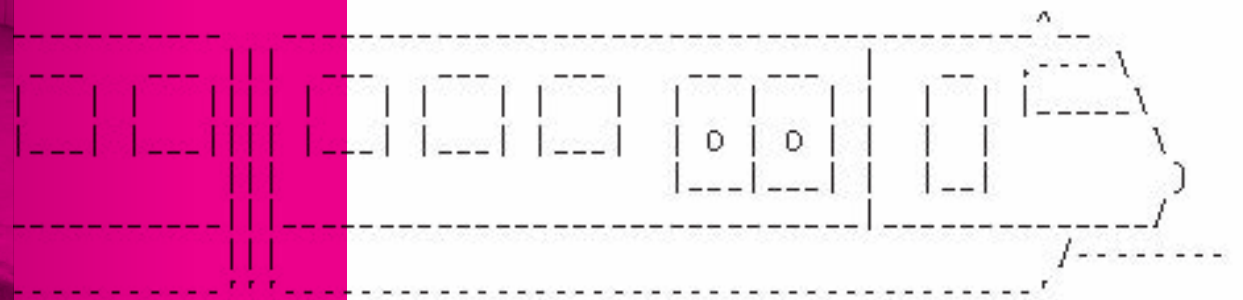


Chapter 1

Miles Between Theory and Practice

Three Decades
of Youth Policy
in Slovenia

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Key milestones in the development of Youth policy in Slovenia

1990: National Youth Council of Slovenia founded

1991: Office for Youth founded

2005: Strategy for Youth in the Field of Youth Policy Until 2010

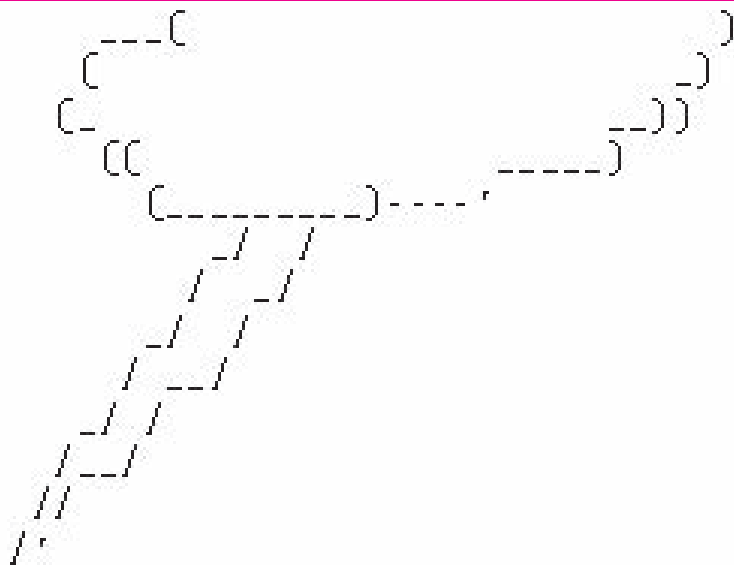
2009: Government Council for Youth founded

2010: Public Interest in the Youth Sector Act

2011: Results of the Mladina 2010 study published

2013: Resolution on the National Youth Programme 2013–2022

2017: First interim report published on the National Youth Programme 2013–2022



Youth policy contexts in Slovenia

Youth policy is a distinct field that differs from other public policies in terms of type, but chiefly in terms of the range of principles on which it is based and the wide spectrum of impacts that it sets out to achieve. It is more than simply a public policy response to the specific challenges that need to be addressed in relation to young people, as it represents a clear commitment on the part of government to ensure good living conditions and opportunities for the young (Denstad, 2009). Generally speaking, youth policy addresses different and interconnected dimensions in the lives of young people, such as their welfare, education, democratic participation and inclusion. It can also offer young people the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes so that they are able to find their place in society, be autonomous, play a role in civil society and enter the labour market (Youth Partnership, 2019).

Youth policy has evolved radically in recent decades to the point where it now addresses the wide range of risks and opportunities encountered by young people; this requires a broader strategy covering a variety of public policy domains (employment, social protection, formal and non-formal education, health, housing policy, culture, etc.) as well as transversal challenges such as social inclusion, youth participation and gender equality (Youth Partnership, 2019). However, it is important to note that there are considerable differences between countries; we cannot therefore talk of shared understandings of core terms such as 'youth policy', 'youth work' or even 'youth' itself, as the way these terms are understood can vary between countries and public policy fields (Taru, 2017).

It is also true that international organisations have had a strong impact on youth policy in many countries, often providing an important incentive for the systematic development of policy even before an awareness of the need for it developed within those countries themselves. Slovenia is one such country, as this chapter will show. Of course, this has also helped to establish a tendency towards an integrated approach to youth policy, one that is supported by many international organisations and associations (Kuhar and Leskošek, 2008). In Slovenia's case, the main organisations are the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the European Union.

This chapter provides an overview of the development of Slovenian youth policy that pays due regard to the major role played by international organisations. It also attempts to define that role in more detail. Alongside this, we have taken as a guideline the key principles of good youth policy; this, we hope, will enable us to produce a balanced overview of the key developments as well as the missed opportunities.

Key international starting points for Slovenian youth policy

While the first stirrings of youth policy can be traced as far back as the 19th century, when young people began to be seen as a distinct social category, modern youth policy ideas only properly emerged after the Second World War, in tandem with the development of the welfare state (Taru, 2017). Within international organisations, the first signs of an integrated (or cross-sectoral) youth policy began to appear at the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s. In Europe, the field of youth policy gained considerable momentum in the 1990s within the context of social, employment and economic policies that aimed to strengthen the international competitiveness of the EU; this also created a more general context for the development of cross-sectoral youth policy (ibid.). Youth policy initiatives have been significantly influenced by an

EU economic and social agenda whose main policy goal is the fight against poverty and social exclusion (Colley, in Taru, 2017).

Youth policy at the Council of Europe has had a different focus, emphasising youth participation at organisational, community and societal level, as well as the importance of democratic and civil society movements (Eberhard, 2002). Although the socio-economic integration of young people with vulnerable social backgrounds has not been the only goal set out in European documents, it has remained a central concern of European youth policy since the beginning of the 21st century (Taru, 2017). The EU and the Council of Europe have played an important role, not just at international level but also at the level of individual countries' youth policies, perhaps most obviously with the introduction of the 'open method of coordination'¹ at the turn of the millennium (ibid).

European Union

Not all young people are students and it was only relatively recently, in the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, that the EU began to insert the formal youth field into its general policies — even then, its efforts were modest, with a single reference in Article 126 of the Treaty on European Union to encouraging youth exchanges and exchanges of youth workers (or, as the Treaty calls them, 'socio-educational instructors'). That said, it did also provide (albeit indirectly) the basis for the development of youth policy at European level in a variety of fields relevant to young people, such as employment, the mobility of young researchers, culture, health and consumer protection (Debeljak, 2009). While it is possible to argue that youth-centred activities did start earlier than this, they tended to be limited solely to specific programmes, such as Youth for Europe, which the European Commission set in motion in 1988.

While acknowledging the foundations laid down by the Department for Education and Youth Policies operating from 1973, the breakthrough within the EU came with the Lisbon Strategy of 2000, which prioritised the development of human capital — and therefore of young people as well. This was followed by A New Impetus for European Youth, a White Paper that signalled the start of the accelerated development of the field in the years that followed. The White Paper proposed the institutionalisation of cooperation between Member States in the youth field by using the open method of coordination (OMC) in four priority areas (providing young people with information, participation, voluntary service and greater understanding of youth), and the strengthening of youth dimensions in other sectoral policies (education, lifelong learning, mobility, employment and social integration, and tackling racism and xenophobia) (European Commission, 2001).

This was followed by two key documents that helped to rapidly consolidate the field: the European Youth Pact of 2005 and the Resolution on a Renewed Framework for European Cooperation in the Youth Field (2010–2018, also known as the Renewed Framework) of 2009. The European Youth Pact was adopted by the European Council in 2005 as one of the key instruments for achieving the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy. It obliged Member States to redouble their efforts in the fields of growth and jobs, and raised awareness of youth policy at EU level and of the importance of empowering young people to become independent. It also stressed the importance of youth participation, which later led to the establishment of the Structured Dialogue initiative. The Renewed

¹ The open method of coordination (OMC) is a form of intergovernmental policy-making that is not binding on Member States.

Framework, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2009, enhanced the framework for European cooperation in the youth field in place at that time, with the Council following the guidelines and proposals published by the European Commission in the spring of that year in the EU Strategy for Youth – Investing and Empowering: A Renewed Open Method of Coordination to Address Youth Challenges and Opportunities.

The core vision of the EU Strategy for Youth was to boost investment in young people by increasing funds for the development of areas that had an impact on young people and their welfare, and to strengthen the role of young people in renewing society; within this context, the Commission saw the renewed OMC as a tool for promoting the youth dimension in other sectoral policies and boosting participation. At the same time, the Renewed Framework provided for the use of instruments such as evidence-based public policymaking, mutual learning between Member States, progress reporting, and consultations and structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations (Council of the European Union, 2009). Further contributions to EU youth policy were made in the Europe 2020 strategy, adopted in 2010. Based on seven flagship initiatives aimed at promoting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (including 'Youth on the Move'), it replaced the earlier Lisbon Strategy and was an attempt to enhance the performance of education systems and facilitate the entry of young people onto the labour market (Communication from the Commission, 2010). This signalled that the role of young people and youth policy was gaining greater weight within the EU's strategic policies.

The period since the adoption of the Lisbon Strategy has been one of accelerated development for EU youth policy, resulting in a higher profile for that policy and the development of several instruments that have had an impact on the development of youth policy in the Member States themselves. This period has undoubtedly seen a radical change in how young people and youth policy are understood; it is also clear that the 'youth dimension' has also begun to be addressed within the framework of other sectoral policies. These are all important steps towards creating an integrated cross-sectoral youth policy.

The current EU Youth Strategy 2019–2027, which was adopted by the Council of the European Union at the end of 2018 and builds on the experiences and decisions of previous years, aims to tackle the existing and upcoming challenges that young people face, and to provide a framework of objectives, principles, priorities, core areas and measures for youth policy cooperation for all relevant stakeholders (Council of the European Union, 2018). It is split into three thematic sections (engagement, connection and empowerment), and is complemented by the European Youth Goals, which are the product of consultation with young people within the Structured Dialogue process. To help realise the EU Youth Strategy, a number of instruments are set out that enhance those contained in the Renewed Framework: evidence-based youth policy-making and knowledge-building; mutual learning and dissemination; participatory governance; the mobilisation of EU programmes and funds; the Future National Activities Planner; Youth Dialogue (previously known as Structured Dialogue); an EU Youth Coordinator; Youth Information and Support; three-year EU Work Plans for Youth; monitoring, reporting and evaluation; and Mid-Term Reviews.

Council of Europe

The Council of Europe began to address the youth field in 1972 with the establishment of the ad hoc intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Youth Questions and the organisation of the first Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Youth in 1985 (eight such conferences took place between that year and 2012). Based on the conference discussions, the Youth Department has developed a range of instruments and programmes aimed at promoting and supporting youth policy development within the Council of Europe and the Member States (Siurala, 2006). These instruments include reviews of national youth policies that are designed to support other countries in their efforts to develop their own. In addition to providing support, the reviews have also sought to identify those common characteristics of national youth policies that would make it possible to establish a European approach to the youth policy field, and contribute to mutual learning within the context of the development, formulation and delivery of youth policy (Cink, 2016). These efforts have been continued through one of the most recent youth policy development instruments presented by the Council of Europe, the Self-Assessment Tool for Youth Policy, which was created to help Member States assess the compliance of their national youth policies with the Council's own youth policy standards. The Council of Europe's basic youth policy standards, upon which the tool is based, proceed from its basic values and from a broader understanding of youth policy. They address the fields of active cooperation, information, the promotion of inclusion, mobility, access to rights by young people and high-quality youth work (see Council of Europe, 2021).

Of all the Council of Europe instruments that operate on a continuous basis and make an important contribution to youth policy development at both Council and Member State levels, particular mention should be made of the relevant co-governing bodies active in the youth field and within which national authorities and representatives of youth organisations, as well as young people themselves, make joint decisions on youth policy within the Council of Europe: the European Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest, the European Youth Foundation, and partnerships with the European Commission in the youth field.

The Council of Europe's overarching document, one that summarises previous developments and achievements in youth policy and sets policies going forward, is the Youth Sector Strategy 2030 (COEYSS), which was adopted in 2019. The mission set out in this document is to broaden youth participation, strengthen young people's access to rights, and deepen youth knowledge (Council of Europe, 2020). Within the COEYSS, the Council of Europe has established a range of priorities that it wishes to address through instruments already in place; these include revitalising pluralistic democracy, young people's access to rights, living together in peaceful and inclusive societies, and youth work (ibid.).

United Nations

The United Nations is, of course, one of the most prominent international organisations active in the youth field; and while its processes cannot be said to have had a direct and decisive impact on the development of youth policy in Slovenia, they have nevertheless left their mark on the international environment in the form of guidelines. The UN began to address youth-related issues back in 1965, when Member States adopted the Declaration on the Promotion Among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples, with a major step forward towards the

systematic development of youth policy coming 20 years later in 1985, which the UN General Assembly proclaimed as International Youth Year. This aimed to draw attention to the important role young people played in society, and to promote national youth policies that were cross-sectoral and integrated (Nico, 2017).

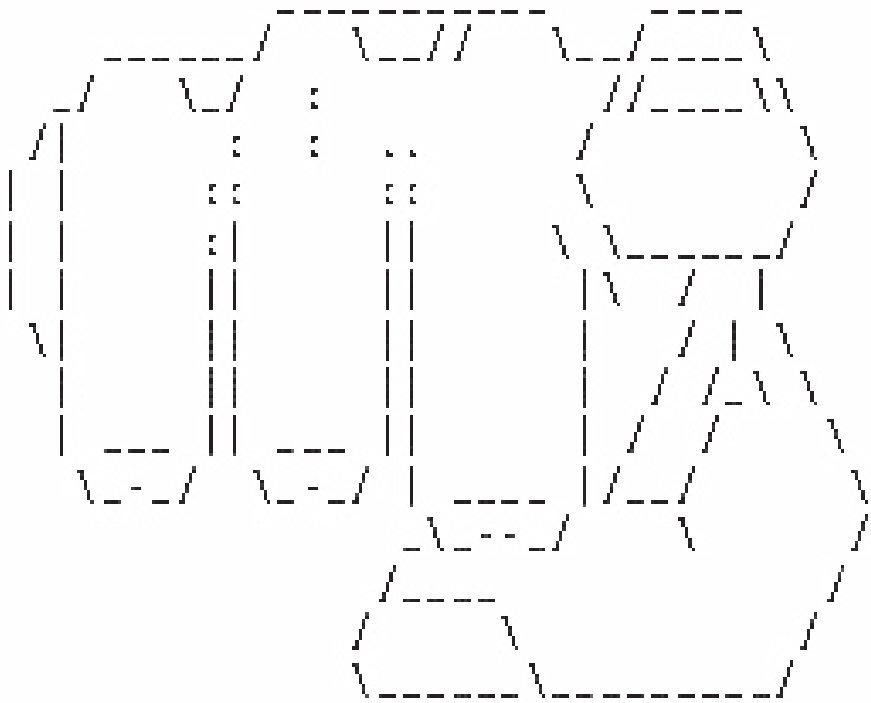
The themes identified by the UN General Assembly for International Youth Year ('Participation, Development, Peace') reflected a predominant concern of the international community with distributive justice, popular participation and quality of life. These themes were also reflected in the guidelines, and were installed as the overarching themes of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (WPAY) (United Nations, 2010). In its action plan, the UN built on its efforts to foster the development of youth policy, defining the framework and guidelines for the formulation of youth policy at global and national level. This made it the first global initiative to plan effective national youth policies (Cink, 2016). The plan encouraged Member States to create and adopt integrated youth policies, and to engage in the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the position of young people by putting in place cross-sectoral programmes and measures with clear, time-determined objectives and the systematic monitoring of progress (ibid.).

Former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon focused heavily on young people during his time in office, and his efforts bore fruit with the adoption of the Youth-SWAP document (2013), the main aim of which was to enhance the coherence of the UN's system-wide activities in key youth-related areas, and to present a blueprint for identifying the major priorities of the UN's system as they related to youth (United Nations, 2013). The first Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth was also appointed in 2013, followed the year after by the first Global Forum on Youth Policies. This took place in Baku and featured a broad range of participants.

Principles of good youth policy as a conceptual starting point

Youth policy is the means by which a country works to improve the position of young people, empower them and ensure that they are fully involved in society. It also provides an insight into how the state and its decision-makers understand young people — indeed, one of the central characteristics of a well-functioning youth policy is whether the state regards young people as a resource or as a problem. While this might appear to be just another political cliché, it is a dichotomy with significant presence in perceptions of youth policy (Denstad, 2009). In turn, it leads us to a series of important questions: whether youth policy is a mainstream or marginal component of public policy, for example, and whether its approach is synchronised or segmented (Williamson, 2002). Understanding youth policy as a problem-oriented field means perceiving young people as requiring of protection through public policies because of their vulnerable and endangered position; at the same time, they are seen as 'trouble-makers'. Youth policy therefore tends to target specific segments of the youth population, with very little (if any) coordination between different sectors. This is also reflected in practice in the tendency for countries to use measures to respond to individual challenges as they arise.

By contrast, the approach that views youth as a resource steers youth policy towards ensuring the active participation of all young people, and searching for ways of empowering them so that they realise their full potential. This type of youth policy is more proactive, and more keenly felt and appreciated by young people themselves.



The key areas in this approach are education and the provision of support to young people to become active citizens (Kuhar and Leskošek, 2008). This type of youth policy also helps young people lead lives appropriate to their age group, encourages independence and critical thinking, and aims to foster an integrated cross-sectoral governmental approach towards young people and their needs and challenges (Denstad, 2009).

One of the features specific to youth policy is its inter- or cross-sectoral nature, as it cuts across many other fields of public policy (Rakar et al., 2011). Youth policy is not only a collection of actions by different sectors that affect young people, but a deliberate and structured inter-sectoral policy of the youth sector, which cooperates with other sectors and coordinates services for young people (Kuhar and Leskošek, 2008). We can understand the word 'sector' in the context of youth policy in two ways: as a public policy sector or area (e.g. education, employment, health) or as a sector in the wider social sense (e.g. the public sector, the non-governmental sector, the economic sector). Within the context of European youth policy, 'sector' is usually thought of in the first sense, i.e. as relating to different policy sectors, to different ministries or to different departments within ministries, although it is also used in the latter sense in certain contexts (Taru, 2017). We can add yet another dimension, where 'cross-sectoral youth policy' may also refer to vertical cooperation — between central government and municipalities, for example (ibid.). When we look at the different approaches to youth policy in Europe, it becomes clear that it is understood to be much more than youth policy per se, and that it has to take part in, communicate, encompass, integrate or lead a set of coordinated plans, measures, programmes and policies that are, generally speaking, the formal or legal responsibility of other sectors.

Owing to the cross-sectoral nature of youth policy, it is therefore also important to have a clearly defined and established government authority on youth responsible for coordinating the development of a national youth policy (Denstad, 2009). This authority, which can be organised as an independent ministry or some other governmental body, must be recognised and have strong links with ministries if coordination and cooperation are to be successful.

As we have already pointed out, one of the most important attributes of a youth policy that regards young people as a resource is youth participation through the entire public policy process — that is, in both the development and delivery of youth policy. Young people should have the right, means, support, opportunities and space to participate as partners in youth policy, advising or deciding jointly on its design, contributing to youth policy service delivery, and monitoring and evaluating the impacts of the policies. They should not merely be seen as 'beneficiaries' of services (Youth Partnership, 2019). There is a broad set of reasons why youth participation in the public policy process should be encouraged; they range from viewing young people as a resource to the fact that there are formalistic and legal reasons why young people should be natural partners in decision-making — for example, to keep the promises made by governments when they sign up to international agreements and charters (Denstad, 2009). Of course, any discussion about encouraging participation should mention the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12 of which addresses children's participation in government decisions that affect them, as well as the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, which was adopted in 2003 by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe, one of the pillars of the Council of Europe (ibid.). One further reason for encouraging youth participation is worth highlighting here: that where young people are involved, policymakers are better able to identify and, with the help of those young people, understand the needs and challenges of the young. They also acquire the necessary legitimacy for their decisions and, by involving young people in decision-making, take ownership of those decisions together with them. This can help to ensure that the policies are delivered more effectively (ibid.).

Non-governmental youth organisations that enjoy strong recognition and support from policymakers have an important role to play in youth policy (Denstad, 2009). As civil society organisations that bring large numbers of young people together, youth organisations are defined as autonomous democratic voluntary associations whose operations enable young people to create planned and unplanned learning experiences, formulate and express their positions, and carry out activities in accordance with their interests and their cultural, sectoral or political orientations (National Youth Council of Slovenia, 2010). Youth organisations that involve young people and are part of the wider public policy process have shown themselves to be more than capable of addressing and overcoming the problems of disconnected youth, general apathy and the absence of adequate representation of young people's interests (Rakar et al., 2011). In most European countries, youth councils are a key point of contact between youth organisations and the interests of young people, and are designed to occupy a privileged position as a partner to political decision-makers in the development and delivery of youth policies. Because of the importance of youth participation, youth policy must recognise the (non-governmental) youth sector and its organisations, as well as young people themselves, and design and carry out measures and programmes that encourage young people to become engaged and active citizens and

to take responsibility for helping to create society (Denstad, 2009). At the same time, political decision-makers should be aware that not all young people are involved in youth organisations, and give an opportunity for those young people to be consulted when youth policies are being designed. One mechanism that directly involves young people in the consultation process is Youth Dialogue (formerly Structured Dialogue), which enables young people, youth organisations, youth councils and researchers in the youth field to become actively involved in political dialogue with those responsible for youth policy.

Another important feature of a high-quality youth policy is a concrete and transparent strategy capable of analysing and addressing the youth population's most pressing issues as effectively as possible. This can be achieved with clearly established and defined objectives, and measures to support their achievement. The objectives must be set out in such a way as to enable long-, medium- and short-term scrutiny of their implementation, with mechanisms in place to ensure a prompt response in the event of any shortcomings in delivery; where possible, they should also be equipped with appropriate indicators that allow them to be monitored and measured. The transparency of the strategy is reflected in the clearly defined responsibilities of the youth policy coordinator and those responsible for individual measures, as well as in the link between objectives on the one hand and measures on the other (Denstad, 2009). By being transparent, we also ensure that there is accountability towards young people.

If the objectives and measures of youth policy are to be formulated in a way that addresses the actual needs of young people, they must be supported by adequate data. An evidence- and knowledge-based youth policy comprises two dimensions — research/scientific knowledge and practical/experiential knowledge — which are of equal importance to policy development (Denstad, 2009). In addition to the requirement for relevant knowledge and evidence to be deployed in youth policy design, data and research on the youth field needs to be collected so that the policies can be regularly monitored and evaluated. This offers the only tangible way in which the success (or otherwise) of specific measures and programmes can be evaluated.

Development of youth policy in Slovenia

The beginnings of youth policy in Slovenia can be traced back to around the time of the country's independence in 1991, which is when the Office for Youth (Urad RS za mladino, URSM) was founded and a start made on addressing the position of young people in Slovenia within the context of national policies and institutions. The National Youth Council of Slovenia (Mladinski svet Slovenije, MSS) had been established the year before as the country's umbrella youth organisation, assuming the role of advocate of the interests of youth organisations in their dealings with political decision-makers. If we look back at the last three decades of youth policy in Slovenia, we can see that it has developed at different levels of intensity in different periods of time and has, as we pointed out at the beginning, been under the influence of the international organisations of which Slovenia is part. Generally speaking, we can divide this 30-year period into the period before Slovenia's accession to the EU, the period of accession, the period immediately after accession (when important steps were taken towards adopting a law on the public interest in the youth sector and a national programme) and the period that followed the adoption of the national programme.

Early impact of the Council of Europe

In the 1990s youth policy in Slovenia was heavily influenced by the Council of Europe, whose operations in the youth field were joined by the Office for Youth in 1992, when Slovenia became a State Party to the European Cultural Convention. The Office had been founded in 1991 in response to initiatives from three committees of the Slovenian Assembly during discussions on the draft Youth Councils Act (Škulj, 2016). After 1992 it began taking part in the activities of the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ), which comprised ministries and other bodies responsible for youth. The CDEJ was designed to foster cooperation between governments in the youth sector, and provide a framework for comparing national youth policies, exchanging best practices and drafting standard-setting texts (Council of Europe, n.d.).

The Office's participation in the CDEJ has had an impact on youth policy in Slovenia in substantive, organisational and administrative terms. The administrative impact has come chiefly in the context of the management model established at Council of Europe level and its introduction into Slovenia with the setting-up of the Joint Commission for Youth Affairs (Mešana komisija za mladinska vprašanja), which was the co-management body comprising representatives of youth organisations (National Youth Council) on the one side and central government representatives (Office for Youth) on the other. In this context, the commission was the predecessor of today's Government Council for Youth (Svet Vlade RS za mladino, SVM). At the substantive level, participation in the Council of Europe's working and other bodies led the Office to focus more heavily on providing information and advice to young people (Škulj, 2016).

The Office for Youth then set about building on its earlier work in these two areas with the publication of an information and counselling plan for young people, which was based on the Council of Europe's Recommendation to Member States Concerning Information and Counselling for Young People in Europe (1990), the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life (1992) and the European Youth Information Charter, which was adopted in 1993 by the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERIYCA) (Cink, 2016). Youth mobility has been another area of focus for the Council of Europe, one that has been developed mainly through the European Youth Card, which Slovenia joined in 1999 by signing the Council of Europe's Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility Through the Youth Card. Responsibility for introducing the card was assumed by a non-governmental partner, originally Zavod MOVIT and, from 2010, Zavod MOBIN (which later became the SLOAM Youth Agency).

The first step towards the legislative regulation of youth policy and the youth sector was taken in 2000 with the adoption of the Youth Councils Act (Zakon o mladinskih svetih), which regulated the position, operations, activities and financing of the national and local community youth councils. The need for the law had arisen as a result of the unregulated status and legal personality of the National Youth Council, which was affecting its ability to draw on budget funds.² The legislation in force at the time did not give the National Youth Council the option of acquiring legal personality, mainly because of the links between member organisations organised under the provisions of the Societies Act and those subject to the Political Parties Act, as it also included youth wings of political parties (Škulj, 2016). To bridge these legal gaps, youth councils

² The National Youth Council found itself in a critical position after funds on its account were blocked — indeed, its bank account was even closed at one point following its deletion from the register.

were established as legal entities sui generis. The legislator also pointed out, as the basic reason for the adoption of the law, that children and young people who were organised within different organisations and formed a youth council would now be able to determine, express and implement joint positions and activities, thereby enjoying a more suitable status as an organised form of expression of the common interests of the participating youth organisations in the public sphere (Report on the Draft Youth Councils Act, 2000). The law therefore instructed the government, ministries and other central government and local community authorities to inform the National Youth Council or local community youth councils before setting out draft laws and other regulations with a direct impact on the life and work of young people (Youth Councils Act, 2000, Article 6). However, apart from regulating the position of youth councils, the Youth Councils Act failed to make any inroads into the broader field of youth policy and the youth sector, nor did it establish any of the related definitions that would have allowed this to happen.

EU accession and the beginnings of the systematic regulation of youth policy

The breakthrough in the regulation of youth policy in Slovenia, also infused by the insights of the recent Council of Europe's Advisory mission, came in 2005 with the publication of the Office for Youth's Strategy for Youth in the Field of Youth Policy Until 2010 (Strategija Urada RS za mladino na področju mladinske politike do leta 2010). This was the first comprehensive document to regulate youth policy in Slovenia, define the basic terms and set out the key youth policy areas, with goals, measures and programmes for individual areas aimed at improving the conditions for youth work. At its core, it contained measures and programmes in the vertical youth policy field, i.e. those fields specific to young people and youth work, although its vision for the future development of youth policy encompassed the development of a horizontal youth policy as well. This was reflected chiefly in the fundamental strategic objectives for youth policy in Slovenia set out in the Strategy (Office for Youth, 2005), which contained, inter alia, the requirement 'to incorporate youth policy into all national policies whose strategies, national programmes or legal frameworks specifically also address the youth population'. The Strategy therefore also established vertical and horizontal axes for the formulation and delivery of youth policy by stating that while the horizontal level included measures that were otherwise an integral part of other policies, the state was particularly keen to introduce special measures to create incentives to make it easier for young people to integrate into society (housing policy, employment policy, etc.). The vertical axis included measures that were essentially specific to young people and aimed at promoting their involvement in youth work, putting in place the conditions for youth work, and laying the foundations for a determination of objectives and measures in the youth policy field (ibid.).

The Office for Youth set itself the task of boosting the quality and profile of youth work in Slovenia, strengthening links between different youth work entities, and increasing the mobility of knowledge, ideas and people (Office for Youth, 2005). The political and substantive premises of the Strategy were provided by several basic Slovenian and European documents and processes, chief among them the European Youth Pact and the European Commission's White Paper A New Impetus for European Youth. The Strategy for Youth was also the first Slovenian document to provide comprehensive definitions of some of the basic terms in the field, including 'youth',

'youth work', 'youth policy', 'youth organisation' and 'organisation for work with young people', and defined the factors (key actors) of youth policy at national and local level. At national level, these were the National Youth Council of Slovenia, the coordinators of various different fields (Zavod MOVIT, Zavod MISSS, MaMa Youth Network), youth organisations and organisations for work with young people; at local level, they included youth centres, local community youth councils, local youth organisations, youth initiatives and local youth committees (ibid.). That the Strategy represented the start of the comprehensive and systematic regulation of the youth sector and youth policy in Slovenia is also confirmed by the fact that the Office defined it as a 'living' document designed to serve as a platform for continuous public discussion, and encourage a higher degree of social consensus on its objectives and greater cooperation in its realisation. Judging by its impact on youth policy today, the Strategy for Youth has met its objective of initiating a discussion on the development of youth policy.

Formulation and adoption of the umbrella law

The first steps that followed the realisation of the objectives of the Strategy for Youth after its adoption in 2005 were taken in the same year when the process of drafting an umbrella law on youth was initiated. In September 2005 the Office for Youth commissioned the preparation of a comparative law analysis and the drafting of a law designed to systemically regulate youth policy and youth work from the NGO legal information centre (PIC). The Office set up a working group to provide support to the work of the PIC comprising representatives from the Office, a representative from the Association of Municipalities and Towns of Slovenia, and representatives from the PIC and National Youth Council (Rakar et al., 2011). The comparative law analysis and the theses for the law compiled by the PIC were discussed by the working group in March 2006. Agreement was reached on certain amendments and additions, which the PIC inserted and then sent to the Office. As agreed with the working group, the Office presented the theses to the ministry in charge, and then forwarded them to youth sector organisations for discussion. The first draft of the law was produced in autumn 2006 and was discussed at a consultation organised by the Office. However, the draft did not gain support, which brought the process to a complete halt (Rakar et al., 2011). The National Youth Council attempted to revive the process in 2007 with the preparation of its own proposed law ('Mladina je zakon', Youth Rules), but no further progress was made.

The process was revived again in 2008, when it received support from the newly established governing coalition that arose following the general election. At the initiative of its junior partners (Rakar et al., 2011), the coalition inserted the following commitment into the coalition agreement: that a law on youth work and youth policy would be adopted to provide the basis for a national programme in the youth field; that the Office for Youth would be transferred from the Ministry of Education and Sport to become a government office, and would be tasked with the inter-departmental coordination of issues of concern to young people; and that a Slovenian Government Council for Youth Issues would be established (Coalition Agreement, 2008). On the basis of new findings and past experiences with legislative preparations, the position was taken to formulate a law that would be as narrow as possible (in order to ensure the necessary consensus), but still sufficient to provide the foundation for the drafting of a national youth programme (Rakar et al., 2011). In parallel with the preparation of the draft law, the Government Council for Youth was set up in 2009. At its first meeting,

it discussed the draft and issued a decision authorising the National Youth Council to lead a preliminary discussion within the youth sector in cooperation with the Office for Youth to gather comments on the law (ibid.). On the basis of the comments received at the consultations, the Office, together with the working group, drew up a new draft law, the Public Interest in the Youth Sector Act (Zakon o javnem interesu v mladinskem sektorju), which was approved unanimously by the Government Council for Youth in November 2009. The draft law underwent some minor changes when it reached the government, and was sent to the National Assembly for discussion at the beginning of 2010. After receiving broad parliamentary support, it was passed unanimously on 18 May 2010.

Although the legislators had gone for the narrower option, the law did nevertheless represent an important breakthrough in the development of youth policy, the youth sector and youth work in Slovenia by comprehensively establishing a normative framework for the youth field. Most importantly of all, the public interest act provided a basis for the adoption of a national youth programme, the need for which arose from the realisation that the Office for Youth's strategy in force at the time was having limited impact. What was needed was the targeted integration of the wider field of the 'state' and the inclusion of more ministries if broader impacts were to be achieved and the youth sector developed (Public Interest in the Youth Sector Act [Draft], 2010). To ensure that the youth field matched the international context and the processes taking place at international level closely as possible, the legislators examined and considered various strategic policies and documents produced by international institutions, in particular the EU and the Council of Europe. They included the Recommendation to Member States Concerning Information and Counselling for Young people in Europe, adopted in 1990 by the Council of Europe; the UN Convention on the Rights the Child; the European Commission White Paper A New Impetus for European Youth of 2001, which laid down the framework for cooperation in the youth field; the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, which was adopted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe; the European Youth Information Charter (ERYICA); the Rotterdam Declaration; Recommendations on the European Commission's Proposals Regarding the Youth in Action 2007–2013 Programme; the European Youth Pact; and the Revised Lisbon Strategy.

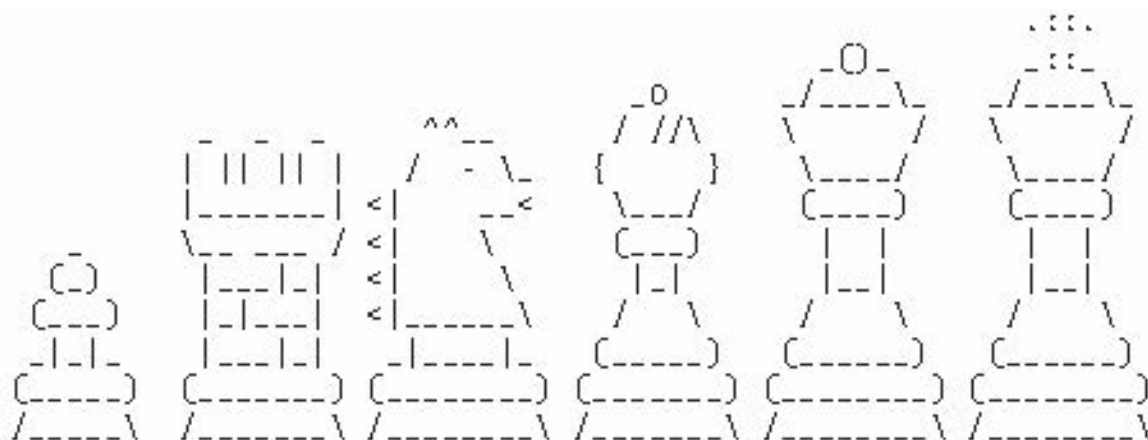
The law defined the youth sector and the public interest in the youth sector, identified the actors and entities operating within the youth sector, and the youth sector bodies and their powers, laid down the conditions and procedures for acquiring the status of organisation operating in the public interest in the youth sector, provided a framework definition of the role of self-governing local communities in the youth sector, and laid the groundwork for a binding strategic document, the National Youth Programme (NPM), which was required to contain strategic objectives, and measures for the achievement of those objectives, and to form the basis for the co-financing of youth sector programmes. The public interest act defined the basic terms, including 'youth policy', which became 'the coordinated set of measures of different sectoral public policies aimed at encouraging and easing the integration of young people into the economic, cultural and political life of the community, and appropriate support mechanisms for the development of youth work and the operation of youth organisations run in cooperation with autonomous and democratic representative representatives of youth organisations and with professional and other organisations' (Public



Interest in the Youth Sector Act, 2010, Article 3). The definition was formulated in a comprehensive way, one that incorporated the whole spectrum of measures that take place within vertical and horizontal youth policy. Horizontal youth policy therefore involved a coordinated set of policies of different ministries aimed at effectively and successfully integrating young people into society (e.g. employment, education, housing policy, culture), while vertical youth policy comprised measures specific to young people and youth work.

National Youth Programme

As the basic programming document setting out the youth sector priorities and measures deemed to be in the public interest (Public Interest in the Youth Sector Act, 2010, Article 16), the National Youth Programme is one of the most important elements of the Public Interest in the Youth Sector Act and of the drive to ensure comprehensive regulation of the position of young people within society (as the definition of 'youth policy' suggested). At its core, the Programme demonstrates this ambition by seeking to ensure the coordinated introduction of a uniform and transparently arranged system of inter-departmental priorities and measures designed to improve conditions and address the problems highlighted by analyses, research and public discussions. It is a horizontal programme, which means that it brings together measures from areas that lie within the remit of different ministries with the aim of creating new value and ensuring that measures are coordinated and visible (Resolution on the National Youth Programme 2013–2022, 2013). The Programme's contents are determined in detail by the Public Interest in the Youth Sector Act (2010, Article 16), which requires it to contain programmes, financial plans (with an indication of costs and funding sources), the people and organisations responsible for delivery, the expected development effects and the indicators used to measure those effects, and the periods and deadlines for delivery of the programme. The National Youth Programme is adopted for a nine-year period by the National Assembly, following a proposal by the government. To enable detailed implementation, the government is required to adopt delivery plans in accordance with the central government budget, while individual ministries are responsible for delivering the Programme and the planned measures. The government is also required to present an interim report on Programme delivery and an evaluation of the results to the National Assembly every three years, as well as a final report at the end of the Programme (ibid.).



When the Public Interest in the Youth Sector Act was passed, it was expected that the National Youth Programme would be adopted within 18 months of the entry into force of the law. However, there were delays to its formulation and final adoption, and the first Programme was not adopted until October 2013 (for the period up to 2022). The process of drafting the 2013–2022 Programme nevertheless began in 2009 with an intensive study of young people in Slovenia; this was because it first required the production of expert background documents based on the facts pertaining to young people, along with some indication of their real needs. A start was therefore made on promoting and financing analyses and research (Resolution on the National Youth Programme 2013–2022, 2013). In 2009 the Social Protection Institute (Inštitut RS za socialno varstvo) compiled an analysis titled *Med otroštvom in odraslostjo – Analiza položaja mladih v Sloveniji 2009* (Between Childhood and Adulthood – An Analysis of the Position of Young People in Slovenia 2009), while the Statistical Office produced the first comprehensive statistical overview of young people (*Mladi v Sloveniji*, Young People in Slovenia). An analysis titled *Matrika ukrepov državnih organov na področju mladinske politike* (Matrix of Measures of State Authorities in the Field of Youth Policy) was produced in 2010 with the aim of evaluating the success of public policies in resolving the specific problems faced by young people. The same year saw the appearance of an analytical study, *Mladinsko delo in mladinska politika na lokalni ravni* (Youth Work and Youth Policy at Local Level), which sought to provide a comprehensive overview and analysis of the organisational status of the youth sector at local level, the instruments in place for supporting youth work and the standards of locally based youth policy in the light of the creation of the National Youth Programme. Probably the most important document in this set was the *Mladina 2010* (Youth 2010) study, which enabled national youth programmes to be based on scientific findings, and provided answers to key questions regarding changes among young people in Slovenia since 2000 (and also after that year), as well as several points of international comparison.

In contrast to the Office for Youth's previous strategy, the National Youth Programme was much more heavily focused on delivering both horizontal and vertical youth policy, as demonstrated by the guidelines on which it is based and the areas it covers: education, employment and enterprise, the living conditions of young people, health and well-being, young people and society, the importance of the youth sector, and culture, creativity, heritage and the media. With the public interest act and then the National Youth Programme, Slovenia therefore took a major step towards addressing the position of young people via an integrated and cross-sectoral youth policy.

Gap between theory and practice

The regulation of youth policy in Slovenia at the normative level is well-aligned with the international standards that constitute the reference framework for development of the field. The specificity of this youth policy requires consistency in its formulation and delivery; only in this way can it be successful and effective. Below we offer an overview of the successes of Slovenian youth policy in realising some of the key attributes of good youth policy (strategic approach, cross-sectoral character and the involvement of young people themselves), as well as an insight into relationships between the national and local levels and their respective responsibilities in relation to youth policy. Other attributes of a successful youth policy, such as adequate management and an evidence-based approach, are covered elsewhere in this book (for example, in the chapters on the Office for Youth, research in the youth field and the youth sector).

Strategic approach to youth policy

A high-quality youth policy requires a concrete and transparent strategy capable of analysing and addressing the youth population's most pressing issues as effectively as possible. The method by which youth policy is regulated in Slovenia, via an umbrella law and a strategic document in the form of a national programme, is completely aligned with this approach, as the establishment of a legal basis has enabled the normative conditions to be put in place for a systemic and strategic approach towards youth policy. The National Youth Programme enables Slovenia to pursue all the steps in this process, from analysing the position of and consulting young people, to monitoring, delivering and evaluating the programme. Evaluation of the Programme, which takes place every three years, has also revealed its strategic nature, as evident from the impact it has had on the development of youth policy. The Programme has had an important effect on the way young people are understood within public policymaking and delivery processes, and raised the awareness of key stakeholders of the specific needs and interests of this group. It has placed young people on the administrative and political agenda, and made an essential contribution by increasing the profile of this important target group. This in turn has led to a greater levels of involvement on the part of young people in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the various measures in this field (Deželan, 2020).

However, the National Youth Programme has been slightly less successful when it comes to monitoring and measuring the achievement of its objectives. At certain points, the performance indicators do not enable realistic measurements to be carried out (because they are not backed up by mechanisms that systematically collect the necessary data), and the delivery of commitments varies from department to department, especially where areas are covered by multiple departments. The National Youth Council has also drawn attention to the lack of an adequate mechanism for monitoring the delivery of measures, pointing out that such a mechanism was envisaged in the framework guidelines for the National Youth Programme (guidelines that have not yet been implemented). The National Youth Council believes that no system yet exists for measuring how successful the Programme's measures are, or the extent to which the position of young people has improved as a result of them (National Youth Council of Slovenia, 2020).

Cross-sectoral character of youth policy

In practice, youth policy cuts across a large number of areas and is in no way connected simply to youth organisations per se. Youth policy is connected to young people, and young people are present in all spheres of public and private life. Therefore, when we talk about youth policy, we are talking about a policy that encompasses all spheres of society. This means that we must approach it in that way. In practice, it is an explicitly inter-sectoral policy and must be conducted as such (Tadej Beočanin, interview, 15 April 2021).³

The first references to horizontal youth policy can be found in the Office for Youth's strategy of 2005, which defined youth policy as having vertical and horizontal aspects. However, the lack of an appropriate legal basis for the strategy meant that it could not itself have the status of a publicly recognised horizontal strategic document; consequently, its final version was explicitly vertical in nature and of a highly internal

character. With the arrival of the Public Interest in the Youth Sector Act, youth policy came together within a single framework, although even that law originally addressed the regulation of vertical youth policy — a pragmatic decision taken to ensure that it would be passed. Nevertheless, Article 5, which addressed the public interest in the youth sector, did make reference to the regulation of horizontal youth policy, i.e. a policy that had an impact on other sectoral policies as well. The public interest was to be realised through the incorporation of youth-related issues into strategies, policies and measures that affected the lives of young people.

With the National Youth Programme addressing horizontal youth policy in more detail and the public interest act at least referring to it, an important chapter was opened for youth policy in Slovenia: here was the first systemic opportunity the country had had to develop a horizontal youth policy that emphasised its cross-sectoral character. The first step was to raise the awareness of all relevant parties of the cross-sectoral challenges facing young people, which was achieved with the help of research and with support for capacity-strengthening provided primarily at international level. One former director of the Office for Youth, Peter Debeljak, believes that fundamental shifts took place at that time that have had an impact on the subsequent development of youth policy in Slovenia. He pointed out that this period was heavily marked by a consideration of other youth policies within the EU, as well as by the availability of funds for this purpose from the EU. Debeljak also acknowledges the important shift in mentality that occurred in Slovenian youth policy, 'from activism to the bureaucratic and systemic regulation of the youth policy field' (interview, 10 May 2021).

However, despite the positive prospects that attended the development of a horizontal youth policy and were heralded by the adoption of the public interest act and the National Youth Programme, cross-sectoral cooperation continues to face major challenges today. Debeljak highlights the lack of an adequate system for funding such policies; and since this approach is not rewarded with budget funds, the success of horizontal policy is, to a large degree, dependent on political interests, whether they are in favour of such an approach or not (Debeljak, interview, 10 May 2021). That political interests can play a decisive role in the development of youth policy in Slovenia is demonstrated by the fact that key shifts have taken place in periods when political parties and politicians have acknowledged the policy and made it one of their priorities. Nowhere was this clearer than in the coalition agreement for Borut Pahor's government, which prioritised the adoption of the public interest act and the National Youth Programme and the establishment of the Government Council for Youth. Certain similar shifts in importance could also be seen later — during Alenka Bratušek's government, for example, when the idea was mooted of appointing a state secretary for young people and making the Office for Youth a government-level authority, although this idea did not come to fruition at that time. As Tadej Beočanin pointed out in an interview on 15 April 2021:

We [...] have not gathered enough energy and have missed the opportunity to unite around an individual who would perform this function. I remember what the prime minister said at the time: that we should sort it out and that she would be happy to appoint someone. But logically, this ran up against the same political obstacles as existed in central government policy as a whole, and we were unable to coalesce around someone whose appointment could then be proposed to the prime minister.

³ Source available from the authors (the same applies to all interviews).

Miro Cerar's government also paid a certain degree of attention to the field, organising a special government session at which youth organisation representatives were invited to put forward their proposals. However, this failed to have any major impact on the development of youth policy itself. The importance of political interests is also confirmed by Tine Radinja, mayor of Škofja Loka and former president of the European Youth Forum, who had this to say in an interview on 9 April 2021:

[E]verything depends on politics in Slovenia. It seems to me that this area has been undervalued by politicians. Only rarely have national politicians come up with a vision or with ideas of what to do with youth work and youth policy. But basically, we're lucky in Slovenia because youth organisations and youth workers have built 'from the bottom up', so that we can now talk about a youth policy in Slovenia.

In practice, the lack of inter-departmental cooperation and the poor understanding of the inter-sectoral dimension of youth policy are evident from the fact that when 'theories of action from other sectoral policies and their related instruments encroach on the measures themselves, the programme is shown to be an instrument with limited reach. At best it intersects with other sectoral public policy mechanisms, at worst it is in direct conflict with them' (Deželan, 2020). The National Youth Programme can, at several points, be understood as the glue that binds together specific sectoral policies and measures that also pursue their own objectives and their own logic of delivery, reporting and evaluation — and that only find themselves in the Programme as a result of a lack of vision in addressing the challenges that young people face and a lack of funding for the creation of new measures (Deželan, 2020; Debeljak, interview, 10 May 2021). The National Youth Council also highlights a lack of cooperation, both between ministries and with other stakeholders (National Youth Council of Slovenia, 2020):

In recent years, young people have been inserted into horizontal policies and at least partly included in the priorities of other ministries, which can be seen as a positive thing. At the same time, individual ministries give the youth sector and other key stakeholders insufficient recognition as relevant factors in the creation, planning and delivery of measures that relate to young people and youth organisations. Youth representatives should not just be involved in preparation — their proposals should also be taken into consideration.

Youth coordinators have been introduced into specific ministries, at the proposal of youth organisations, in an attempt to overcome the problems of cooperation with departments and strengthen the youth dimension in specific sectoral policies.

On several occasions in the past, the idea was formed of bringing the Office for Youth directly under the prime minister's office in order to overcome the obstacles to inter-departmental coordination. The majority of our interviewees are of one mind, however: that the Office for Youth needs, first and foremost, to be strengthened in terms of personnel, funding and powers. Another former director of the Office pointed out that her role was very undefined (Dolores Koles, interview, 18 May 2021):

In terms of its competencies, the Office has only a coordinating role in the field of horizontal youth policies. I would give the Office greater weight in horizontal policies. This does not mean taking powers away from other ministries, but I do think that the Office should simply do more. It has no capacities, it has nothing, but I still believe that it should be the main driver

for promoting youth-related topics. As a coordinator, you don't have the power to change things. The role of the Office is currently also to support the umbrella youth organisations to ensure that they are active in the field, because then ideas or pressures, whatever you want to call them, arrive at specific ministries from different angles.

Inclusion of young people

A central plank of good youth policy is undoubtedly the participation of young people in its entire public policy cycle — that is, from formulation and monitoring, to delivery and evaluation. At the normative level, Slovenia is aware of this; and while the mechanisms are in place, the delivery phase could be more consistent and successful. The Government Council for Youth was established with the aim of including young people in the process of creating youth policy. It performs two functions: first, it fosters the formalised participation of young people in the creation of youth policy and, as such, constitutes the highest level of youth dialogue in the country; second, it promotes the cross-sectoral character of youth policy by comprising representatives of different youth organisations on the one side and representatives of various ministries (government representatives) on the other. This is an ideal picture only on paper; in practice, it is ineffective, with the Council displaying a distinct lack of interest in discussion and decision-making. In an interview conducted on 15 April 2021, Tadej Beočanin, a former member of the Council, had this to say about it:

[I]t has managed to fulfil its mission only to a certain extent. Because as soon as there are indecisive, bureaucratic people at the table, particularly on the government side, it starts to lose its validity as a decision-making body.

This is a problem that young people themselves were quick to recognise, leading the National Youth Council to propose that the presence of more senior-level political representation be secured within the Government Council for Youth. With the support of the Office for Youth and the line ministry, ministers began to be appointed to the Government Council. However, this has not proved effective because the lack of interest means that they simply do not attend meetings and do not send deputies. This is a further example of the importance of political will to youth policy. In this context, the past support for the Government Council at prime ministerial level proved very positive, and attracted media attention, with various prime ministers attending some Council meetings.

According to the principles of good youth policy, one of the most important roles in the development of youth policy should also be played by the umbrella youth organisation. In Slovenia's case, we can say that the importance of the National Youth Council is recognised by politicians, who are prepared to involve it in policymaking and delivery processes. As its policy officer Tanja Baumkirher says: 'It has had the most significant role of all youth organisations in the field of youth policy. For students it's the student organisation [Študentska organizacija Slovenije, Slovenian Student Union], but for other policies and the development of the youth sector, it is the National Youth Council that has played the central role' (Tanja Baumkirher, interview, 15 April 2021). While she also admits that the proposals drawn up by the Council generally

remain unimplemented, she does point out that ‘certain things do happen if enough work is done on them’ (ibid.).

Relationship between national and local levels

Any overview of the development of youth policy in Slovenia cannot but help point out the major issues that attend the relationship between national and local levels — or more specifically, the powers of local communities versus those of central government. As the material produced during the adoption of the public interest act states (Public Interest in the Youth Sector Act [Draft], 2010):

With due regard to the guidelines of the resolutions, which highlight the responsibilities and powers of local actors in relation to young people and youth work, the powers of central government and local communities are separated in the text of the draft law. Local communities should themselves establish the specific features of their youth population and produce measures on that basis.

This demarcation is entirely clear in the law itself, which provides that municipalities are responsible for the youth field at local level. However, the provision on the obligations that municipalities have in this area is slightly less clear, as the youth field is not one of the tasks of municipalities set out in the Local Self-Government Act. There is therefore a general belief that the development of youth policy at local level is, to a large degree, dependent on the interest of the mayor. This is confirmed by Tine Radinja, mayor of Škofja Loka, who says that while making the youth field one of the tasks of municipalities is a positive move, the necessary mechanisms do have to be set up, including financial mechanisms, as municipalities often finance the entirety of youth policy measures from their own funds (interview, 9 April 2021); only then can municipalities begin to think about young people and youth policy as being among their compulsory tasks. Of course, while views on this differ, it is undeniable that ‘it is financial resources, if provided by central government, that would encourage municipalities to begin to address this area in a more comprehensive way, or begin to invest more funds and do so more quickly’ (Tadej Beočanin, interview, 15 April 2021).

Key players at national level are also aware of the need to strengthen cooperation between national and local levels. The National Youth Council points out that youth policy can only be effective if it is carried out in close cooperation between national and local authorities, and that the two levels must determine a systemic arrangement of the powers and obligations of municipalities in the management and financing of youth work and policies (National Youth Council of Slovenia, 2020). The awareness of the need for closer cooperation between national and local authorities also prompted the creation of the ‘Rastimo skupaj’ (Growing Together) project. This is carried out by the Office for Youth and National Youth Council together, and aims to integrate and strengthen municipalities’ capacities to develop youth policy successfully. The Europe Goes Local project, which is designed to develop youth work at local level and is led by the MOVIT Institute for the Development of Youth Mobility, is also part of these efforts, as is the Youth-Friendly Municipality Certificate, which is administered by the Institute for Youth Policy (Inštitut za mladinsko politiko).

Looking towards the future

- If we are to have a targeted and effective (national) youth strategy, elements of the national programme must be formulated in collaboration with line ministries. Only mirrored starting points that are either repeated in departmental strategies or transferred to the national programme can realise the delivery potential that individual line ministries have at their disposal.
- To monitor the performance and effectiveness of youth policy measures, particularly for the National Youth Programme, we require a special mechanism, supported by adequate data that enables the effective measuring of indicators and progress, and by a robust research and analytical infrastructure.
- An instrument for assessing the impacts on young people should be introduced, with young people themselves being involved in the assessment process (‘youth mainstreaming’). This would prevent the adoption of sectoral policies that have a negative effect on the position and status of young people.
- To bolster the development of youth policy at local level, consideration should be given to amending the Local Self-Government Act so that the youth field is made one of the compulsory tasks of municipalities (which should also be given sufficient funding for this purpose)
- Cooperation between national and local decision-makers and policymakers must be strengthened if the National Youth Programme and its measures are to be delivered with greater success.
- Consideration should be given to drafting special programming and financial mechanisms to encourage municipalities to develop youth policies that bolster local youth policy development.
- As participation is a key feature of good youth policy, steps must be taken to ensure that young people are able to take part in the creation and delivery of public policy, for example by participating and helping to make decisions in bodies set up to draft regulations, and in structures that indirectly or directly oversee their delivery.
- To improve inter-sectoral cooperation, youth coordinators should be appointed to ministries with a clear set of tasks and responsibilities, and organisational, human resource and management support secured so as to enable them to carry out those tasks smoothly.
- It would also make sense to organise regular training in the fields of youth, youth policy and youth work for public officials at all levels who deal with the youth field in the course of their work.

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