



Monitoring Report

CEPA Article 95 | Youth Worker Education



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEPA	Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement
CoE	Council of Europe
CSO	Civil society organizations
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus group discussions
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NEET	Not education employment and training
NGO	Non-governmental organization
RA	Republic of Armenia
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement between the European Union and Armenia (CEPA) provides a framework for Armenia and the European Union to work together for the benefit of the citizens of Armenia. “Support to CEPA monitoring, implementation and communication” is a four-year project (hereafter Project) funded by the European Union to assist the Government of Armenia in its efforts to reform the public administration under CEPA.

The monitoring explores the implementation of CEPA regarding Article 95 related to youth, especially points on cooperation and exchanges in the fields of youth policy and non-formal education for young people and youth workers, support mobility for young people and youth workers.

The monitoring methodology includes data collection from youth, youth workers, youth policy makers, trainers, youth experts and researchers, and youth leaders.

There are different understandings of youth work competences across Europe. Competences are mainly regulated at the national level. The Council of Europe (CoE) developed the youth work competence framework (portfolio). The Portfolio is a tool for assessing youth work competence and for planning their development. The CoE Portfolio serves as both a standard and a guiding framework for youth workers’ education. The Portfolio has also been used as a benchmark for monitoring.

The measures outlined in the CEPA roadmap for the youth sector have been implemented; however, the absence of clear indicators makes it difficult to assess the actual impact of the CEPA on the youth sector.

In Armenia, a youth workers’ training program was developed in line with the CoE portfolio. However, youth workers and experts emphasized that while the training in Armenia is effective for experienced youth workers, it does not provide novice youth workers with the basic knowledge and skills needed for youth work. In Armenia youth work training modules have the aim of providing general competences for youth workers, while more specific competences require a long-term education program.

The exchanges and trainings helped change the focus of the youth law development. Before these visits, it was referred to as the Youth Law, but afterward, youth policymakers changed it to the Law on Youth Policy. Youth policymakers and youth workers who participated in these visits had the opportunity to gain knowledge and insights about participation tools, participatory approaches, community youth work, and working with young people of different ages. Experts mentioned that these visits and trainings could have been more effective and had a greater impact on Armenian youth if a study plan had been developed beforehand. The study plan should have included study questions and specified the information and knowledge that participants were looking for during the visit. It was effective for youth workers to get acquainted with experiences in recruiting young people and learning how to involve them in youth centers. This experience was applied in the youth center of Dilijan, including a visit to a school and preliminary work with young people. We can conclude that the measures envisaged by this article have been implemented; however, since there are no measurable indicators for the planned measures, it is difficult to assess the quality of the article’s implementation.

Youth workers who participated in the international exchange program gained knowledge and skills on community youth work. As a result of the visit to the European Youth Capital, the youth worker was able to mobilize the community, and it became the Youth Capital of Armenia in 2025. This article has not been fully implemented, as the ministry began negotiations on the visit of a youth worker in 2024, but it has not yet taken place.

The main recommendation for the CEPA roadmap to develop qualitative and quantitative indicators for the CEPA roadmap in the youth field, to align youth worker training programs with the CoE Portfolio framework. Introduce a modular, competency-based certification program aligned with the CoE Youth Work Portfolio for beginner youth workers. Include mentorship and practice-based learning components, as well as carry out country-specific mapping of competences needed in youth work. Conduct research and define a clear framework of topics and thematic areas for experience exchange and study visits. Develop the monitoring and evaluation system of youth programmes, youth centers and policies, assure the involvement of the young people in this process.

INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement between the European Union and Armenia (CEPA) provides a framework for Armenia and the European Union to work together for the benefit of the citizens of Armenia¹. “Support to CEPA monitoring, implementation and communication” is a four-year project (hereafter Project) funded by the European Union to assist the Government of Armenia in its efforts to reform the public administration under CEPA. The monitoring explores the implementation of CEPA regarding Article 95 related to youth, especially points on cooperation and exchanges in the fields of youth policy and non-formal education for young people and youth workers, support mobility for young people and youth workers.

Youth Worker - Youth workers are people who work in direct contact with young people and carry out activities designed for supporting their personal and social development through non-formal and informal learning. Youth workers can be professionals or volunteers, and can be civil servants or work for NGOs².

Youth Policy - The purpose of youth policy is to create conditions for learning, opportunity and experience, which ensure and enable young people to develop knowledge, skills and competences. This is to allow young people to be actors of democracy; integrate into society; and, in particular, enable them to play an active role in both civil society and the labour market. The key measures of youth policies are to promote citizenship learning and the integrated policy approach³.

The main objective of the monitoring is to evaluate the quality of education for youth policy makers and youth workers. This includes assessing the effectiveness of cooperation and exchanges in youth policy and non-formal education for young people and youth workers, mobility for young people, youth policy makers and youth workers as means of promoting intercultural dialogue and the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences outside the formal educational systems, including through volunteering.

The process of updating the roadmap and developing indicators is currently underway, and the goal of monitoring is also to present recommendations for developing indicators.

Measuring the main outcomes of Youth Workers' Education Programs: Youth workers play a key role in informal education programs, which supplement formal education systems. By monitoring cooperation under

¹ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/comprehensive-enhanced-partnership-agreement-between-european-union-armenia-cepa_en

² European Commission (2015) Quality Youth Work. A common framework for the further development of youth work. Report from the Expert Group on Youth Work Quality Systems in the EU Member States, page

12. https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/quality-youth-work_en.pdf, accessed March 5, 2025

³ Youth policy essentials, <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/web/youth-partnership/other-publications>, Siurala, L (2005): European framework of youth policy.

CEPA, it's possible to assess whether educational initiatives for youth policy makers and youth workers are addressing to youth needs and youth fields priorities in Armenia.

Developing Skills and Competencies of Youth Workers: Monitoring helps track which and how effectively youth policy makers and youth workers are gaining the skills, knowledge, and competencies necessary to support and educate young people. This includes areas like civic education, leadership, digital literacy, and democratic engagement, which are crucial for fostering an informed and active civil society.

The report is structured to cover key areas for understanding the current state of youth workers' education and CEPA implementation in this field. The report consists of methodology, European experience, the current state of youth policy in Armenia, the education of youth workers in Armenia, as well as conclusions presenting the current state of implementation of the CEPA and recommendations for improving agreement implementation the roadmap.

The monitoring methodology includes data collection from youth, youth workers, youth policy makers, trainers, youth experts and researchers, and youth leaders.

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHODS

There are different conceptions of youth work competences in Europe. The competences are regulated mainly on the national level. CoE developed youth work competence framework (portfolio). The Portfolio is a tool for assessing youth work competence and for planning how to develop it⁴. CoE portfolio will serve as the main European standard for the comparative evaluation of youth workers' education in Armenia.

Considering the scope of measures aimed at the implementation of the CEPA agreement, the monitoring framework is intended to assess how these activities have contributed to achieving the following expected outcomes:

- a). Capacity building of youth policy makers and youth workers, exchange of experience
- c). Capacity building of youth workers, introduction to successful practices in the field.

The monitoring methodology includes data collection from youth, youth workers, youth policy makers, trainers, youth experts and researchers, and youth leaders, using the following methods:

Secondary data collection

- Desk review on youth studies reports, statistics, regulations on youth and youth workers.

Primary data collection

- Focus group discussions (FGD) among youth,

Two FGDs implemented among young people.

- In depth Interviews with youth workers,

Three in depth interviews

- Expert Interviews with youth experts and trainers,

Three expert interviews

⁴ Competence frameworks and competence-based approaches in youth worker education and training in five European countries, page 13



- Key informant interviews with youth policy makers.

Four expert interviews

1. Chief Specialist of the Department of Cooperation and Reforms, Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan's Office
2. Head of the Youth Policy Department at the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport
3. Head of Department for Strategic planning and monitoring at the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport
4. Chief Specialist of the Department for Strategic planning and monitoring at the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport

EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE OF YOUTH WORKERS' EDUCATION

Youth work

There are different definitions of Youth Work. In some countries 'youth work' is a relatively well-defined, distinct practice. In other countries (especially in southern European countries), the term is less known and there is no identifiable overall concept of youth work. In all countries however it is possible observe a distinct, but diverse field of social and educational practices shaping a so called 'third socialisation environment', next to family and school. Regarding the target group of youth work it can be observed that in a number of countries youth work is restricted to the work with young people (15-25 years), in other countries (e.g. Belgium, Germany, ...) there is no strong distinction between children's work and youth work. The same differences are to be found regarding the distinctions between cultural work or welfare work with young people resulting in a number of countries in strong dividing lines between what could be called 'youth work working with young people' and 'youth work working on young people'. In most countries however there is a clear tendency to take a broad perspective on youth work integrating differentiated practices, with different target groups and varying aims.

Estonia: youth work is defined in the 2010 Youth Work Act as the creation of conditions to promote the diverse development of young persons, which enables them to be active outside their families, formal education and work on the basis of their free will;

Finland: youth work as defined in the 2006 Youth Act means efforts to support the growth, independence and social inclusion of young people in society;

Ireland: youth work is defined in the 2001 Youth Work Act as: 'a planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young people through their voluntary participation, and which is complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training; and provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations.';

North Macedonia: The National Youth Strategy defines youth work as: "an organised and systematic process of education and support of authentic development of young people with the aim of fulfilling their overall personal, social and civic potential. It is directly associated with the development of the local community, whereby young people not only become active participants in the process of their own development but also active participants in the life of the community.";

Malta: a non-formal learning activity aimed at the personal, social and political development of young people (Youth Work Profession Act 2016);

Montenegro: youth work is defined in the Law on Youth 2016 as activities which are conducted with young people and for young people, based on non-formal education, in line with their needs and abilities;

United Kingdom (Wales): in the National Strategy for Youth Work in Wales 2014-2018, youth work is defined using the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work (Learning and Skills Improvement Service 2012) as work that: “enables young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential”.

The Law on the "Youth Policy of Armenia" defines youth work as “work aimed at the personal development, social inclusion and formation of active citizens of young people. Youth work is aimed at discovering and developing the abilities of young people, satisfying their educational, cultural and social interests and preferences, solving youth problems, ensuring the participation of young people in political, socio-economic and cultural life and increasing the level of participation in decision-making.” A youth worker is defined as “a person who carries out youth work, either on a paid (community service or paid services) or volunteer basis”.

Youth work competence

There are different conceptions of youth work competences in Europe. The competences are regulated mainly on the national level. Youth work competences are defined by occupational standards; by youth work quality standards; by setting legal requirements for the desired outcomes of youth work; or through other methods⁵.

CoE developed youth work competence framework (portfolio). The Portfolio is a tool for assessing youth work competence and for planning how to develop it. In youth work, competence is understood as having three interlinked dimensions:

- **Knowledge:** This dimension refers to all the themes and issues you know or need to know about to do your work. This is the ‘cognitive’ dimension of competence. It is commonly associated with the ‘head’.
- **Skills:** This dimension refers to what you are able to do or what you need to be able to do to do your youth work. This is the ‘practical’ or skills dimension of competence. It is commonly associated with the ‘hands’.
- **Attitudes and values:** This dimension of competence refers to the attitudes and values you need to espouse in order to do your work effectively. This dimension of competence is commonly associated with the ‘heart’⁶.

The Portfolio tries to understand better what youth workers should be able to do, the competences youth workers need to have in order to do youth work. In other words, we could call these functions of youth work. The Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio is the most comprehensive one. It comprises 31 competences that are divided into eight groups according to the functions that youth work is seen as capable of performing⁷. The list of functions is following:

Function 1. Address the needs and aspirations of young people

Function 2. Provide learning opportunities for young people

Function 3. Support and empower young people in making sense of the society they live in and in engaging with it

Function 4. Support young people in actively and constructively addressing intercultural relations

Function 5. Actively practise evaluation to improve the quality of the youth work conducted

Function 6. Support collective learning in teams

⁵ Competence frameworks and competence-based approaches in youth worker education and training in five European countries, page 13

⁶ The Portfolio, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio/youth-work-competence>.

⁷ Youth worker education in Europe. Policies, structures, practices, page 171

Function 7. Contribute to the development of their organisation and to making policies / programmes work better for young people

Function 8. Develop, conduct and evaluate projects.

The competences that one needs to have in order to do youth work have been divided into two categories:

- Specific youth work competences – competences that make this field of activity unique
- More general competences – competences relevant for other fields of activity but which are usually important for youth work.

SALTO has produced a European Training Strategy Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally. It defines competences as a cluster of knowledge, values, attitudes, skills and action/behaviour. The model describes eight competences of youth workers. These are:

1. Facilitating individual and group learning in an enriching environment;
2. Designing programmes;
3. Organising and managing resources;
4. Collaborating successfully in teams;
5. Communicating meaningfully with others;
6. Displaying intercultural competence;
7. Networking and advocating;
8. Developing evaluative practices to assess and implement appropriate change⁸.

Youth Workers' Education Programs

Developing youth work has been for many years an area of common interest of the Council of Europe and the European Union (EU). The EU plays a supporting role, especially when it comes to mobility and opportunities across the EU. Following the 2nd European Youth Work Convention and the adoption of the Council of Europe Recommendation on Youth Work CM/Rec(2017)4, education and training of youth workers became an important objective in the overall context of youth work development in Europe. The Declaration of 3rd European Youth Work Convention called for a Youth Work Research Agenda, which would secure among other topics “research on existing common agreed professional standards for youth workers education and training (e.g., competence models and frameworks, code of ethics, curriculum)”⁹. In the ‘Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on education and training of youth workers’ by the Council of 10 European Union from 2019, member states were invited to “Create a competence-based framework for formal and non-formal youth work education and training which is sensitive to the differences in training needs of employed/paid youth workers, those wishing to pursue a career in youth work and volunteer youth workers and youth leaders, which relies on peer-learning and uses digital learning and other innovative methods.” Members states were also encouraged to carry out country-specific mapping of competences needed in youth work¹⁰.

There are a wide variety of degree- and postgraduate-level courses available in the youth work field. The education and training provided for youth workers can be identified and defined in three contexts:

- provided by state-supported bodies or institutions;
- provided by the voluntary youth sector;

⁸ IBID, Page 12

⁹ Declaration of the 3rd European Youth Work Convention, page 13

¹⁰ Competence frameworks and competence-based approaches in youth worker education and training in five European countries, page 10



- provided by European support programmes.

The settings, methods and tools employed in non-formal education and training, the themes/topics focused on and the competences promoted are both wide-ranging and diverse. Settings, methods and tools employed include courses, seminars, projects, exchanges, peer learning, group work, networks, exchange of good practices and conferences. The themes and topics addressed are equally wide-ranging and diverse and include: human rights, social inclusion, intercultural awareness, communication, information, counselling, participation and advocacy, as well as conflict management, migration, radicalisation, safety and protection, drug prevention and unemployment. The competences that such training seeks to develop are primarily personal, interpersonal and group related and include leadership, empathy, communication skills and intercultural skills as well as organisational and managerial skills¹¹.

The professionalisation of youth work¹² providers (educational and occupational standards of youth workers and validation), accreditation of organisations providing youth work and the recognition of skills gained by young people through non-formal youth work programmes. Developing and implementing quality assurance standards varies across the countries, from national occupational and educational standards to the evaluation of youth organisations. Standard setting in youth work plays a crucial role not only for the recognition and establishment of the profession but also for developing the quality of youth work¹³.

Armenia should develop quality assurance frame for youth work that will serve a basis for educational program of youth workers.

YOUTH POLICY IN ARMENIA

In its 2021-2026 program, the Government of the Republic of Armenia has prioritized the youth sector by emphasizing the creation of a legal framework and the allocation of necessary resources as key steps in addressing sectoral policy priorities and challenges. These steps are crucial for unlocking the potential of youth and ensuring their comprehensive development, self-assertion, and self-expression.

According to the Government of Armenia's 2021-2026 programme, 25 youth centres are planned to be established by 2026 in the regions, aimed at creating an environment for young people that fosters the discovery of their potential, comprehensive development, and the organisation of intellectual leisure activities. According to the "Youth Environment" guide published in 2022 by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Armenia the target group of the youth centres, without discrimination, includes all young people aged 14-30 residing in the respective community¹⁴.

Eight youth centres have already been established in Armenia, located in Dilijan, Ijevan, Aparan, Kapan, Meghri, Ararat, Akhuryan and Sevan. These youth centers are tasked with carrying out professional youth work focused on the personal development, social inclusion and active citizenship of young people who are out of work and formal education. They aim to help discover young people's abilities, satisfy their educational,

¹¹ Youth Worker Education in Europe: Policies, structures, practices, Youth Knowledge book 26, Council of Europe and European Commission, April 2020.

¹² Professionalisation refers to a process whereby a particular field of work is able to convince the society that it does quality work and that it exercises professional control over the work done. As a consequence, it gets societal recognition and financial support from a public budget. The main elements of profession are legislation of the field, which should be connected to financing; independent status from other fields; education to the field; public acknowledgement that the field is beneficial to society; autonomy and ways to influence society in matters relevant to the field. In youth work, professionalisation is seen as a way to secure that youth work is financed, but at the same time it is feared that voluntary and civil society-oriented forms of youth work might be neglected.

¹³ Regional perspectives on youth work in eastern Europe, page 13

¹⁴ "Youth Environment" guide, <https://escs.am/am/news/15476>

cultural, and social interests and address various youth-related issues. The youth center should ensure that all young people living in the community have access to the services provided by the center. However, the monitoring and quality assurance procedures for youth centers have not yet been developed. Youth field experts have emphasized the critical importance of the monitoring and evaluation of the youth centres. Experts also suggested the quality label approach as a potential quality assurance tool for these centers.

It is important to ensure realistic planning, monitoring, and evaluation for the timely establishment of the remaining 17 youth centers. As we see, 17 youth centers need to be built in 2025 and 2026, therefore, more effective planning is needed.

The European Steering Committee for Youth developed a project to promote the European Youth Centres of the Council of Europe as standard-setting instruments and examples of good practice for youth policy, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe welcomed the initiative for an initial pilot phase of three years, starting in 2010. This project aims at knowledge sharing and networking among youth centres across Europe. It consists of three main elements:

1. a Council of Europe Quality Label for Youth Centres, to be awarded to youth centres that meet [a set of quality criteria](#);
2. an annual meeting of a European Platform of Youth Centres to ensure networking among centres recognised with the label and those aspiring to its acquisition;
3. an annual training course for educational staff of youth centres.

The use of the Quality Labelled youth centres is also encouraged by the European Youth Foundation to organise EYF-supported activities. In other words, Quality label is financial resources allocation tool. Candidate centres and public authorities that wish to develop a youth centre can use the acquisition of the quality label as a guide to establish their centre in line with Council of Europe standards. As support, the Council of Europe can provide the candidate centre with expert input in relation to the conceptual and practical development of youth policy and youth work, and specific advice on the development of the infrastructural, managerial, administrative and educational quality of youth centres whose main mission is value education with young people.

In Armenia youth centres are receiving financial resources as a grant for 5 years. There is no procedure to re-allocate resources based on monitoring and evaluation results.

The process of developing and adopting the Law on the "Youth Policy of Armenia" is a fundamental direction for the reform of the youth sector, which will regulate the powers, legal relations, and subjects of the sector's stakeholders. In order to develop the draft law of "Youth Policy of Armenia", the Ministry initiated a participatory process, as a result of which, by order of the Minister of Education, Science and Sports of the Republic of Armenia No. 1419-A dated November 6, 2023, a working group was formed to develop the draft law. The working group consists of members representing the state sector, representatives of civil society organizations, and international organizations. Representatives of civil society organizations were involved in the working group taking into account their sectoral roles. The working group operated in five subgroups, which were coordinated by the members of the working group according to the relevance of their sectoral roles. The working groups consist only of CSO representatives. As a result, about 45 representatives participated in the development of the Draft, including from state, civil society, and international organizations. Invited experts from the youth and legal sectors also participated in the development of the Draft. A number of international partners supported the development of the draft law, in particular the United Nations Population Fund Armenia Office, The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Representative Office in Armenia, the "Youth Engagement and Empowerment/Strengthening Civil Society in the Eastern Partnership Countries" project implemented by the German International Cooperation (GIZ) within the framework of the 4th cycle of the "EU for Youth" program, and the "Youth Policy Making in Practice: Strengthening Youth Policy Capacity Building" project implemented within the framework of the EU-CoE Youth Partnership, have supported the study of the legal framework of youth policy in the Baltic countries, in particular the Republics of Latvia and Lithuania, the involvement of experts in the youth and legal fields, the organization of

discussions in the regions of Armenia and the development of the draft. The draft law was discussed during [parliamentary hearings](#) on December 17, 2024, and on January 21, 2025 in its [first reading](#) at the National Assembly session. Among the measures taken for the implementation of the agreement, actions have also been carried out to support the process of developing the draft law. Youth work and youth workers are central components of the law. National Assembly adopted Law on the "Youth Policy of Armenia" in 6th march. We could conclude that the law is developed based on CEPA approaches. The law included the principles of the youth policies which are: participation, evidence based policy, measurable, inclusion, youth as a resource. However, the justification for the law is missing argument on CEPA¹⁵.

Armenia's commitment to developing a legal framework for youth policy and establishing youth centres is commendable, but there are significant challenges that need to be addressed to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of these initiatives. The following challenges exist:

The Law on Youth Policy is an important but insufficient basis for effective youth policy. It is important to develop Youth Strategy based on 8 Standards for a Quality Youth Policy¹⁶.

Lack of a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system in youth policy. A robust M&E framework could provide an opportunity to assess the impact of youth centres and, accordingly, develop a rationale for funding them based on performance.

Lack of a methodology for assessing the quality of youth centres. Adopt a quality label for youth centres. This would provide a clear framework for quality assurance and encourage continuous improvement.

Exchange and capacity building programmes are fragmented. It would be more effective to establish sustainable partnerships between youth centres and international networks. Armenia could benefit more from working closely with youth policy networks, which would allow for knowledge sharing, capacity building and access to international experience.

The logic of implementing CEPA measures in phases. The revision of the roadmap for the agreement should undergo significant changes aimed at introducing indicators measuring quantitative and qualitative changes in the youth sector.

YOUTH WORKERS' EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ARMENIA

The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports developed and adopted the Youth Work and Youth Worker Training Guide in 2022¹⁷. The guidelines outline the purpose of youth work, the structure of the training program, key topics, methodologies, implementation stages, ethical standards, and the criteria for selecting both trainers and participants. Every year 25 youth workers are trained. The CoE portfolio was taken into account when developing the youth worker training program. Youth workers' competencies include professional skills, personal skills, and ethical norms¹⁸. Professional skills include:

- awareness of state youth policy
- knowledge and experience in working with young people, and the ability to use this knowledge to promote the development of the sector
- skills in applying the acquired knowledge to promote youth work
- program development and implementation skills

¹⁵ http://www.parliament.am/draft_docs8/K-962_Himnavorum.pdf

¹⁶ <https://tools.youthforum.org/8-standards/>

¹⁷ <https://escs.am/files/files/2023-03-07/72fa538a5aba35a5492e1204f1505cb7.pdf>

¹⁸ Youth Work and Youth Worker Training Guide, page 9-10



- basic skills in the use of information and communication technologies
- management skills
- evaluation and monitoring skills
- teaching skills.

Education Programmes Content

According to the Guide the topics for youth worker training are the following:

1. Work with youth, youth and youth worker
2. Development of youth work, principles of youth work organization, ethics, youth policy and programs
3. Youth worker as team player, communication styles, cross-sectoral communication
4. The stages of personal recognition and development, motivation. Youth age
5. Social problems of youth
6. Learning types: formal and non- formal, informal learning
7. Management skills, leadership development, professional orientation
8. Conflict regulation, Intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts
9. Skills for working with young people with limited opportunities
10. Support and encouragement for youth self-organization and unity
11. Tools and methods for promoting youth participation in public life
12. Fundraising
13. Project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
14. Youth international cooperation programs.

The training consists of 64 hours of in-person learning and 148 hours of independent work and mentoring. Experts mentioned that this training is effective for experienced youth worker.

Key informant interviews showed that the following topics need to be more addressed in during the training of youth workers: personal recognition, emotional intelligence, communication, including English language, skills, navigation skills, international exchange programs, mental health, youth needs, community needs study, works with NEET youth, mobile youth work, gamification approaches and tools, participation tools.

It is important also mention that youth work training modules has aim to give general competences of youth workers and more specific competences need to be more long-term education program. As mentioned, the training program was developed with a CoE portfolio logic, but youth workers and experts emphasized that youth worker training in Armenia is effective for experienced youth workers, but it does not provide novice youth workers with fundamental knowledge about youth work.

Exchange and training programs for youth policy makers and youth workers from Armenia and the EU

The following activities have been carried out and are being implemented in accordance with Annex 2 of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia's Decision No. 666-L of June 1, 2019, "On Approving the Roadmap for the Implementation of the CEPA between the Republic of Armenia and the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and its Member States," in relation to youth sector measures:

CEPA Article 95 a). Implementation of exchange and training programs for youth policy makers and youth workers from Armenia and the EU



Youth policy makers and youth workers from the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports participated in a number of events organized by the EU to develop the capacities of youth policy makers and youth workers and exchange experiences.

- 5 training programmes in 2022,
- 8 training seminars, experience exchange visits in 2023,
- 6 seminars, study visits in 2024.

These exchanges and trainings helped change the focus of the youth law development. Prior to these visits, it was referred to as “youth law,” but after the visits, policymakers renamed it the “Law on Youth Policy”. Youth policymakers and youth workers who participated in these visits had the opportunity to gain knowledge and insights on participation tools, participatory approaches, community youth work, and youth work with young people of various ages. Experts suggested that these visits and trainings could be more effective and have a greater impact on Armenian youth if a study plan were developed beforehand. Study plan should include key questions to guide the participants’ search for information and knowledge during the visit.

It was effective for youth workers to learn about the experience of recruiting young people and involving them in youth centers. This approach was applied at the youth center in Dilijan, including a visit to a school and preliminary work with young people.

We can conclude that the measures outlined in the article have been implemented. However, due to the absence of measurable indicators, there are no clear indicators to assess the effectiveness of the planned measures, making it difficult to evaluate the quality of implementation of the article.

CEPA Article 95 c). Organising internships in youth centres of EU member states for young people who participated in and successfully completed the youth worker training programme in Armenia.

From 2021 to 2024, young people, youth organisations, and youth workers have been widely informed about various capacity-building opportunities for young people organised in the EU through the official website of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, the youth portal erit.am, social networks, as well as circulars sent to youth organisations.

In 2024, changes were made to the procedure for providing air tickets to young people, with the goal of aligning it with the national youth policy. These adjustments aim to direct the allocated financial resources toward increasing the participation of young people and youth groups in international platforms, particularly in youth events and programs, while encouraging their more active involvement.

The Action Programme for 2021-2026, approved by the Government of Armenia's Decision No. 1902-L on November 18, 2021, includes the measure "Support for the participation of Armenian youth and youth delegations in international festivals, conferences, competitions, forums, seminars, courses, and other public events." Within the framework of this measure, in 2022, 15 young people, in 2023, 18 young people, and in 2024, 21 young people have been given the opportunity to participate in international youth events, forums, and conferences. In some cases, financial support is also provided, particularly through reimbursement of airfare expenses.

In 2024, changes were made to the procedure for providing air tickets to young people, with the aim of aligning it with the logic of national youth policy. The allocated financial resources are also directed towards increasing



the involvement of young people and youth groups in international platforms, specifically in youth events and programmes, and promoting their more active participation.

Youth worker participated in international exchange program gain knowledge and skills on community youth work. As a result of the visit to the European Youth Capital, the youth worker was able to mobilize the community and it became the Youth Capital of Armenia in 2025.

During the visit of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Armenia to the Federal Republic of Germany in 2024, discussions were held regarding the possibility of familiarising with the work of youth centres that have received the EU quality label, organising exchange visits, and implementing joint training programmes for youth workers in German youth centres.

This article has not been fully implemented, as the ministry began negotiations on the visit of a young worker in 2024, but it has not yet been implemented.

Training implementation, funding, capacities of trainers, quality assurance

As already mentioned each year 25 youth workers are selected for participation in training program.

Although youth worker training is not directly represented by the Ministry as a CEPA event, exchange programs aimed at developing the capacities of youth workers and youth policy makers, which are CEPA events, have an impact on these trainings. The youth worker training course is funded by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Armenia through a grant program. The course is being implemented by the Gyumri "Youth Initiatives Center" NGO, the winner of the grant competition announced for the organization of the 2024 "Youth Worker Training" course, in cooperation with the UNICEF Armenia office.

In total, the training consists of 3 stages:

1. The duration of the first stage is 4 days and consists of existing classes and independent work.
2. The duration of the second stage is 4 days and consists of existing classes and independent work.
3. The duration of the third stage is 3 days and consists of existing classes and independent work.

The following criteria are used for participant selection: higher education, a minimum of 1 (preferred 3 years) experience in the youth field and volunteering experience. Participants are selected through an open call.

The criteria for selecting trainers are as follows:

- A minimum of 3 years of experience in youth work
- Familiarity with the youth sector in the Republic of Armenia
- Higher education
- Knowledge of key approaches and tools in non-formal education methodology
- At least 3 years of experience in training teams in non-formal education programs
- Experience in implementing a minimum of 5 training programs related to the topics outlined in the training program
- Ability to convey information clearly and accessibly
- Strong oral and written communication skills, with the ability to present results comprehensively
- Analytical skills, along with strategic and creative thinking.

The course is evaluated by both participants and trainers through an online questionnaire at various stages of the training and at the conclusion of the course based on which minor methodological changes were made.

Training effectiveness, youth needs

The post-COVID and post-war situation in Armenia can be characterized as a continuous crisis. Societies emerging from conflict often undergo a reassessment of core values, an enhanced sense of individual freedom, heightened personal accountability towards smaller communities, increased critical thinking, demographic shifts, unemployment, health issues, and a tendency among young people to withdraw and disengage from adults. Therefore, engaging diverse youth groups in decision-making during such crises becomes a complex and multidimensional process, emphasizing the importance of youth mainstreaming to integrate their perspectives into policy formulation and decision-making processes. In the post-war context, the crisis of trust in state institutions has led to a lack of confidence in the state and its institutions, resulting in a sense of alienation among young people¹⁹. From this perspective, the knowledge and skills of those professionals who must work with young people become important.

Before the war, Armenian youth faced a range of challenges, including unemployment, health concerns, and issues related to the quality of education. However, these challenges have been exacerbated and new issues have emerged in the aftermath of the war, such as the uncertainty of the post-war reality, the constant threat of renewed war, mental health issues, and the full realisation of the right to education. These factors compel young people to continually adapt to new realities and ongoing uncertainty. The pandemic and the war have significantly impacted the involvement of children and young people in education, as the shift to remote learning, due to the pandemic, wartime activities, and security concerns, has impeded the full realisation of their right to education²⁰.

In contemporary post-war Armenia, young individuals are confronted with various issues, including:

- Crisis of trust: a diminished confidence in the future, detachment from the community, government, and state institutions, and a low level of participation,
- Educational needs: concerns about the quality of education, inclusivity, limited involvement in non-formal education programs, and lack of community education services,
- Health related needs: mental health challenges, a deficiency in a culture of healthy lifestyles, and the prevalence of harmful habits,
- Lack of opportunities to organize time and space for self-establishment, identity formation,
- Limited opportunities for full engagement in the labor market²¹.

In the post-war context, the crisis of trust in state institutions has led to a lack of confidence in the state and its institutions, resulting in a sense of alienation among young people. As a consequence:

- Nearly half of young people did not participate in the most recent elections.
- Only one-fifth of young people are interested in political events occurring in Armenia and globally.
- 9.6% of young people are members of any political party or movement, a figure that has remained unchanged since 2012²².
- Only 5.4% of young people are members of any non-governmental organisation²³.
- A small proportion of young people have participated in civil movements, charitable events, fundraising activities, or volunteer work in the past six months.
- About 38% of young people have indicated that they feel they have no influence on decision-makers at the community level, although they would like to have such influence but see no opportunity to do so²⁴.

¹⁹ Galstyan, 2023

²⁰ Galstyan, 2021

²¹ Galstyan, 2023

²² IBID, page 98

²³ IBID, page 102

²⁴ IBID, page 101

- 10% of 18-20 years old youth has a problem with the functional literacy.²⁵

Youth work, which is carried out in NGO activities and youth centers, is carried out mainly in the format of clubs and courses. Experts and key informant mentioned that at most, 6-7 percent of young people are involved in these activities. Youth Policy makers mentioned that 6000 young people involved in state funded youth centres activities now.

Youth centers have clubs, provide space for young people, support preparing of homeworks, and professional orientation. However, youth centers still do not address a number of needs of young people. Since there is no system and mechanism for monitoring and evaluating youth centers, there are no indicators for the centers according to which financial resources will be distributed, youth policy makers are unable to monitor the provision of the content of youth centers.

CEPA impact in Youth Field

The current situation regarding the implementation and impact of the measures set out in the CEPA roadmap has grounds for a dual assessment, since it is not clearly formulated what change we want to bring about, and clear indicators for that change are not defined. As outcome of the CEPA article A and Article C are capacity buildings and experience exchange, awareness on good practices. Methodologically, it is difficult to give a clear assessment of the impact of the CEPA on the youth sector, as clear indicators for measuring this impact have not been defined. We can confirm that certain actions have been taken in line with the measures outlined in the roadmap; however, it is challenging to assess the extent to which these actions have led to the desired changes in the youth sector.

We can state that as a result of exchange programs, youth workers and youth policy makers have significantly developed their capacities regarding youth participation and participation tools.

The development of the law on youth policy is also influenced by exchange programs and study visits, which have provided an opportunity to become familiar with youth legislation in various European countries.

Today, the roadmap is being reviewed, and the sectoral ministry has made a proposal specifically aimed at defining indicators. This is an important step, as the Ministry sees that indicators are important, but in order for the indicator to be informative in a few years, these indicators must have both quantitative and qualitative characteristics. The Ministry proposed to include Localization of tools developed by the EU to increase youth participation in various sectors as measure of Article A.

CEPA implementation requires financial resources, but now medium-term expenditure does not match CEPA priorities. Experts also raised this issue: the implementation of the CEPA lacks a procedure for distributing funds for its implementation. This will allow for more effective and targeted measures to be taken to implement the CEPA agreement, as well as to evaluate its impact.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation of CEPA in the youth sector lacks a clear direction; however, the CoE Portfolio serves as both a standard and a guiding framework. The Portfolio has also been used as a benchmark for monitoring. The main conclusions of the monitoring reflect the extent to which Armenia's youth worker education program in Armenia and the experience exchange visits align with the principles and logic of the Portfolio.

²⁵ World Development Report of 2018,
<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099165002012328951/pdf/P1749800007e7703509aac0261edace2ee6.pdf>

Conclusions

- The measures outlined in the CEPA roadmap for the youth sector have been implemented; however, the absence of clear indicators makes it difficult to assess the actual impact of the CEPA on the youth sector.
- The concept of youth work and the role of youth workers in Armenia are generally consistent with European approaches.
- The educational programs for youth workers in Armenia are also shaped by European standards and practices.
- Youth worker training programs in Armenia are effective for experienced youth workers; however, they do not provide novice youth workers with the fundamental knowledge required for youth work. The existing training modules aim to develop general competences, while more specific competences require longer-term education programs.
- There is a profound lack of trust in public institutions and decision-makers, as evidenced by the low levels of youth participation in political, civic and community activities, despite efforts to encourage their involvement. While youth centres provide useful services such as careers advice and homework assistance, they are insufficient to meet the broader needs of young people, including mental health support, participation in decision-making processes and opportunities for personal growth.
- The lack of a unified national youth strategy with clear, measurable outcomes hinders the effectiveness and coordination of youth policy implementation, even though various initiatives and programs are in place.
- Because of the post-war trauma, it is challenging to determine impact and ensure accountability because there is no standardized system for tracking and evaluating youth policy, youth centers, and youth worker programs.
- Youth centers still do not address a number of needs of young people. Since there is no system and mechanism for monitoring and evaluating youth centers, there are no indicators for the centers according to which financial resources will be distributed, youth policy makers are unable to monitor the provision of the content of youth centers.

Recommendations

To the Government

- Align medium-term expenditure with the CEPA implementation roadmap. Verify that budget lines for CEPA implementation in the youth sector, with an emphasis on capacity building, youth centers, and participatory mechanisms, are specifically included in the medium-term expenditure framework
- Implement capacity-building activities to enhance institutional capacities for effectively planning, managing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the policies, reforms, and regulations required by CEPA. In the youth sector, this refers specifically to developing a youth strategy and establishing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system for youth policy.
- Develop qualitative and quantitative indicators for the CEPA roadmap in the youth field, including number of the experience exchange and capacity building programs, as well as main qualitative changes (CoE portfolio topics, knowledge, skills increase):
 - The number of participants of youth worker trainings from 2021 to 2025,
 - At least one youth worker from youth centers participated in capacity building and experience exchange programmes,
 - Participatory and Youth Friendly Monitoring and evaluation system established in all youth centers, with qualitative and quantitative indicators, including knowledge, skills increase, motivation increase etc.



- Capacity building initiatives and knowledge development related to the all topics of CoE Portfolio to achieve knowledge on youth work, skills for doing youth work, attitudes and values for doing youth work effectively. Youth workers’ Knowledge and skills increase participated in capacity building and experience exchange programmes.
- The number and scope of programs and initiatives implemented by youth workers,
- The number and profiles of young people participating in these programs and initiatives among others.
- The impact of the youth works on youth in communities where youth centers established, including main changes in youth lives.

To Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport

- Align youth worker training programs with the CoE Portfolio framework and Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally. Introduce a modular, competency-based certification program aligned with the CoE Youth Work Portfolio for beginner and experienced youth workers. Include mentorship and practice-based learning components. Develop degree course for youth workers as well.
- Carry out country-specific mapping of competences needed in youth work. Conduct research and define a clear framework of topics and thematic areas for experience exchange and study visits. This report includes information these thematic areas, such as.
 - Quality standards of youth centers
 - Youth and community needs
 - Mental health and self-care
 - Emotional intelligence
 - Self-discovery
 - Fundamental knowledge about youth work
 - Recognition of youth work as a profession, the professionalization of youth work
 - Establishment of a Youth Workers’ Association
 - Formation of a Youth work Alliance
- Establish national accreditation requirements and quality standards for youth centres. Ensure that centres provide a full range of services such as career guidance, civic education and mental health services, in addition to homework assistance. Develop and adopt the procedure to re-allocate resources for youth centers based on monitoring and evaluation results.
- Assure the involvement of the young people in the monitoring and evaluation of youth programmes, youth centers and policies, promoting a sense of ownership and increasing accountability to beneficiaries.
- Create digital resource centres, e-learning for youth workers and online youth engagement platforms accessible to disadvantaged and rural youth groups.
- Develop a structured plan for each study visits, including pre- and post- assessments of participants.
- Armenia should develop quality assurance frame for youth work that will serve a basis for educational program of youth workers.

To Youth workers

- Develop a plan for study visits and exchange programs plan that outlines key points for presenting Armenian experience and learning from European practices.
- Involve young people in the monitoring and evaluation of youth programmes and policies, promoting a sense of ownership and increasing accountability to beneficiaries.



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APPENDIX. MONITORING TOOLS

Guide for Focus group discussions among youth

Introductory Questions

1. Please introduce yourself-your age, education, occupation, and interests.
2. What are the main issues and aspirations for young people of your age in Armenia?
3. What are the primary issues faced by young people in your community?

Youth Needs

4. What do you personally find most challenging under current conditions, and what do you think young people generally struggle with the most? For instance, work, income, politics, culture, social interactions, etc. What are you and other young people planning to do to address these issues- emigration, activism, education, or other actions?
5. How did you participate in the war? After the war, what changed in your life and within yourself? What have you changed? Were these changes significant or minor? Please provide examples.
6. How satisfied are you with your life? What are your main dissatisfactions? What are your main concerns, and what is currently troubling you?

Youth Work and Youth Policy

7. What types of youth programmes or voluntary activities have you participated in? How would you evaluate the quality of these programmes? What did they provide you with in terms of new knowledge, skills, abilities, or personal qualities? What changed in your life as a result of these programmes? How would you assess the knowledge and abilities of the professionals working with you? What are their strengths and weaknesses? If you could advise them on how to better structure their work with today's youth in Armenia or what new skills to acquire to improve the quality of their work, what would your advice and suggestions be?
8. How and what should change in youth-focused work after the war?
9. What are your expectations for the future, particularly concerning your personal life plans? Which organisations or individuals do you expect support from to achieve these plans? To overcome the current situation in Armenia, which organisations do you expect active measures from?
10. What are your expectations from state policies directed at youth?
11. Are you aware of the process of drafting the Law on the "Youth Policy of Armenia"? Are you familiar with its content? If so, how did you come across it? Please share your opinions and suggestions regarding this law.

Concluding Questions

12. To summarise today's discussion, are there any thoughts that were left incomplete or not fully explored? Please feel free to share.

Thank you for your participation!



Guide for Interviews with youth experts and trainers

Introductory Questions

- Please introduce yourself. How long have you been working on youth field?
- What are the primary needs of young people, particularly those in the most vulnerable groups? Which of these needs can be addressed through youth work methodologies?

Questions About the Needs of Youth Workers

- What are the educational needs of youth workers?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of youth workers?
- What educational programmes are available for youth workers? What are the educational programs for youth workers: state, NGO-run, and international? How would you evaluate their effectiveness? Are there any programmes in Armenia that are effective and worth expanding? If so, please provide details. What are the prerequisites and obstacles for spreading such practices, in your view?
- Are there successful international practices that could be localised in Armenia? Please describe and justify your suggestions. What do you see as the prerequisites and obstacles for localising such practices?
- Are you aware of the process of drafting the Law on the "Youth Policy of Armenia"? Are you familiar with its content? If so, how did you come across it? Please share your opinions and suggestions regarding this law.

Questions About International Educational Programmes for Youth Workers

- What programmes for the exchange and training of youth policymakers and youth workers between Armenia and the EU have been implemented? How would you assess their effectiveness? What new skills have youth workers and policymakers learned or developed? What experiences were shared, and which countries' practices did you study and why? How have you applied the results?
- Have internships been organised in youth centres of EU member states for Armenian youth workers who participated in and successfully completed training programmes in Armenia? If yes, please provide details. If not, why not? How would you evaluate the importance and feasibility of such an initiative? What obstacles have you encountered in attempting to implement it?

Guide for Key informant interviews with youth policy makers, government representative

Introductory Questions

- Please introduce yourself. How long have you been working on youth-related issues?
- What are the primary needs of young people, particularly those in the most vulnerable groups? Which of these needs can be addressed through youth work methodologies?

Questions About the Needs of Youth Workers

- What are the educational needs of youth workers?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of youth workers?
- What educational programmes are available for youth workers—those implemented by the government, NGOs, or international organisations? How would you evaluate their effectiveness? Are there educational programmes in Armenia that are effective and require wider dissemination? If so, please provide details. What do you see as the prerequisites and obstacles for spreading such



practices? The formation of youth centers is currently in an active phase in Armenia. How are youth workers selected, what kind of training is provided to them, and how is it carried out?

- Are there successful international practices that could be localised in Armenia? Please describe and justify your suggestions. What do you see as the prerequisites and obstacles for localising such practices?

Questions About International Educational Programmes for Youth Workers

- What exchange and training programmes have been implemented between Armenia and the EU for youth policymakers and youth workers? How would you assess their effectiveness? What new skills have youth workers and policymakers learned or developed? What experiences have been shared? Which countries' practices have you studied and why? How have you applied the results?
- Have internships been organised in youth centres of EU member states for Armenian youth workers who participated in and successfully completed training programmes in Armenia? If yes, please provide details. If not, why not? How would you evaluate the impact, importance and feasibility of such an initiative? What obstacles have you faced in attempting to implement it?

Implementation and Monitoring of the CEPA Agreement

- What key steps have been taken to fulfil the provisions of the CEPA agreement, including goals related to the youth sector?
- What mechanisms does the government use to monitor and evaluate the progress of the CEPA agreement, including its youth-related goals?
- What successes or main changes have been observed in Armenia as a result of activities implemented within the framework of the CEPA agreement, including in the youth sector?
- What major challenges have arisen during the implementation of the CEPA goals, including those related to the youth sector?
- What type of collaboration has been established with EU countries in the context of youth programmes?
- What financial and technical support has been received from the EU to implement reforms in the youth sector?
- What measures have been taken to ensure compliance with international standards outlined in the CEPA agreement in youth field?
- What steps are currently being taken towards the revision and renewal of the CEPA agreement? How are indicators being developed? Are there any new approaches to developing indicators, such as targets or measurement methods?

Guide for In-depth Interviews with youth workers

Introductory Questions

- Please introduce yourself. How long have you been working on youth field, and what professional education do you have?
- What are the primary needs of young people, particularly those in the most vulnerable groups? Which of these needs can be addressed through youth work methodologies?

Experience in Youth Work

- How long have you been involved in youth work, and how did you begin this career?



- What training or educational programmes have you participated in? What did you learn, and what skills and abilities have you developed?
- Have you participated in state-sponsored educational programmes, NGO-implemented programmes, or international educational programmes? Please provide details and describe the skills you gained as a result of these programmes. As a youth worker, what was the most effective educational programme/programmes you participated in? Please justify it.
- How have you applied this knowledge and these skills? What types of programmes have you implemented? What groups of young people have you worked with? What needs have you addressed? Were you able to achieve your objectives? If not, why do you think that was the case?
- What educational programmes do you currently need? Who do you expect to fulfil these needs?

Concluding Questions

- Are you familiar with the process of drafting the Law on the "Youth Policy of Armenia"? Are you aware of its content? If yes, how did you learn about it? Please share your thoughts and suggestions.
- Are there any points that were left incomplete or insufficiently discussed? Please feel free to share them.