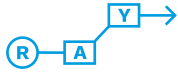


**Research-based
analysis of European
youth programmes**

RESEARCH PROJECT ON THE IMPACT OF THE CORONA PANDEMIC ON YOUTH WORK IN EUROPE (RAY-COR)

CONCEPT NOTE FOR 2022

18 OCTOBER 2021



1. CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

The world is going through unprecedented times: the coronavirus pandemic has taken people, governments, societies initially by surprise – and youth work was no exception. Some of the immediate consequences of the pandemic, and the policy responses to the pandemic, have intermittently gained some visibility in the youth field in Europe. In the meantime, the discussion has begun to shift to the mid- and long-term impact, and crucially to the underlying systemic challenges for youth work that are being exposed through the pandemic.

In recognition of the extraordinary circumstances, the RAY Network has started a dedicated research project on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on youth work in Europe in 2020. In doing so, the network charted new ground by looking at youth work in its entirety – including the European youth programmes. In 2021, the research project continued, with a focus on exploring successful youth work responses to the pandemic, identifying core conditions for such responses to succeed, and analysing to which extent the European Union's Recovery and Resilience Facility (RFF) meets these conditions. In 2022, the research project will continue, further exploring European and national policy responses to the pandemic and their relevance for youth work, and with a strong focus on the Youth Work Recovery Conference, which the RAY Network agreed to co-organise during its 2021 Network Meeting.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1. OVERALL AIM OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The aim of this research project is to document and analyse the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on youth work in Europe, including the European youth programmes, and the response of youth work and the youth sector across Europe to the pandemic and its effects.

2.2. KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The key objectives of this research project are to

- explore the short- and mid-term effects and projected longer-term impact of the coronavirus pandemic on youth work in Europe;
- explore responses of youth work to the coronavirus pandemic and its effects on young people and youth work across Europe;
- explore key differences between responses of different youth work structures, contexts, frameworks, types and approaches;
- develop recommendations for European youth programmes and European youth policies on how to better support youth work in responding to the effects and impact of the pandemic on young people and youth work;
- explore in how far European and national recovery plans and programmes support youth work in recovering from the effects of the pandemic.



3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.1. CORE RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE PROJECT

The core research questions of the project are:

- What are the effects and impact of the coronavirus pandemic on youth work in Europe? How do effects and impact vary between different youth work contexts in Europe, including the European youth programmes?
- What are the responses of youth work to the coronavirus pandemic and its effects? How do responses vary between different youth work contexts in Europe, including the European youth programmes?
- What role can European youth programmes and European youth policies play in supporting youth work to navigate the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and to actively develop responses to the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on young people across Europe?
- What are the key systemic conditions that create an enabling environment for youth work to successfully respond to a pandemic, and more generally to and in crisis situations? How can such conditions be created and youth work be strengthened?
- How do the existing and emerging recovery plans and programmes support the recovery of youth work, and how could such plans and programmes be further strengthened in this regard?

4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND INSTRUMENTS

The project will continue to combine quantitative and qualitative social research methods and its strong focus on research communication in four modules:

4.1. MODULE 1: ROLLING LITERATURE REVIEW

Continuous literature review to map existing and emerging research on the coronavirus pandemic and its effects on young people and the youth field at European and international level. The literature review will be amended on a rolling basis to keep track of new research findings.

4.2. MODULE 2: YOUTH WORK RECOVERY SURVEY

European survey—if manageable in several languages—to determine in how far youth work is able to use national and European recovery plans and programmes, and how adequate these plans and programmes are for the recovery of youth work.

4.3. MODULE 3: RESEARCH COMMUNICATION

Continuous development of policy briefs and contribution to meetings and events as well as publications and reports at national and European level on the effects of the pandemic on youth work and the recovery of youth work.

4.4. MODULE 4: YOUTH WORK RECOVERY CONFERENCE

Contribution to the organisation and implementation of the Youth Work Recovery Conference in 2022.

5. RESEARCH SCHEDULE

The following table provides an overview of main activities¹ at transnational and national level for the envisaged duration of the research project:

Time period	Activities at transnational level	Activities at national level
01.2022 – 12.2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous mapping of research on the pandemic and its effects on young people and the youth field at European level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous mapping of research on the pandemic and its effects on young people and the youth field at European level
02.2022 – 04.2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey on relevance of recovery plans and programmes for youth work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translation of survey (possibly and if possible) Support of promotion
05.2022 – 06.2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis and data snapshot of the survey 	
01.2022 – 06.2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of and contribution to the Youth Work Recovery Conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support of conference promotion & awareness raising for the event
01.2022 – 12.2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy and practice reports on key themes emerging from all research activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translation (optional) and dissemination of reports
01.2022 – 12.2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributions to national and European events and publications 	

Additional research activities may be added if required by the evolving situation.

6. RESEARCH OUTLOOK

The research project will hopefully conclude in 2022.

7. PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS

The contributions to the research project by project partners are shown in the table above.

8. RESEARCH PARTNERS

Research partners of this project are the RAY Network partners in Austria, Belgium (French Community), Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey. Further partners are always welcome to join.

¹ Due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, this research schedule is more tentative than usual.