

GUIDELINES FOR CSOs WORKING WITH

YOUTH

AT RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN WESTERN BALKANS

“ACHIEVING THE YOUNG PERSON’S GOALS,
BROKEN INTO REALISTIC STEPS TO GET THERE”

We hope that you will find this document useful for your further work and that it will inspire you to help children and youth embrace positive social values.

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The Guidelines for CSOs working with children and youth at risk in Western Balkans (further in the document Guidelines) seek to strengthen Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working with specific categories of At-risk Youth in Western Balkans, in order to provide standardized, high quality services to youth at greater risk of social exclusion.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The publication was developed within the At Risk Youth Social Empowerment Project (further in the document Project), funded by the European Union, represented by the European Commission, coordinated by the NGO Juventas, and implemented by CSOs in Western Balkan countries.

The Project started in 2016, with the duration of 45 months, targeting CSOs and relevant state authorities, international stakeholders, media, education facilities, employment offices, business sector, judiciary, young people (mainly at-risk youth), parents, etc.

The overall aim of the Project is to contribute to regional achieving of social inclusion of most at risk youth by strengthening CSOs capacities, regional / national cooperation and advocacy actions. The specific objective is to support equal access to education, employment, justice and other related fields to most-at-risk young people in Balkan countries, by fostering the level of active participation and inclusion of CSOs representing young people in decision making and reform processes.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDELINES

This document is the result of the work and dedication of CSOs' representatives who, gathered around the At Risk Youth Social Empowerment Network (further in the document Network), conducted a research on social position of youth at risk, identifying problems and their possible causes, mapping available services, and making recommendations which should suppress their social exclusion. Through partnership, and with a contribution of stakeholders, CSOs created joint standards in social delivery when working with youth at-risk.

This document was commissioned by NGO Juventas as a coordinator of the Project, and has gone through an external and internal review process, which targeted a broad range of stakeholders including... Its development was overseen by a Project/National working group...????

STRUCTURE

The Guidelines set out international standards for the protection of youth at risk, an overview of the institutional framework for cross-sectoral cooperation in Western Balkans, the guiding principles and values, a code of conduct for NGOs and a code of ethics for the beneficiaries, description of phases in working with vulnerable young people, a detailed description of case management/planned support model, modalities of cooperation and collaboration on different levels, types of available services and interventions, existing operating procedures, and modern trends that should be incorporated in the work in the region.

USE OF THE GUIDELINES

This publication is in line with the content of the Standards for CSOs working with youth at risk of social exclusion and the remaining six Guidelines for service provision to the target groups of the Project. The document is intended to inform the work of CSOs so that services to vulnerable youth are provided in a manner that supports them to achieve the same outcomes that are sought for all young people – that they have a strong sense of wellbeing and are positive about their future. The Guidelines also refer to people who have everyday professional contact with vulnerable youth and who consequently have particular sensitivity and empathy for their needs.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

YOUTH

According to the definition of the United Nations, each person between 10 and 24 years of age is considered a youth, while according to the Council of Europe (CoE), a person is considered a youth until the age of 30. In most of the countries from the region, the term "youth" covers all persons between 15/16 and 30 years of age. Still there is no official, unambiguous definition of young people. It varies due to circumstances, especially with regard to socio-cultural patterns, geography and various policy settings. Common to European countries is that the period of youth is marked with the important life changes: milestone in education to job market transition, maintaining residential independence from the parental home, from being financially dependent to managing its own money, from being a son/daughter to raising the ones.

TYPES OF DOCUMENTS THAT PREDOMINANTLY ADDRESS YOUTH

Country	Youth in constitution	Law on Youth	Other relevant act(s)	National Youth Strategy	Youth Action Plan	Cross-Sectoral Mechanisms
Albania	X	Law on Empowerment of Youth, 2008.		The Youth Strategy 2013 - 2017	National Youth Action Plan 2015-2020	Department of Youth Policy Coordination at the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth
Bosnia and Herzegovina						

.....