



INFORMATION TEMPLATE ON SOCIAL INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE



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1. The socio-economic situation of young people

1.1 Please inform which groups of the young people are perceived as being socially excluded. What are the main factors for being socially excluded as a young person in your country?

By the law on social protection, the groups perceived as possible subjects of social protection are those who live in poverty, are without parents custody (orphans), homeless, unemployed, disabled, chronically ill, are victims of violence in family, mothers or from families with multiple children, refugees or foreigners having difficulties in integration, people with addictions, those in crisis situations, or victims of ecological or natural disasters. Many of these criteria are also applied to children and young people. In the planned programme of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the “National Programme on Preventing Poverty and Social Exclusion 2020. New dimension of active integration”¹, much attention is paid to:

- Children in families that are at risk of poverty or social exclusion;
- Young people facing problems entering the labour market (NEET);
- Young people with disabilities (unmet needs of rehabilitation and medical care, problems with participation in education).

In the recent years, young people in general are started to be perceived as a group that has to face more challenges in their lives. As far as their participation in the labour market is concerned – this is revealed by the latest study on social inclusion – young people are perceived in their locality as a excluded group not only by their representatives but as well by elderly people or public representatives (Mach et al 2013). The exclusion is perceived mostly as far as the labour market participation is concerned, but it is noticed that lack of job hinders young people access to e.g. housing, setting up a family and forces young people to migrate from their home towns (or abroad, or to bigger cities).

Children poverty remains a very critical area for action. As stresses by distinguished poverty researcher Wielisława Warzywoda-Kruszyńska (2010) in Poland child poverty is not seen as a violation of child’s rights, and it is rather perceived as a problem of the family than public concern.

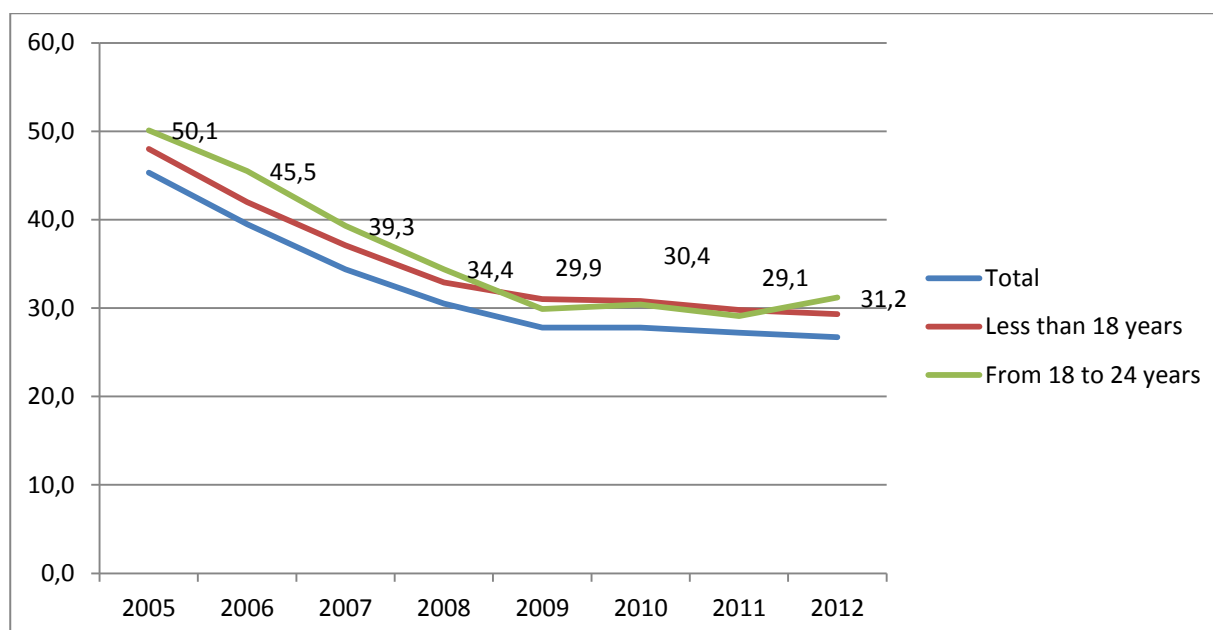
There exist as well inequalities in the access to education – such as impact of the place of living, where in Poland living in the rural areas might have impact on education opportunities, but most of all the level of education of the parents and socio-economic situation of parents (Białecki 2011).

1.2 Please provide the percentage representing the share of young people (18-24) who are at *risk of poverty* (and/or severely materially deprived and/or living in a household with very low work intensity). Please compare it to the general population risk of poverty rate. What is the trend in your country – is the rate growing etc.?

The percentage of children and young people at risk of poverty has been declining in Poland since 2005, still it remains at a high level. In the last years, we are observing that the decline has slowed down and the rate remains more or less stable since 2009. General population risk of poverty is lower from youth risk of about 5pp in 2012. This difference however was smaller in years 2009-2011. In the last year (2012) the gap between risk of general population and youth population has widen again, which indicates that young people are becoming a group being at higher risk of poverty, even more than children below 18 (see figure below). Concerning the children poverty, in Poland the families that are most at risk of poverty are families with 3 or more children (about 30%

¹ <http://www.mpips.gov.pl/bip/projekty-aktow-prawnych/projekty-programow-i-inne/projekt-uchwaly-rady-ministrow-w-sprawie-przyjecia-programu-pod-nazwa-krajowy-program-przeciwdzialania-ubostwu-i-wykluczeniu-spoiecznemu-2020-nowy-wymiar-aktywnej-integracji/> (access 04.06.2014)

at risk of income poverty or social exclusion), as well as families consisting of a single parent with children (50%) (MPIPS 2013).



People at risk of poverty or social exclusion by age and sex, Eurostat, Dashboard of Youth Indicators, accessed 07.10.2013 (percentage)

1.3 Has an impact of the current financial crisis on young people been observed in your country? Please answer by referring to their access to social rights, discrimination, economic exclusion

In the recent study on social inclusion in Poland, labour market inclusion was seen as most important, and young people were among the groups most often cited as being excluded from the labour market. It concerned both young people with low education or with a university degree but without work experience (Mach et al. 2013). The unemployment rate has risen among young people in the crisis – from 18, 7% in 2007 to 27, 4% in 2012. The unemployment of young people is 2-2, 5 times higher than the unemployment of overall adult population (in 2012 – about 10, 3%). As far as registered unemployment is concerned, young people constitute about 20% of all unemployed – about 424,200 people below 25 are registered as unemployed. Since 2008, the time that young person was remaining as registered unemployed has lengthen – in 2008 – 6, 6 months, in 2012 – 8 months. About 125,000 young unemployed were not more than 12 months since finishing education – this number has risen since 2007. Women unemployed have higher qualifications, still they are more at risk of long-term unemployment. (MPIPS 2012)

Concerning job conditions, 66% of young people (15-24) work on temporary contracts (while 90% of those 15-19). The percentage of temporary contracts in Poland remained stable between 2007 and 2011, which would indicate that this is already an established practice. As explained in report Youth 2011 (Szafraniec 2011), the big share of young people employed with temporary contracts leads to the labour market division into two segments: one with stable, indeterminate contracts and second, of those who have temporary contracts and little advancement perspectives. Usually the number of temporary contracts would fall down after five years upon graduation, but in Poland it remains at high level, which means that young people remain trapped in temporary employment

(Szafraniec 2011). As 61% of Polish people have stated in Eurobarometer survey (2011) “Jobs are available but they are very poorly paid (salary not adequate for a reasonable standard of living)”. Those who are not in employment, education nor training constitute 11,6% (Eurofund 2012). Young people from Poland face problems in transitioning from education to work, as these young people are more often inactive on the labour market, they have high skills and a good education level, but no work experience. As they are more often female, this might indicate the process of pushing off women from the labour market in connection to childbearing. As noticed, these young people have usually no or little work experience (after Krzaklewska 2013).

Another phenomenon is appearing category of working poor, so people who are in the labour market but face problems with sustaining themselves with their salary. While the risk of poverty remains much higher for those unemployed, it is notice that about 12% of employed young people (15-24 or 25-29) are faced with in-work poverty risk (in comparison to about 8% 55-64) (see more Eurofund 2010, Working poor in Europe report).

Concerning the social rights of young people, it is plausible that young people are most often employed on the temporary contracts, that suggests that some of them may be deprived of the social security measures such as unemployment benefits, as well as possibility to receive mortgage to buy an apartment. About half of young unemployed has no job history, this implies that they are not entitled to the unemployment benefits (MPIPS 2012). This situation is also difficult for young parents who want to set up a family, and without having adequate contracts they are not able to receive parental leave benefits.

2. Policy measures for young people at risk of social exclusion

2.1. Social subsistence/ protection and health cover for young people living in poverty

Please describe country's social protection provisions for young people living in poverty (list of benefits young people living in poverty are entitled to).

Family benefits: The welfare support is mostly directed to children through families, which may receive support in form of financial benefits, meals, support for their schooling (education scholarship), advising/psychological counseling, and in case the child who lacks parental support or care, a place in a foster family or a social welfare home. Families are entitled to the social benefits if living on a low income and to the child deduction on the income tax.

Day care: Children are also invited (or directed) to participate in the afternoon school (day care activities) – they provide young people with activities, ways to spend free time, support in their school work, as well as also psychological support.

Unemployment benefits: Some of young people are entitled to unemployment benefits. The person which during the last 18 months worked for 365 days and was receiving at least minimum wage, can receive an unemployment benefit of about 200 euro for a period of 6 or 12 months. Other forms of support for unemployed include trainings, job announcements as well as funding for setting up a business (mostly through EU funds). But as mentioned earlier, about half of young unemployed has no job history, this implies that they are not entitled to the unemployment benefits (MPIPS 2012).

Support for autonomous living: There is a special procedure (art.88 of the Law) to support young people aiming at autonomous living (pl. osoba usamodzielniana), who lack personal resources in the process, such as persons 18-year-old with intellectual disability who leave social

welfare homes, single mothers from single mother homes, or those leaving a reformatory, educational or socio-therapeutic centers. These people might receive financial or material support, mostly for education, housing, as well as assistance in finding employment. The condition for receiving support is person's commitment to realize the individual plan of becoming autonomous, with assistance of a social worker.

2.2. Measures to meeting the medical care needs of Young people at risk of social exclusion

Please describe any measures taken to meet the medical care needs of young people at risk of social exclusion.

In Poland the medical services are available for free for most of the young people (up to age 18 and those in education up to age 26, unemployed registered have also medical insurance for free). The issues concerning accessibility of medical services are multiple but seem more problematic to the population in general, possibly due to the fact that young people do not yet face health problems. About 3% of young people aged 18-24 reported unmet needs of medical examination compared to 9% of overall population (EU Youth Report, 2012, p. 56). About 5% of children had unmet medical needs (ibidem, p.57). The young people with disabilities is the group most affected by the lack of adequate medical assistance, especially concerning rehabilitation (MPIPS 2013).

2.3. Measures to re-engage the young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)

Programmes for unemployed youth: The government, through employment services, provides programmes directed at young people who are unemployed – most of these programmes are measures directed at activation of a young person and supporting their (re)access to the labour market. Young people who are unemployed and under 25 were by law since 2004, the status of a group with a special situation on the labour market, thereof the employment services within 6 months of their registration are obliged to give them a proposal of employment, or other form of professional activation. Most often the measures undertaken constituted of internships and trainings. In 2012 about 150,000 young registered unemployed took part in some activation interventions from the employment services. The most common were **internships** – about 100,000 young people took part in it, and about 24,000 young people participated in **trainings**. About 7,800 young people received the grant (subsidy) to **open up one's business** (MPIPS 2012). From this year, there is also an opportunity to get a preferential loan for opening up a company ('First Business').

Voluntary Labor Corps (OHP): <http://www.ohp.pl/en/> OHP is a state organization functioning under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. As we read on the website: "The primary objective of VLC is to create adequate conditions for proper social and vocational development of young people, including special actions that are addressed to disfavored young people who are supported by VLC and such support consists in organization of various forms of going out of poverty, unemployment, and social pathology effects. Actions taken by VLC are addressed to three groups of young people aged 15-25 years." VLC offers educational model that merges school education and vocational training. While attending public elementary or grammar school, he or she is trained in a particular profession or acquires occupational qualifications at the level of basic vocational school. Each student signs individual employment contract with an

employer, under the terms and conditions applicable to juvenile employees. VLC participants are paid for both work time and study time (employers can have wages paid to students refunded).

2.4. Measures to ensure access to decent housing for young people at risk of social exclusion

There is not enough mobilization as far as provision of the decent housing conditions; therefore the programme of social inclusion as one of its aims has the improvement of quality housing (MPIPS 2013). Today, about 13% of children live in the houses that are of inadequate quality (20% of children at risk of poverty) (MPIPS 2013). Young people in Poland delay in time leaving the parental home, which may be caused by the raising costs of living alone. In 2010, the housing cost overburden was faced by a bit less than 10% of young people in Poland aged 18-24 and similarly by those aged 25-29 (EU Youth Report, 2012, p. 55).

In Poland we lack a definition of 'social housing'. There are measures which could be treated as social housing measures (about 13% of all housing) (MPIPS 2013). One is **communal housing** (8,7% of all housing in Poland in 2011), which are not being developed but their numbers are diminishing. Second is **TBS – Association of Social Housing**, a company which allows people with lower income to 'acquire' their own apartment (the apartment does not become a property, but the costs are lower than buying an apartment; there are plans to allow the contributors to such housing to buy them and become owners).

Programme Housing for youth (pl. Mieszkanie dla Młodych): In Poland until last year, families (with the younger person up to 35) could be beneficiaries in the programme concerning support for buying apartments ('Family on its own', pl. 'Rodzina na swoim') - this programme finished last year and now there is a new programme which is called Housing for youth (Mieszkanie dla młodych) which supports young persons up to 35 both those who are single and in marriage for buying their first apartment. The state will subsidize 10% of up to 50m² of the apartment for couples or single people without children and 15% in case they have children. Additionally, if in the following 5 years the family will have at least 3 children, the additional 5% of subsidy will be available. The programme supports buying the first apartment (from the primary market) or building the first house.

'Protected' Housing (pl. mieszkania chronione) – some people may receive support in their way to autonomous living in the shape of the apartment. This may concern people who leave foster care, reformatory, educational or socio-therapeutic centers, persons 18-year-old with intellectual disability who leave social welfare homes, or refugees. The apartment is under the supervision of a social worker (Law on Social Protection).

Housing benefit (pl. dodatek mieszkaniowy). People with low income may receive a benefit to cover part of their housing expenses from gmina (municipality).

2.5. Measures addressing the social integration of young people with disabilities

Multiple measures are being introduced to support people with disabilities, among them young people. These include medical and rehabilitation support (e.g. refund for rehabilitation equipment), support in receiving employment (internships, trainings, subsidized employment, work in the institutions with work supervision), specialized education, support in spending free time through the work of the multiple non-governmental organisations (see www.niepelnosprawni.gov.pl). The

offered measures often do not prove successful, still more and more efforts are in place for allowing young people with disabilities to participate in the society. For example **in the labour market** no matter the existing measure, inactivity of people with disabilities is still much higher than in other European countries. (Gąciarz, Rozmus 2012)

Inclusive education is aimed at preventing social exclusion of young people with disabilities. In the Education System Act (pl. ustawa z dnia 7 września 1991 r. o systemie oświaty) allow to organise education of children and young people in diverse forms in order to assure the accessibility of such. The regulations indicate that the content, methods, and organisation of education has to be adapted to the psycho-physical needs and potential of pupils, as well as assuring them with psychological and pedagogical assistance, assuring access to special schools, adjusted to individual needs and predispositions. Flexible systems for education of young people with disabilities allow a choice of the form of education by parents or legal guardian. Additionally, the inclusion of children and young people with disabilities is additionally strengthened through the change of regulations that promotes more individualized learning conditions. Schools of all levels and institutions (general, special and integrative) are obliged to organise individual learning on the basis of the special diagnosis of the pupils done by the experts of public psycho-pedagogical clinic. Each pupil follows an individual educational and therapeutic plan adjusted to one's development and educational needs and to one's psychophysical abilities. More efforts are needed concerning the assurance of **quality of education** for young people with disabilities. There is necessity to update the existing educational programmes, as young people with disabilities are sometimes receiving qualifications that cannot be used at the labour market. The **access to study materials** is difficult (esp. for those with sight, hearing disabilities or intellectual disabilities) as well to the educational spaces (physical and sight disabilities), so in effect the level of education is being lowered or people are directed to individual education without previous efforts. (Gąciarz, Rozmus 2012) Good practice is already an existing office for people with disabilities at almost every bigger university, supporting them in studying.

The most critical area of action is **social, civic and political participation of young people with disabilities**. Young people with disabilities are perceived not as active agents in the society but as those who have to be taken care of, they are not given a voice. There need to be more efforts to consult with them concerning their needs, to give them a space for social engagement and to create their own groups or associations, providing training and empowerment. Young people with disabilities need to be given space to become pro-active (very often also within their own associations), be aware of their rights and potentials, be given clear information on this (not this information is scattered and 'hidden' in different laws) and be stimulated to be active. (Raszeja-Ossowska 2013).

The Government Plenipotentiary for Disabled People supervises execution of tasks specified by the Act of 27 August 1997 on vocational and social rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities. Since November 2007 the post of the Government Plenipotentiary for Disabled People has been occupied by Mr. Jarosław Duda. See more:
<http://www.niepełnosprawni.gov.pl/english-version-/the-government-plenipotentiary/>

Project "From the holistic diagnosis of situation of people with disabilities in Poland towards the new model of social policy towards disabilities" run by AGH University in Krakow (pl. Od kompleksowej diagnozy sytuacji osób niepełnosprawnych w Polsce do nowego

modelu polityki społecznej wobec niepełnosprawności) deals with 6 themes, among other: University graduates with disabilities, Disabilities and new media, Improving employment of people with disabilities (best practices) and Gender dimension of disability. Results of the project are available at: <http://polscyniepelnosprawni.agh.edu.pl/>

More for analyses of the young people with disabilities see the bibliography.

2.6. The contribution of youth work (and youth centres) to social inclusion of young people

Have there been measures taken at all levels (national, regional, local) to ensure youth work and youth centres have the means to contribute towards the social inclusion of young people? If yes, please explain.

Youth participation in public life: The former Strategy for Youth, set for 2003-2012 prepared by the Ministry of National Education and Sport used the concept of youth participation in public life (Uczestnictwo młodzieży w życiu publicznym). In the strategy, the participation is defined as “possibility of expressing opinions, making decision in matters which concern them or the society in which they live in”. Participation implies participating in the decision making process on various levels of social and state management, particularly including local communities. Participation is also understood as an own activity of young people, not organized by the state but by youth groups as such (“The state should play an aiding role for youth groups, allowing them for their own activity – the state should be an animator of actions, and not their organizer.”), therefore the strategy aims at supporting youth organizations which are the main space for young people to act as well as any other less formal activity of young people.

In the latest report Młodzi 2011 (Youth 2011), three recommendations concerning youth participation have been proposed:

- Creating mechanisms of participation and consultation in preparation of public decisions, corresponding with participative democracy (on the local scale, connected with participation budget), using modern communication technologies (nets), constructing open government model –to make young generation step from being observers to actors
- Creating new conditions for civil society actions and work of its institutions (including various forms of NGOs), supporting the NGOs through a long-term project of financial support from the state budget.
- Creation of the young people representation organizations on different levels and in different areas, giving them feasible tasks and supporting governmental coordination of actions for young generation.

At the moment Poland does not have the strategy for youth as the previous one expired in 2012. However, being a member of the Council of Europe and the European Union, Polish authorities are obliged to respect and follow the general recommendations set in the respective documents, i.e. The Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. Moreover, the Polish Law on the Local Government states that: „The municipal council at the request of those who concerned may agree to establish a youth municipal council having a consultative nature”.

Below, there are examples of youth participation structures at national, regional and local level as well as examples of activities.

1. **National level: Polish Council of Youth Organisations (PROM)** - <http://www.prom.info.pl>, established in 2011. PROM is a representative of the organisations associated within it for issues related to the needs and postulates of young people. PROM priorities are to be involved in the e.g. development of the youth policy, popularisation of the concept of public involvement of young people, support of collaboration, exchange of information and experiences between youth organisations and youth unions and organisations acting on behalf of youth, facilitation of contact between Polish youth organisations and youth unions. Membership of the council is open to organisations where minimum 2/3 of members are aged under 35, also the youth town councils may participate in the activities of PROM. The Ministry of National Education has supported the process of establishing the Polish Council of Youth Organisations from the very beginning, but it is an organization independent of the state structures. The establishment of PROM is a step towards the European social dialogue standards, meaning assuring participation of young groups and organisation in policy work and consultation. The remaining challenge is to find ways to cooperate with non-formal youth groups and preparing activities to stimulate increased participation of individuals.
2. **Regional level: Youth councils** - they exist alongside the voivodeship council, municipality (gmina), province (powiat) council, or even city district (dzielnica) council, and it is elected through democratic elections in schools. The aims of a council are to promote active citizenship among young people and participation, spreading knowledge on council work (among members and among all young people), consult the work on the main council and voice opinion all matters concerning the city or province (including social inclusion). They can prepare proposals, publish articles in media, voice opinions in the city council sessions, hold meetings with mayor or counselors or become active through demonstration or marches.
3. **Local: School councils** - according to the Law on the Education System, each school should have a school council. The students elect the board, which represents all the pupils of the school. The council can present opinions and proposals to the school council, pedagogic council or director, especially those related to the rights of students (e.g. organisation of school, possibility to publish school magazine, organize social, cultural, sport and other activities).
4. **Non-governmental organisations:** Non-governmental youth organisations contribute to the social inclusion of young people, as far as their social, civic and political participation is concerned. The activities of youth organisations are diverse and cover diverse themes. Right now the organisations can receive funding for their activities when the funding is launched, still there is a need of the additional funding directed particularly at the youth initiatives promoting active participation of young people, their own initiatives. There is not enough funding support operational costs of youth organisations. The Polish Law on associations allow for the creation of youth organisations upon fulfilling certain criteria. The registration of the youth organization (as well of any association) is free of charge. Many of those exist in Poland and are quite active – in 2011 the Youth in Action Programme financed some 600 projects submitted by non-governmental organisations.

5. **Non-formal groups of young people** – that do not want to go through all registration procedures and gather around certain issue (including social inclusion) in order to spend their free time, share experience or develop competences. E- participation – young people are quite active creating groups of interest (very often related to social and political issues) on social media. They also run blogs that are dealing with issues related to civic activity or dealing with political and social issues.

Day care centers: There exist in Poland a network publically funded of the day care centers. In Poland exists 1375 day care centers, among which 587 is run by public authorities (pl. gmina, municipality) and 770 run by other institutions e.g. non-governmental organisation, churches etc. they provide free time activities for young people, support in studying, as well as work with parents and support them in raising children. In 2012 31,737 children attended day care centers. (Information of the Ministers Council on family support and foster care system, 2013). In the planned programme on social inclusion (MPIPS 2013), the fund will be directed to support the day care centers as well as other socio-therapeutic youth centers in providing their attendees with social and professional competences that could be later used at the labour market. Beyond the employability enhancement, more stress should be placed at the civic competence and social participation of young people. **Siemacha** (<http://www.siemacha.org.pl/>) is a very effective non-governmental organisation responsible for multiple day care activities to adolescents, spots open 24/7, foster houses, sport zones or supported housing for young people over 18 who left foster houses. It is perceived by the city and wider public as a very well organized, very professional and trustworthy organization, having many institutional and private partners. Its work has become a model for other cities, which also today open the Siemacha day care centers (e.g. in Kielce, Wrocław, Tarnów or Katowice). They base they work on very strict educational aims and high standards of work taking care of a young person cognitive, educational, social, emotional and physical development. It is also quite innovative e.g. the organization has opened a first day care in the shopping mall, as the shopping malls appear to be the new area where young people passively spend their time. The research shows that Siemacha has positive effect on integration of young people with difficult family situation and fewer economical resources (cited after Krzaklewska 2011).

Streetwork: One more method starting to being more frequently used within NGO work is streetwork. 'Streetwork – an effective contact' is a project funded by the European Social Fund, and realised by the Municipal Social Aid Centre starting from January 2010. The aim is to help young people with multiple disadvantages. These young people are often called street-kids, as they live without stable family support and spend most of their time hanging out in their neighborhoods. The programmes reaches about 150 youngsters (15-25 years old), mostly male (about 70%), during the duration of the project. The streetworkers, nine people employed the Municipal Social Aid Centre, enter into a direct contact with young people trying to become colleagues and motivate them to change their life for better, to be active. They go directly to the neighborhoods, talking to young people who hang out outside. These groups are rather passive and closed, they do not move, this is why it is necessary to approach them in their houses (it revealed that some of them rarely move from the neighborhood). It has to be stressed that streetworkers work with a person is based on the stable and regular contact, as well as sometimes also through special workshops or psychological therapy. Another organisation using this method but directed mostly at children is Rakowicka 10. The programme operates with the use of street pedagogy methods. Street workers make contact with children and teenagers in their own environment offering alternative ways of spending free time by animation, pedagogical and socio-

therapeutic measures, as well as execution of joint projects with the participation of children and teenagers. Thanks to the use of street working as an operational method, street workers can reach those people who do not use traditional forms of help and support, that is socio-therapeutic centres, who are afraid or do not know how to turn to institutions for help. Apart from the contact with the child's family (parents or legal guardians), the workers make contact with schools, curators and social workers.

3. Research on social inclusion

- 3.1. Is there any national report/ national survey investigating the social exclusion of young people in your country, including issues of discrimination? Please provide brief descriptions of the most representative and links, if available.**

The report of Youth 2011 includes topics such as poverty, social inequalities, disability, barriers to employment and education:

- Youth 2011 [pl. Młodzi 2011], by Krystyna Szafraniec, available at: http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/documents/EKCYP/Youth_Policy/docs/Better_understanding/Research/Poland_youth_2011.pdf (version in English)

- 3.2. Is there any longitudinal research focused on the cumulative nature of disadvantage (taking place across generations of the same family). Please provide the title and the link, if available.**
 - "Poverty in childhood as a determinant of future poverty and social exclusion" (p: *Bieda w dzieciństwie jako zagrożenie utrwaleniem biedy i wykluczenia społecznego w przyszłości*) <http://www.wzlot.uni.lodz.pl/pub/dokumenty/123231.pdf>
 - Warzywoda-Kruszyńska Wiesława (2011) *Badania nad ekologią i dziedziczeniem biedy w wielkim mieście*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN [Researching ecology and inheritance of poverty in a big city]

- 3.3. Apart from national reports and surveys, are you aware of other research that is valuable for understanding the situation of young people (esp. those with fewer opportunities) in the current crisis? Please provide the title and the link, if available.**
 - Warzywoda-Kruszyńska Wiesława 2013. *Intergenerational transmission of poverty: a challenge for Poland. The Baltic Region. Issue №3(17)* http://journals.kantiana.ru/eng/baltic_region/1455/4140/
 - Petelewicz, M., Warzywoda-Kruszyńska, W. 2010, *Bieda w dzieciństwie jako zagrożenie biedą i wykluczeniem społecznym w przyszłości*, Łódź, Wydawnictwo Biblioteka [Poverty in childhood as a risk of poverty and social exclusion in the future].
 - *Faces of poverty in contemporary Poland*. [Pl. *Oblicza biedy we współczesnej Polsce*]. Editors: Monika Popow, Piotr Kowzan, Małgorzata Zielińska, Magdalena Prusinowska, Magdalena Chruściel, available: <https://depot.ceon.pl/bitstream/handle/123456789/131/Oblicza%20biedy%20we%20wspolczesnej%20Polsce.pdf?sequence=1>
 - Anna Czerwińska, Zofia Łapniewska, Joanna Piotrowska, *Kobiety na „zielonej wyspie”*. Kryzys w Polsce z perspektywy gender. Fundacja Feminoteka, Warszawa 2010. http://www.feminoteka.pl/downloads/Kryzys_a%20kwestiegender_www.pdf

- Jan Czarzasty, Dominik Owczarek. The economic crisis and social dialogue in Poland. Instytut Spraw Publicznych, Warszawa 2012, <http://www.isp.org.pl/uploads/pdf/998320264.pdf>
- Polski Raport Social Watch 2010. Ubóstwo i wykluczenie społeczne w Polsce. KPH2011. Available: http://www.kph.org.pl/publikacje/raport_sw_2010.pdf
- Poverty in Poland in the data of National Statistical Office [pl. Ubóstwo w Polsce w świetle badań] GUS. 2013. Available: http://www.stat.gov.pl/gus/5840_8292_PLK_HTML.htm

4. Examples of policy responses and practices

- 4.1. **What are the relevant initiatives/projects at regional/ national level promoting the social inclusion of young people?** *Please describe policies, regulations, legislation put in place or major initiatives/ projects (from the governmental or the third sector) which had the social inclusion of young people as major focus.*

Recently, the plans are to **reform the existing mechanisms** supporting unemployed, in order to more efficiently solve problems of the labour market such as high inactivity of some groups, long-term unemployment, little geographical mobility. The support will be extended to the young people up to 30 years old. The support is supposed to be more individual, enhancing agency of young persons in planning together with an advisor Individual Plan of Action.

In 2012, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy started a pilot project “Your career- your choice” to test new tools that would support the employment of young people (aged up to 30) in the new programme “**Youth on the Labour Market**”. These tools include:

- 1) Individual support of an unemployed person from an advisor,
- 2) Promessa for youth – tools to be selected with a support of the advisor (Stipend to undergo training, stipend to continue education after higher education on the postgraduate course, stipend to go to vocational school or post-secondary school, stipend for undergoing internship, subsidy for an employer to offer a job to an unemployed young person).
- 3) Financial support for moving to another town to undertake a job.

The programme as well aims at activation the university career offices and building collaboration of these with employment services. Similarly, there will be opportunity for collaboration with employers, public authorities and training companies to organise requalification courses that later will guarantee job placements. Some additional forms of support are planned to be offered to **parents who want to come back at the labour market after parental leaves** – in the form of subsidy for employers, promoting tele-work.

More detailed information: <http://www.mpips.gov.pl/aktualnosci-wszystkie/zatrudnienie-i-przeciwdzialanie-bezrobociu/art.5779,program-mlodzi-na-ryнку-pracy.html>

Very good initiative (which is still in planning) is the **programme “Active Youth”** (prepared by the adhoc group of youth policy in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy). In the light of the focus of the youth initiatives around economic activity this programme is mostly valuable as it gives more attention to social and civic competence of young people. In the light of lack of youth strategy or other programme directed at young people, it is a great initiative that would give possible support to youth groups, youth initiatives and youth empowerment. The programme has 4 priorities:

1. Hobbies and interests (providing more diverse leisure time activities);
2. Social and civic activism (promoting participation of young people in political processes, local initiatives, cooperation, volunteering, civic education);
3. Preparation to the labour market (non-formal education, internships/study visits, coaching and advice);

4. Infrastructure of support (supporting youth leaders and youth workers, support for youth centers).

In 2013, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy has given grants to non-governmental organisations for **supporting equal opportunities of women and men on the labour market**. Most of the grants were given for supporting re-entrance to the labour market of women who took care of their children. In the 2013, the government has taken also other decisions that could go in this direction possibly combating gender discrimination at the labour market such as possibility to divide equally the parental leave among mother and father, as well as taken steps to assure access to pre-school education to all children.

Access to leisure activities: Ministry of Education is giving funds to organisations supporting e.g. summer camps of scouts. Additionally, each year the number of competitions is open to schools, institutions and organisations concerning the organisation of youth exchanges or local projects.

4.2. Have young people and civil society organizations been given political and financial support to be involved in the policy making process on social inclusion?

Consultations: Non-governmental organisations, including youth organisations, have possibility to comment on the law proposals including proposals for Ministry of Labour and Social Policy National Programme on Preventing Poverty and Social Exclusion 2020. New dimension of active integration. Youth organisations are not given any special role in such consultations.

Structured dialogue: Additionally, the Ministry of Education is supporting the structured dialogue with young people, which is coordinated by PROM (Polish Council of Youth Organisations) and run in partnership with Ministry of National Education and National Agency for the Youth in Action Programme and Erasmus+. The topics of structured dialogue include social inclusion of young people: Irish Presidency – Youth work and social inclusion, Lithuanian Presidency – social inclusion of NEETs. More information is available: http://prom.info.pl/?page_id=279. The structured dialogue needs still a wider outreach and more innovative tools in order to reach more young people.

4.3. Have youth organisations and other civil society organisations been involved in the development of the policies related to social inclusion of young people

Social inclusion of young people, besides the area of the labour market is not distinguished as an area for action which specifically concerns youth. Poverty is seen rather from the family perspective, even if it impacts most of all children. Poverty of young people is becoming only recently as issue of young people above 18 who may face challenges concerning their transitions to autonomous living in the light of difficult labour market situation. Young people with disabilities have as well not been very active as a separate group of people with disabilities, but rather included in the wider structures of organisations that are available for all age categories. Concerning the political participation of young people recent initiatives come from the Polish Council of Youth Organisations (<http://www.prom.info.pl/>) that starts to undertake actions to consult policies directed or impacting young people. The engagement of youth organisations in youth policy is still the area that needs further improvement and efforts from the state authorities in encouraging and empowering young people in shaping youth policies at all levels.

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