they "are behaving in a way, or live under personal circumstances, that risks hampering their future possibilities to live a good and constructive life as part of society, not being able to reach their full potential as individuals and citizens." This of course include many different kinds of behaviors or circumstances, from drug abuse and being out too late with 'the wrong people' to domestic violence, that also will change over time and between contexts.

Consequently, the degree of quality does not depend on *which* risks that are addressed, only on that we *do* work with young people at risk. The only quality indicator that is possible to set is therefore that we actually work with young people at risk. In order to see to what degree we reach this indicator

we have to do follow up on both what risks we are actively addressing and the personal situation of the young people we work with. This can be done both through documentation of the risk behaviors and situations we encounter when doing street-based activities and through questionnaires (or interviews) with the young people we work actively with in groups or on an individual basis. (Both these options are built into the system that we have developed.) Quality is then of course not based on risks that we observe, but on what we actually do about it.

In order to see that we focus our efforts in the best way possible we also need indicators on costs. Only this way can we see if we have found the best balance between actual street work and all the other things that needs to be done, e.g., planning and informing about street work. The two indicators that we have found most relevant for being able to see this are:

- Cost per individual we work with (In groups or individually)
- Cost per hour of actual street work (In street-based, group and individual activities)

The above indicators are the ones that we mean will, taken together, constitute a good ground for documentation and follow up of the quality of street work. They are all measurable and we have integrated them all in our web-based system for documentation and follow up, The Logbook Street.

However, as every street worker knows, the degree to which the above indicators are met will to a large extent depend on the attitudes and approaches of street workers when they meet young people. The relation between street workers and young people at risk is crucial to a good and constructive outcome. At the same time, a good relation between young people and street workers is not an aim in itself, this relation is 'only' a means to obtain a good result.

Nevertheless, we need to know how young people at risk perceive street workers to see if this relation is good and if we need to develop our attitudes

and approaches. Therefore, we have also set quality indicators for this relation, not as outcomes but as process indicators.

Quality indicators on the attitudes and approaches of street workers are that young people at risk perceive that street workers

- are accessible when they need them
- care about them as a person
- act in their best interest
- make them see new things or look at things in a new way
- involve them when they act
- treat them with respect
- talk with them about things that they feel are important
- are clear about what can be expected from them
- help them understand the role of other services (police, social services, etc.)

You will find all these indicators put as question in the same, above mentioned, questionnaire.

Besides setting indicators on outcomes and work processes/methods, you can also set indicators on preconditions. One such crucial indicator is, as previously stated, having "a clear and comprehensive system for documentation and follow up of outcomes, preconditions and work processes in relation to measurable indicators and aims." Another one, also from the European charter on local youth work, is having "clear procedures for continuous analysis of and reflection on outcomes in terms of how they relate to preconditions, work processes and activities, and the need for further development". Having indicators and information on to what degree they are met is only the first step. It is only through thorough discussions, reflections and analysis that this information can be turned into knowledge and understanding of why things look the way they do and what measures are needed for improvement.

Watch out!

If you plan to create your own indicators, keep in mind that indicators can be more or less general and consequently, when followed up, give more or less precise information. Be careful when deciding what level to choose; A more general level might seem easier and will require fewer questions. On the other hand, this might mean that you have to spend much more time analyzing what the answers actually tell you.

Gathering information and analyzing it

A clear and comprehensive system for documentation and follow up may of course be built in many different ways and consist of many different parts. A complete set of indicators will require information on both quantitative and qualitative outcomes of street work, and this will therefore have to be gathered in different ways.

Quantitative outcomes are for example:

- How many hours you do street work
- How many young people you meet “on the streets”
- How many young people you work with
- How many actions related to various risks that you take
- Which different themes you have worked on together with youth
- Background information on the young people you work with, e.g., gender, background and type of difficulties they face.

In order to document this, you must have a system for gathering statistics.

One, quite common, way of doing this is using an Excel-sheet. In The Logbook Street we use a web-based template to gather all the statistics needed. In this template there is also a section to write notes about the situations that have occurred, something that is often needed when you are to analyze the statistics. Having these two functions in the same template is then a big advantage.

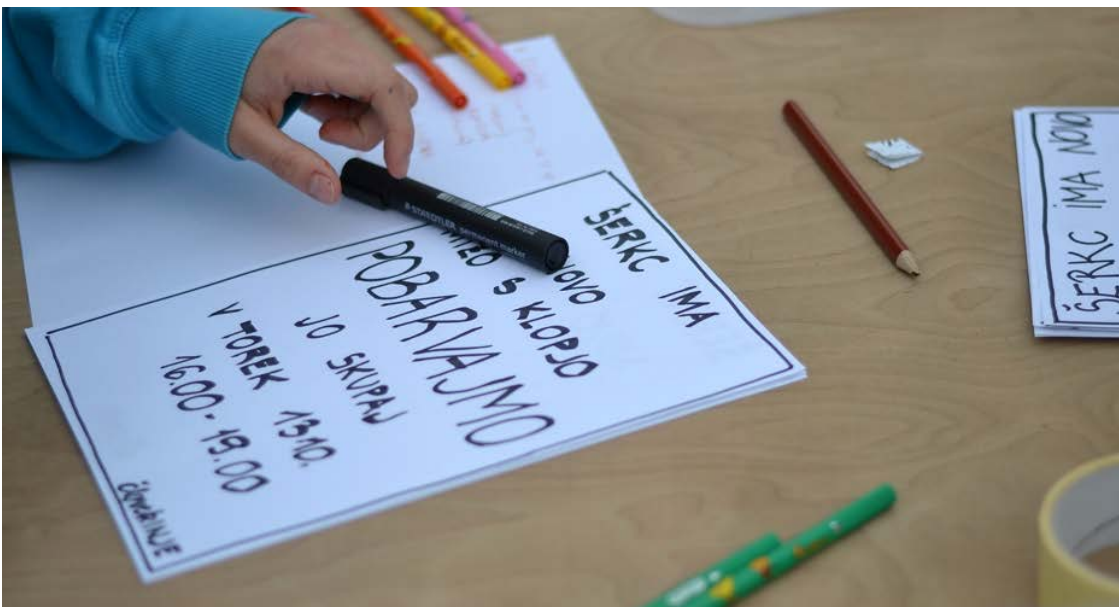
Qualitative outcomes are mainly how young people perceive

- the effects that contacts with street workers have on them
- the attitudes and approaches of street workers

There are many different ways to collect this kind of information. The most usual ones are:

- Questionnaires to young people
- Focus groups with young people
- Interviews with young people

These different methods are in no way mutually exclusive, on the contrary the best results are achieved when they are combined. When formulating a questionnaire, it should be tested and discussed with focus groups of young people before being finalized. And, when analyzing the results from a questionnaire this needs to be done together with young people in order to fully understand the answers and what could be done to improve the results. This is how we have worked when developing The Logbook Street, and this is how it is supposed to be used.



Quite often the follow up or evaluation of youth/street work is done through peer assessment or through observations and assessments made by external actors, e.g., researchers. This could of course give valuable information, but it is often quite linked to the specific individuals doing it and rather situational. It also often lacks clearly structured feedback from young people on what they get out of their taking part in activities. No shop owner will ask their staff if they provide good service, they will ask the customers. Hence, even if done well, this kind of follow up can never replace the continuous, structured documentation and follow up that combines quantitative and qualitative

information, and that allows comparisons over time and between different methods and groups of street workers. It is through doing these kinds of comparisons and being able to see the relations between, for example, the differences in outcomes between group-based work and individual work, that you can really create a sustainable learning organization and gradually develop your work.

It cannot be stressed enough, that what is gathered through statistics and questionnaires is information that needs to be turned into understanding and knowledge through thorough discussions and analysis. Analysis is basically the art of asking relevant questions, and to keep on asking until the picture is completely clear.

- Why did we get this outcome?
- What factors have been decisive for the outcome?
- What would have led to a better result?

Having this kind of data as a basis for discussion is what turns speculations into reflections. This still does not mean that doing a good analysis is easy. It asks for an open and constructively self-critical mindset and the ability to look at your own actions from the outside. This often takes training and the creation of an atmosphere where people dare ask 'uncomfortable' questions and think 'outside the box'. Done with a curious and un-prestigious attitude, making young people part of the analyzing process, giving them access to all relevant information, will help everyone to see new perspectives and get new ideas. Being able to find and reflect on relations between different approaches and outcomes will lead to deeper insights into what constitutes quality street work. It takes time, it is not always easy, but it is fun and definitely worthwhile.

And, not to forget, being able to show results is always a strength, and a well-done analysis is the backbone of any kind of advocacy for street work.

Taken together, this is why we have created a web-based system for documentation and follow up – The Logbook Street

Watch out!

If you plan to make your own system, consider how much time you have to gather information so that you are sure that you will manage this step. Gathering information that will never be used is counterproductive. However, keep in mind that this gathering might be carried out in a way that enhances young people's influence and sense of being actively listened to.

Are there any limitations in your target group that would make a specific method unsuitable (e.g., illiteracy, geographical obstacles, age, etc.)? For example, young immigrants might have difficulties reading the official language and it might therefore be better to interview them than to use a questionnaire.

Some questions, for example regarding sexual orientation, might be very sensitive or difficult to ask. In this case you should not, due to integrity reasons, ask directly, but must instead use some kind of questionnaire where the respondents feel secure that their answers will be entirely anonymous.



The Logbook Street

The only way we can develop street work is to look at ourselves, our attitudes, approaches, methods and ways of organizing our work. The purpose of The Logbook Street³⁰ is therefore to do documentation and follow up of street work, not of single young persons. Due to GDPR it is also forbidden to store data on specific individuals and sensitive personal data. However, you will still, be able to follow single individuals, and to see how different categories of young people perceive their contacts with street workers and how it has affected them.

The Logbook Street is divided into four sections for documentation and follow up:

- Street-based activities
- Group based activities
- Individual activities
- Other activities

³⁰ The Logbook Street is available for members of KEKS. KEKS is a European network of local departments for youth work and youth work providers with over 75 members in eight countries. Please visit us at www.keks.se or contact us at info@keks.se.

Street-based activities

take place when street workers encounter young people in areas that are open to them and might include, beside 'street corners', also youth centers, school corridors, cafés, shopping malls, etc.

In this section you will be able to document:

- Date and hours of street-based activities
- Street worker(s) working
- Per encounter with young people at risk:
 - Area where encounter takes place
 - Number of young persons observed
 - Reason for documenting the situation (type of risk observed)
 - Types of action taken (including eventual contacts with other services)
 - Gender and age of those concerned
 - If those concerned are previously known
 - Notes
- Notes on the whole work shift

Since it is not realistic nor a good idea to hand out questionnaires in these situations, there is no questionnaire linked to this section.

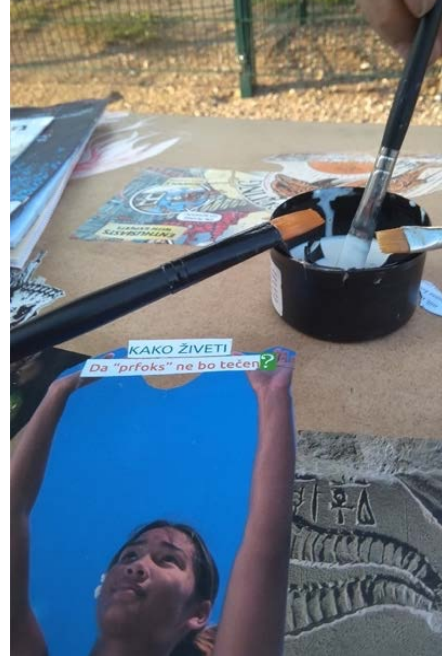
Group-based activities

take place when street workers gather a group of young people at risk to meet continuously, with a common purpose. Groups tend to change over times regarding both participants and purpose, which is ok as long as there is 'more continuity than change'.

In this section you will be able to document:

- When starting the group
 - Name of the group
 - Where you established contact (On the streets, through others, etc.)
 - Street worker(s) responsible

- Participants
- Reason for starting/aim of the group
- Planned activities
- Eventual partners
- For each meeting/activity with the group
 - When: date and hours
 - If it is online
 - Location
 - Participants
 - Theme for meeting
 - If young people are active in creating and running the meeting/activity
 - Notes



You are also able to upload documents like agenda and notes from the meeting. Linked to each group there is the questionnaire that you will find in the appendix. When you have at least five persons that have filled out the questionnaire, you can download the result and discuss it with the participants.

Individual activities

take place when street workers have pre-planned meetings that are focused on the situation of the individual. Other persons might also be present, e.g., parents or teachers, but the individual needs to be center stage.

In this section you will be able to document:

- When starting the contact
 - Street worker(s) responsible
 - 'Alias' of the young person (Through a check-in function that registers age and gender)
 - Where you established contact (On the streets, through others, etc.)
 - Reason for contact (Kind of risk)

- Notes
- For each meeting with the young person
 - When: date and hours
 - If it is online
 - Location
 - If third part is present
 - Theme for meeting
 - Actions taken (Including contacts with other services)
 - Notes on the meeting

You are also able to upload documents. Linked to each young person that you start documenting there is the questionnaire that you will find in the appendix. Due to integrity reasons, you will not be able to download the results from individual questionnaires. However, in the end of the year the total result will be compiled, and you will be able to see how young people perceive the effects that these contacts with street work have had on them. (To get a total result you need to have had at least fifteen respondents.)

Other activities

take place when street workers engage in activities that does not match the criteria for street work and therefore does not fit into the above sections, e.g., informing about street work, doing education activities in school, etc. Planning of own activities and internal meetings are not to be registered in the system, only activities where street workers in some way interact with others.

In this section you will be able to document:

- When: date and hours
- If it is online
- Location
- Street worker(s) responsible
- Eventual partners
- Arranged by (Street workers, young people, others)
- Target group

- Purpose (Information, education, etc.)
- Theme (Drugs, racism, etc.)
- Number of participants (Divided on age and gender)
- Notes

No questionnaire is linked to this section.

Extracting results

In all sections there is also the possibility to use tags of your own choice, so that you more easily can find the information you are looking for. This is the great advantage of using a web-based system – everything you put into the system can be searched for and extracted as reports.

In The Logbook Street you can take out reports regarding, for example, specific time periods, specific weekdays, on number of actions taken, on number of young people you have encountered and worked with, and much more in any kind of combinations.

It is this possibility to see the relations between different factors and how outcomes change over time and due to different situations, that stimulates reflections and leads to learning and gradual improvement. It is through these discussions, sometimes hard and sometimes easy, that you lay the ground for a learning organization.

In the end of each year, after you have filled in the web-based form for key figures on costs, work hours, etcetera, all results are compiled to an annual overall result. This gives you a good overview of the past year and makes it possible to set well-grounded and realistic aims for the year to come³¹. When you have done your analysis, you also have a solid ground for informing about, and doing advocacy for street work.

³¹ Doing a first follow up on your outcomes in relation to indicators is of course exciting. However, it becomes even more exciting the second time around when you will be able to see the results of the measures taken to improve quality.

Final words

We are all living in a world where inequality and segregation is constantly increasing. More and more young people are living in precarious situations, being victims of political decisions taken far from their own realities. We all know that this, in turn, will lead to more and more young people at risk. Poverty, discrimination, unequal access to education will inevitably lead to an increasing number of young people starting to act in a way that endangers both their present and their future. Young people taking drugs or committing crimes is above all symptoms of sick society, and changing this situation is above all and fundamentally a question about politics.

In a society that at the same time is becoming more and more individualistic, where everyone is personally responsible for their success or failure, street workers have an important task in making these mechanisms seen by young people at risk, lifting the burden of personal failure and/or guilt from their shoulders.

This does not mean that young people aren't responsible for their own actions, we all are, but that the role of street workers is to help them understand why they act the way they do. Gaining better self-understanding, including understanding how you are affected by the world around you, is a crucial starting point when trying to find a more constructive pathway in life.

The role of street workers is to support young people at risk in developing a constructive self-image and relation to the world around them, this way strengthening their capacity to shape their lives based on their own personal preconditions, abilities and ideas.

The world is treating many young people very bad and the mere need for street work is a political statement as such. Our task is to do it as good and professional as possible. This asks for us to constantly look at ourselves in a constructively self-critical way, reflecting on how we can improve our work. Working with quality indicators and systems for documentation and follow up is a means to that end. At the same time, it will, at least in the long run, give

street work the arguments and the credibility it needs in order to gain better recognition. It takes time and efforts, it is challenging and fun, and it must be seen as a long-term investment, not as a short-term cost.

We hope that this booklet has inspired you to take the next step in the further development of your work. See you around!



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Appendices

KEKS Street work questionnaire

Hi!

Questionnaire for participants in group activities

You have participated in a group activity together with street workers!

Regardless of what you have done we want to know how YOU think it has been. To us it is important that the group has met your needs, interests and ideas, that you have been able to influence the activities and that they have helped you to develop. Through this questionnaire, we will find out if this is the case, or if there is something we need to improve.

Questionnaire for individual contacts

You have had one or more meetings with a street worker.

Regardless of why you have met, we want to know how YOU think it has been. To us it is important that your contacts with street work has met your needs, interests and ideas and that they have helped you to develop. Through this questionnaire, we will find out if this is the case, or if there is something we need to improve.

You respond totally anonymously. No one will be able to see your answers.

If you click on the **i** you will find a short explanation of the question, and there is also a separate booklet with explanations to all questions. These are for you to understand what we mean by the questions and why we ask them.

Sometimes it can be difficult to answer because your answer might vary depending on the situation or the different street workers that you have met. If this is the case - then answer as you think it is on an average. You will also be able to write a comment at the end of the questionnaire if you want to add something.

To think about when you answer:

- Read the questions carefully

- If you feel uncertain - ask your street worker!
- If you feel that you cannot answer, or that the question is not relevant - mark "I don't know"
- Give your honest opinion!

You will not help us by trying to be "kind". We want to know our weak points so that we can get better at what we are doing in the future.

If you have been part of a group of at least five young people you will be invited to discuss the results with a street worker and give feedback.

Good luck!

All questions are to be answered on a five-gras scale:

I don't agree at all / I agree to a small extent / I partially agree / I agree to a big extent / I totally agree + I don't know

I feel that street workers

1. are accessible when I need them
i: This means that you think it is easy to get in contact with street workers and that you don't have to wait too long to meet them.
2. treat me with respect
i: This means that street workers see your thoughts and wishes as important and don't talk or act as if they are superior to you.
3. care about me as a person
i: This means that you feel that street workers are really interested in you and get truly engaged in how you are getting along in life.
4. act in my best interest
i: This means that you feel that street workers try to do what is best for you, not letting the opinions and interests of others influence their actions.
5. make me see new things or look at things in a new way
i: This means that street workers help you to look at things in different ways, opening up new ways of thinking and acting.
6. involve me when they take action

i: This means that street workers always talk to you before they do something that concerns you.

7. talk with me about things that are important to me

i: This means that street workers talk about things that are relevant and helpful in my life and not just things that they feel that they should say.

8. are clear about what I can expect from them

i: This means that street workers have explained their role and responsibilities and what they can do for you and not.

9. help me understand the role of other services (police, social services, etc.)

i: This means that street workers have explained the roles and responsibilities of other services and why they act the way they do.

Being in contact with street workers has helped me to:

10. become better at understanding myself

i: This means that you have become more aware of why you think and act the way you do, what makes you react in a positive or negative way.

11. become more aware of my strengths

i: This means that you have become more aware of what you are good at, which are your positive sides and talents.

12. become more aware of my weaknesses

i: This means that you have become more aware of what you are not so good at and that it would help you if you improved.

13. become better at controlling my behaviour

i: This means that you have become better at considering eventual consequences before you act, not acting so spontaneously without thinking

14. become better at explaining my feelings, thoughts and actions to others

i: This means that you have become better at finding the words you need to express yourself and/or that you feel more comfortable in explaining yourself to others.

15. become better at dealing with conflicts

i: This means that you have become better at resolving conflicts in a way that no one gets hurt emotionally or physically, and/or that there are no “hard feelings” afterwards.

16. become better at handling my everyday duties

i: This means that you have become better at doing things that you are supposed to do in school/at work/at home, not trying to find excuses not to or waiting till it is too late.

17. become more aware of my rights

i: This means that you have become more aware of what you have the right to expect from authorities like school and social services in terms of how they treat you, and your right to have a say.

18. become better at taking care of myself

i: This means that you have become better at acting sensibly in relation to food, sleep, stress, alcohol, drugs, sex, etc.

19. develop new interests

i: This means that you have found new activities that you like to do/engage in.

20. become more engaged in society

i: This means that you care more about societal issues/politics and/or have become a member of an organization and/or do volunteering, etc.

21. look more positively at my future

i: This means that you see more possibilities and/or less obstacles ahead of you than you did before.

22. become more self-secure

i: This means that you feel more confident and less worried when doing things.

23. become better at understanding my relations to others

i: This means that you have become more aware of how your own behavior affects your relations to others, taking responsibility for your actions, not blaming others.

24. become more aware of how we all are affected by the world around us

i: This means that you have become more aware of how prejudices, inequalities, conflicts, crises, etc. affects the thoughts and actions of yourself and others.

25. become better at cooperating

i: This means that you have become better at doing things together with others in a constructive way.

Questions about you

It is important to us that everyone gets the same treatment and support regardless of gender, age, background, living situation and other personal factors. Depending on how you answer the below questions we will be able to see if there are differences regarding, for example, age. If there are such differences, we want to be able to do something about it. That is why we ask the following questions about you.

26. For how long have you been in contact with street workers?

- Less than a month
- 1 month – 6 months
- 7 months – 1 year
- More than one year

27. How often are you in contact with street workers?

- More than once a week
- Once a week
- At least once a month
- More seldom

28. Gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- I don't want to answer

29. Year of birth?

30. Have you got any kind of disability?

i: You might for example have dyslexia, need a wheelchair or have some kind of diagnosis.

- Yes

- No
- I don't know

31. Are you studying, working or neither?

- Studying
- Working
- Studying and working
- Not studying or working

32. Is one or both of your parents born outside the country?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

33. Have you been discriminated against during the last year? (Note:

You can check multiple options)

i: Being discriminated against mean that you have been treated unfairly by others due to one or more of the below factors.

<u>Due to:</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Your gender or gender stereotypes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your ethnic background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other reasons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

34. Who do you live with?

- Two parents
- One parent
- Altering between parents
- Other responsible adult(s)
- By myself
- With friends
- With partner
- At an institution
- In no permanent place

35. I could not afford to buy more than what is absolutely needed, or not even that.

i: This means that your family or you yourself can't afford more than very basic things like food and somewhere to live, or maybe not even that.

- I don't agree at all
- I agree to a small extent
- I partially agree
- I agree to a big extent
- I totally agree
- I don't know/not relevant

36. Do you have private contacts that would actively support you if in trouble?

i: Private contacts could be friends, family members, co-workers or others who have the will and resources to help you if needed.

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

37. Have you had serious problems at home, in school or during your leisure time in the last six months due to for example alcohol, drugs or violence?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

If "Yes" (You can choose multiple options)

- I have talked to a street or youth worker about these problems
- I have talked to a teacher or counsellor about these problems
- I have had contact with the social services about these problems
- I have had contact with the police about these problems
- I have talked to other responsible adult
- I have not talked to anybody about these problems
- I don't want to answer

38. Only for individuals: My contact with street worker was initiated by:

- Myself

- Street worker
- Other, please specify:

39. Only for groups: How did you get in contact with this group?

- Through information on social media, posters, etc
- Through friends
- Through street workers
- Through school
- Through social services
- Other way, please specify:

40. Only for groups: In which way have you been taking part in the group?

- I took part in creating the idea that led to the starting of our group
- I took part in planning our activities
- I took part in preparing our activities
- I participated and took responsibility when we carried out our activities
- I took part in evaluation

The partner organizations

KEKS is a European network of local departments for youth work and youth work providers with over 75 member organizations. Based on common aims and a common web-based system for documentation and follow up, KEKS aims to strengthen the quality and recognition of youth work through knowledge-based development of competencies, methods, organization and policy. For more information, please visit keks.se.

Institute Bob is an NGO from Ljubljana, Slovenia. Its mission is to ensure the active participation of young people in society, especially those whose voices are not heard. As an organization, it focuses on youth work, non-formal education, youth street work, cultural activities, solidarity economy, and sustainability. For more information, please visit www.zavod-bob.si

ČAS, Czech Street work Association, is a non-governmental organisation, an umbrella for providers of social street work in the Czech Republic. ČAS joins more than 100 member organizations and strives to improve the quality of social street work by providing information, education and advocacy to its members, as well as to the whole field of social street work. For more information, please visit www.streetwork.cz.

CAI is a Portuguese NGO, in the field of Youth and adult education. Through the Street work Training Institute, CAI develops action/research and training projects in the following domains: No-Formal Education, social Street work Methodology, Community development, Youth Workers training, Culture and Creative Industries, Human Rights, Youth Activation for NEETS and drop-outs, Entrepreneurship & Social Economy, Green deal, with groups in vulnerable situations. For more information, please see www.cai.org.pt; Instagram: @cai.org.pt, Facebook: @CAI.org.pt



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