



European Federation of Youth Service Organisations
Federation Européenne des Associations au Service de la Jeunesse
Europäischer Verband der Jugendservice Organisationen

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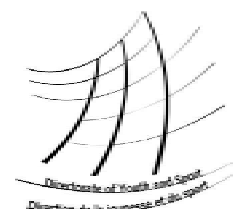
Budapest, May 2002

The investigations of the Social & Political reasons for Youth Violence in the different Socio-Cultural regions of Europe

STUDY SESSION
European Youth Centre Budapest
9th – 16th September 2001

REPORT

This report gives an account of various aspects of the study session. It has been produced by and is the responsibility of the educational team of the study session. It does not represent the official point of view of the Council of Europe.



Index

Index.....	2
EFYSO.....	3
Introduction.....	4
Aims.....	5
Objectives.....	5
Working methods.....	5
Violence against women.....	6
Objectives:.....	6
Methodology:.....	6
Structure of the module:.....	6
Preparation of the activity.....	6
Profile of the participants.....	7
Preparation for the team.....	7
Outcomes.....	9
Material which was produced on the basis of this activity.....	9
Expected impact.....	10
Political impact on the organisation.....	10
Educational impact.....	10
Structural impact.....	11
Support from the EYC.....	11
Procedures that should be changed/improved.....	12
Problems encountered in running the activity.....	12
Information about the participants.....	12
The team.....	12
List of Participants.....	13
Appendix: Petition.....	16

EFYSO

The European Federation of Youth Service Organisations (EFYSO) was originally established in October 1993 under French Law. It was dissolved and re-founded this year under Austrian law because of the relocation of the Secretariat.

The aim of the Federation is to develop co-operation between its members in order to promote, at a European level, the quality of life of young people, particularly of those suffering from exclusion, to contribute to their social integration and to assist them in their career planning.

EFYSO promotes and facilitates social inclusion and intercultural learning. It undertakes this mission by building co-operation between its members, who work at a European level, to improve the quality of life of all young people but particularly those suffering social exclusion. EFYSO, through its member organisations, provides educational opportunities and life chances, in different countries and cultures, which will enhance the integration of young people into the labour market and empower them to make informed choices about their social and cultural development. Its ethos is to improve the social conditions which determine the development of young people and to promote co-operation between other European and International organisations who share this ethos.

Apart from members in Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain and Ireland, EFYSO has associated members and partners in other countries such as Poland, Portugal, Italy, France, Russia and Ukraine. Unlike many other international or indeed intercontinental federations, EFYSO is in fact made up of both non-religious and non-party political member organisations, all of whom share the same common basic objectives.

EFYSO is essentially financed by contributions from the member countries' organisations. The specific programmes organised every year also receive financial aid from the Commission of the European Union and the national governments in the member countries. EFYSO organises one major international conference, one study session and one training course every year as well as many international Youth Exchanges. Apart from these activities, EFYSO helps to organise various smaller projects with organisations responsible for drug and alcohol abuse, racism, intercultural awareness, youth mobility, European citizenship, etc. The members of EFYSO are continually trying to bridge the long-standing gaps in Europe between North & South and East & West. The federation is now also a member of the European Youth Forum and is, in addition, strongly involved in organising EVS projects.

Introduction

There were many reasons behind the choice of investigating a theme like “social & political reasons of youth violence” during this study session at the European Youth Centre; to mention just a few:

- ④ the fact that youth violence is a phenomenon present in all European countries and is currently increasing in some of them,
- ④ the fact that youngsters themselves are subjects and very often also objects of youth violence,
- ④ the conviction that an intercultural approach can be effective in dealing with such issue,
- ④ the belief that comprehension of the phenomenon is the first step towards limiting its spread,

Basing its choices on these considerations, the team set up a programme which aimed to “explore” the theme, roughly composed of three sections.

The first section’s objective was to provide participants with a certain number of tools for their autonomous exploration. First, a common definition of violence was worked out (defining the “boundaries” of the territory to be explored during the week), and this was followed by a session on conflict, which tried to give a possible “key” to analyse the reasons for violence.

The second section presented three different kinds of violence involving youngsters: in sport, on women, and involving paramilitaries. The aim was to acquire some basic knowledge of concrete situations and examples, while beginning to use the tools previously (and commonly) established.

The third and last section was mainly time for the participants to prepare a campaign against violence and therefore assume a proactive attitude towards the problem of youth violence.

The provisional programme was nearly developed as planned, but a major event needs to be mentioned in order to have a clearer picture of the process of the study session. Right in the middle of the second block (the one on conflict theory) the big terrorist attack on the USA took place and this shocking news obliged the team to review the plan, cutting off part of the afternoon programme in favour of a more pressing need to pay attention to the dramatic situation in the USA.

This fact probably took away part of the “harmony” of the programme, but it certainly increased participants’ motivation and commitment in thinking about the campaign against violence. One of the outcomes of the study session was indeed a petition that, after the study session, was signed by over 2000 people and was sent to American, EU and CoE institutional bodies.

The present document tries to cover all the phases of the process described above. The team effort during writing has been the one of giving a clear overall description of the process more than a detailed story of “what happened”. For this reason, for

example, we chose not to fully describe each and every stage we passed through, nor to emphasise the concrete outcome of the stages themselves.

For different reasons, mainly because of the great importance of this issue and also because of the participant's reactions, we decided to present the section "Women and violence". Nevertheless, we know that the section about September 11th was highly emotionally charged and had a huge effect on our study session. The "Paramilitary Section" was indeed a highly professional input of information and experience exchange. In connection with "Youth violence" this section was a highly relevant topic, as our evaluation showed. The creative section about violence in entertainment will be discussed later on, when we are talking about the outcomes of our study session.

Aims

From the very beginning of our study session, our aims were to:

- ✘ Explore causes of youth violence
- ✘ Make people aware of the gravity of the problem
- ✘ Improve working relations and information channels
- ✘ Be aware of the impacts of youth violence

Objectives

To reach these aims, we used the following objectives:

- ✘ Exploring how youth work can decrease or prevent this problem
- ✘ Developing some methods of intervention at a local, national and international level
- ✘ Focusing on different types of violence
- ✘ Using real life examples to demonstrate acts of violence

Working methods

The working methods we chose and used during the study session were:

- ✘ Exchange of experiences
- ✘ Group discussions
- ✘ Simulations
- ✘ Speech by an expert¹
- ✘ Working groups
- ✘ Individual reflection
- ✘ Production of a play, a song and a campaign

Turning now to concrete examples, we present the section on:

Violence against women

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To motivate the participants to know more about this issue
- 2) To develop awareness about the causes and consequences of violence against women
- 3) To identify concrete attitudes to help the prevention of violence against women
- 4) To develop effective behaviour in the struggle against violence, especially against women
- 5) To exchange ideas and experiences about the issue

METHODOLOGY:

The methodology tried to foster a range of approaches towards the subject of the module. These worked on emotional, rational and practical aspects of allowing young people to pass through a personal process leading to an interpersonal exchange, with the aim of constructing some common basic knowledge and an «ethical» behaviour concerning violence against women.

STRUCTURE OF THE MODULE:

- 1) Building a “safe environment”. The workshop facilitators tried at this stage to set up a kind of “reassuring space” for the participants, especially underlining the fact that the aim of the module was not to “accuse men” (and therefore the male participants in the study session) but to take some time to think about the theme chosen.
- 2) The personal level. At this stage, the participants were invited to think about a case of violence against women they knew and to write the story of this case in the form of a letter. Such letters were anonymously redistributed among participants together with a list of key questions (see attached document).
- 3) The micro level. Small, mixed-gender, working groups were created to discuss the case studies and the questions given. The questions were structured in such a way as to facilitate the shift from an emotional reaction to the letters to a more rational one.
- 4) The macro level. The session was closed with a short “lecture” (see enclosed document) which aimed to give a common background to all of the cases presented by the participants. In other words, the facilitators tried to show how single events can be ultimately viewed as part of a general framework of a “male power system” that tolerates and *de facto* fosters such expressions of violence.

Preparation of the activity

The modules gave a general overview of what the theme is about. It gave the participants a kind of “map” that they can now use for further investigation of this theme. The module was certainly sufficiently prepared to meet this aim, so, as far as a short-term evaluation allows to do, we should consider it effective.

Profile of the participants

The participant profile given in the application form was quite broad (from “experienced youth workers” to “young people from problem areas”). The module was therefore developed in such a way that a special profile was not required to be able to gain benefit from it.

Preparation for the team

The importance of being well prepared each day was very important for us, so we had a daily schedule for each day which could give us an overview.

It was important to know that the time schedule appointed was just for team guidance; it had to remain flexible enough to follow the rhythm and interests of the participants.

A daily part in the programme was the key groups, where we evaluated in the day 4 groups, gave information concerning the following day and tried to gauge the emotions of the group and the individuals. We split the key groups according to the languages spoken. Accordingly, we had an Italian group, a German/Austrian group, an Irish, English and Danish group and a Portuguese/International group. The idea behind this was to overcome language barriers, so that as far as possible everyone could speak and give their opinions in their mother language. Additionally, every group made a diary for each day: some text, painting or poem to give a clear picture of the participants’ feelings.

Daily Programme
Thursday the 13th September

When	What	How	By whom	Obs
9h30 MAC	Ice Breaker	Hands and Feet	Joe	Material needed for the day:
9h45	Explaining what's going to happen and splitting into groups.	Lecture + Flipcharts	Mac	
10h00	Negotiating the agenda with the working groups	Meeting with the different groups	Teresa Joe Danie Mac	
10h30	Developing the themes	Working groups	Participants on their own (Team as resource people)	
11h	Coffee break			
12h30	Gathering the groups' conclusions	Sticking up posters	Participants	Scotch Tape
13h	Lunch			
14h30 JOE	Energiser	Fireworks	Mac	Overhead, slides, markers. Template for the envelopes Biographies of women + List of questions + Resource documents
14h40	Input	Short lecture	Teresa speaks Mac writes	
14h50	Writing the letters	Individual task	Teresa	
15h00	Meditating on the letters	Group work	Mac	
17h00	Coffee break			
17h30	Sharing results	Posters and creative presentation	Participants	Video prj.
18h00	Enlarging the vision	Plenary lecture	Mac & Teresa	
18h30	Daily evaluation	Key groups + diaries	Joe, Danie, Mac, Teresa	
19h	Dinner			
20h	Team meeting		Team	
21h	Free time		All group	

Outcomes

The most important decisions/conclusions/resolutions of the study session were

- ✘ The size and diverseness of the issue
- ✘ The impact of media concerning the topic
- ✘ The fact that everything can be done without violence
- ✘ The importance of compromises
- ✘ The fact that violence is a problem of society and that this means that everyone is involved
- ✘ The fact that a lot of violence remains hidden
- ✘ The similarities and differences between society and individual violence
- ✘ The fact that there is a difference between aggression and violence
- ✘ The fact that violence is not natural
- ✘ The fact that aggression is natural and our violent surroundings often provoke it
- ✘ To start a campaign (carrying out the theme of the plenary)

Material which was produced on the basis of this activity

A report was done for the participants and was put on the EFYSO web site. Various articles were written by the participants for their local newspapers, for their internal organisations' newsletters, and for reports at universities and schools. A petition against violence, which was organised by the participants themselves, was started during the study session and was completed after it: over 2.000 collected signatures against violence were sent to American, EU and CoE institutional bodies. To organise the petition and to create more projects against violence, a newsgroup was created, which continues working on the petition and develop new projects. Additionally, a song was written by the participantsⁱⁱ.

The central educational outcome of the study session was that all participants realised that we have to do something against violence and that we can do something against it. It is not permissible to not listen, to not see violence and to not act against violence. Although the participants were really shocked by the terror attack on September 11th, and they were really in despair, talking on this special day about conflict management helped them to realise that sometimes you are not able to do anything against violence. However, after the shock had gone, it was important to be clearly positioned against violence, regardless of which form it takes, and to do something against the not-see-not-listen-not-act elements of society. Although the participants very well realised the size and diverseness of the topic of violence, especially youth violence, they realised that speaking up against violence, developing and carrying out projects that are related to youth violence could have an important impact on the discussion among young people in Europe and all over the world. The participants realised the necessity of facing up to this problem, discussing it and doing something about it, not only in a study session, but also in their work, their studies and their communities.

Expected impact

Political impact on the organisation

Holding a study session on such a subject has had a deep political impact on our organisation. By inviting participants from our member organisations to look at the causes of youth violence, we have acknowledged that it exists and that it is something we want to work towards creating strategies to deal with. Most of our member organisations work at a national as well as local level so the information and learning is cascaded back to the organisations, which helps us to work at a more local level. This may take the form of interventions at a local regional and national level, by organising events in our own countries to explore these issues further and by devising strategies to overcome this problem.

EFYSO wishes to promote a common approach towards young people on a pan-European level within our member organisations. This study session's purpose was to improve the working relationship and information channels between the participating countries and organisations, not only in relation to this theme, but also with regard to other social and youth-related problems. As an international youth organisation, we are continuously promoting more active participation of young people in society and constantly promoting European awareness among our members.

In relation to the subject area, as an organisation greatly concerned with communicating at a pan-European level, we saw that both the participants of this study session and the organisation itself benefited greatly from exploring this topic; the participants, by becoming more informed about the topic itself, and the organisation, by enhancing communication links. The participants gained and shared a lot of information on this topic and were motivated to go back to their respective countries and organisations to highlight this very important issue for young people.

One of the biggest impacts during the week was the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre. It shocked and stunned all of us as it did the rest of the world. Although it was a tragic event, the trainers decided to bring this into our programme, to give the participants the opportunity to explore the issues in more depth. We felt it had a significant relevance to the topic. The participants had the opportunity to express how they felt and their hopes and fears about its impact on world issues. They also decided they would like to set up a petition against further violent actions in response to this atrocity. This petition was taken to our organisation and was ratified as a statement to be sent out to our membership. It was decided it could be taken to the European Youth Forum and presented as EFYSO's view.

Educational impact

The study session as an educational activity helped:

- ✘ to promote the quality of life of young people, which furthers their social and cultural development,
- ✘ to promote understanding between young people from different countries and cultures,
- ✘ to promote European awareness in the field of youth work,

- ✘ to develop excellent European and International co-operation between the member organisations of EFYSO,
- ✘ to improve the social and political conditions of life which determine the development of young people as well as their integration into society and the labour market
- ✘ to promote co-operation with other European and international organisations which pursue similar aims

The study session provided many tools for our participants to take back to their organisations. As mentioned above, the petition that was created was taken to the Presidium of our organisation for ratification, through which it has been passed on the membership. During the session, some of the participants met to discuss the future programme of work for EFYSO, in order to contribute towards what EFYSO plans for the coming years. Out of the discussions raised in our session, it was highlighted that we need to look at the effect of globalisation on Europe and our countries and particularly the impact on young people. Ideas were put forward for activities over the coming years, some of which may involve further exploration of our theme on the causes of youth violence and strategies to deal with this issue. The petition against violence was sent directly to young people and youth workers across our organisation, highlighting the fact that the issue had been discussed in Budapest and that young people were keen to take a preventative approach to violence of any kind. Some of the participants are still in touch with each other and the potential is there to further explore this theme through bilateral projects between countries.

Structural impact

Because of the opportunity to meet young people from EFYSO member organisations who are interested in working within the EFYSO network, the network in general has been greatly strengthened. Since this event, a lot of the participants have become actively involved in the work of EFYSO. The youth and social workers who met in Budapest have either already started to work together (namely with the petition) or to use their contacts to work together in the future. Some new projects, which are still in the planning phase, will be a direct outcome of the study session.

This activity has been quoted in various written texts:

- ✘ Article in ÖJAB – Jung und Heimlich/Austria
- ✘ Article on web-site
- ✘ Article in Carlow's Own newspaper/Ireland
- ✘ Report for participants

Support from the EYC

We definitely received satisfactory support in all directions we needed. Concerning the study session in general, the few problems to arise – as ever – were connected with the reimbursement of travel expenses. However, the EYC staff did their best to overcome the bureaucratic difficulties encountered.

Procedures that should be changed/improved

The only procedure we would change is the one concerning travel regulations (trains vs. aeroplanes). Besides “geographical criteria”, “time criteria” should also be introduced: there is no point in obliging certain participants to travel for up to 19 hrs with a minimum cash saving!

Problems encountered in running the activity

Although one of our trainers fell ill right before the study session, we managed to rearrange the programme – not in terms of the sections, but in terms of areas of responsibility. However, this definitely did not cause any problems in running the activity or affect the high quality of the programme.

Information about the participants

30 participants were expected to come to the EFYSO study session “Youth violence”. In total, 28 young people (one participant fell ill) from 10 countries participated in the session:

Austria: 4, Denmark: 1, England: 2, Germany: 4, Ireland: 4, Italy: 5, Poland: 2, Portugal: 3, Russia: 2, Rumania: 1

Concerning the gender, there was a majority of women (18 women compared with 10 men).

The background of the participants was not as balanced as we might have wished. Although EFYSO tried to reach especially its partner organisation in Eastern Europe with this topic, just 5 of the 28 participants were sent from Eastern Europe. However, the participants were very well balanced in terms of experiences and age. Youth workers, social workers, young volunteers and also inexperienced participants, who helped to maintain the equilibrium during the study session, attended this week-long event. The age range was from eighteen to twenty-nine, which allowed an additional exchange with regard to the styles of approach to this topic.

The team

Joe Dover, England; Giulio ‘Mac’ Maistrelli, Italy; Daniela Punkl, Austria (Leader of the study session); Teresa Cunha, Portugal (Tutor)ⁱⁱⁱ

List of Participants

Name	Country	Organisation
Roland Glöckl	Austria	ÖJAB
Eva Kalvoda	Austria	ÖJAB
Thomas Schüssler	Austria	ÖJAB
Martina Smutny	Austria	ÖJAB
Frederik Knudsen	Denmark	SUF
Catherine Holligan	England	Warrington Youth Club
Kevin Keith	England	The bigger picture
Heike Kropp	Germany	IB
Lucie Überlacker	Germany	IB
Ken Oesterreich	Germany	Stadtverwaltung Reichenbach
Mo Menzer	Germany	Stadtverwaltung Reichenbach
Thomas Farrell	Ireland	NYF
Lorraine Farrell	Ireland	NYF
Valerie McDonald	Ireland	NYF
Liz Nolan	Ireland	NYF
Maddalena Cametti	Italy	Vedogiovane
Daniela Pastore	Italy	Vedogiovane
Alberto Capello	Italy	Vedogiovane
Marilisa Bruno	Italy	Citta di Torino
Valentina Duretto	Italy	Citta di Torino
Marcin Gandziarski	Poland	Polish Rural Youth Union
Ewa Irena Pedziwiatr	Poland	Polish Rural Youth Union
Rossana Ascensao	Portugal	Associação d'Agir
Vania Ascensao	Portugal	Associação d'Agir
Cecilia Faustino	Portugal	Fundação da Juventude
Oksana Bob	Russia	Help to Youth Cooperation
Maria Kartcha	Russia	Help to Youth Cooperation
Eusebiu Gherghelas	Romania	NGOGEMS- Marile Sperante
Trainers:		
Joe Dover	England	Warrington Youth Club
Giulio 'Mac' Maistrelli	Italy	Vedogiovane
Daniela Punkl	Austria	ÖJAB/Leader of the team
Tutor:		
Teresa Cunha	Portugal	Council of Europe

EFYSO Study Session 09 - 16 September 2001, European Youth Centre Budapest

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
08.00-09.00		Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	
09.30 - 11.00	Arrival Day	Introductions, EFYSO, EYCB	Conflict Management / Resolution	Treasure hunt in Budapest	Workshop: Violence & Sport*	Workshop: Paramilitary Violence	Preparation for presentations	Departure Day
11.00 - 11.30		Break	Break		Break	Break	Break	
11.30 - 13.00	Arrival Day	Expectations / Programme	Conflict Management / Resolution	Treasure hunt in Budapest	Workshop: Violence & Sport*	Workshop: Paramilitary Violence	Presentations	Departure Day
13.00 - 14.00		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
15.00 - 16.30	Arrival Day	Definitions of Violence	Political Violence	FREE	Workshop: Women & Violence	Workshop: Violence in Entertainment	Final Evaluation, Conclusions & Follow up	Departure Day
16.30 - 17.00		Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	
17.00 - 18.30	Arrival Day	Definitions of Violence	Political Violence	FREE	Workshop: Women & Violence	Workshop: Violence in Entertainment	Final Evaluation, Conclusions & Follow up	Departure Day
18.30 - 19.00	Arrival Day	Key groups	Key groups	FREE	Key groups	Key groups	Key groups	Departure Day
19.00 - 20.00	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	
21.00 -	Ice breakers	International Evening	Free	Hungarian Evening	FREE	FREE	Farewell Party	Departure Day

* Because of the tragedy that happened on September 11th in New York, we felt it necessary to change our programme, because our participants felt the need to talk out everything that had happened before being able to concentrate on something else. Therefore, we left the workshop 'Violence in sports' (interested participants received the information about this aspect of violence in a written version) and spent the afternoon discussing themes that participants felt happy to discuss. The following groups were formed: Impact of the media, Impact on young people, Conflict transformation – conflict strategies, Global impact.

ⁱ For this session, we decided to invite Eleonora Ganescu from the Council of Europe, an expert, to give a theoretical input on the issue "Conflict management".

ⁱⁱ The lyrics:

My father told me,
Just live your life
And let the others live.
My father told me,
Aggression can't be the only way.
Listen to me
And you'll have force to change the world.

Violence is reigning,
Raining over the whole world.
Over all countries,
It doesn't matter hot or cold.
Can't buy peace with gold,
So stand up – be bold.

How can we cause
Such a big and pointless pain?
Watch people die,
Do it again, again, again.
How can we cause so many tears
Watch people fall, living in fear,
Where will it cease, live life in peace.

ⁱⁱⁱ **Role of the team:**

- To lead the session
- To discuss and run the programme according to our interests and competence
- To moderate, to lead simulations and debates

USA, September 11th



the terror!!

We are participants of the EFYSO Study session on Youth violence, which is being run in partnership with the Council of Europe.

After the tragedy that has happened in the USA, we have decided not to close our eyes but to do something to stop the killing of innocent people – no matter where they are or which culture they belong to.

We fear the consequences of the reactions of the USA and other states, which may cause a domino or snowball effect if they decide to take violent action.

We are not supporting any terrorists, but simply taking a position against violence – we want freedom and peace for everyone, and no war.

We – the young people of Europe – would like to make this petition successful to sensitise each person to the dimension of violence and the problems which can happen after September 11th: the exclusion of minorities (Muslims), a culture gap, racism, violent actions against civilians. Therefore we are asking people to sign this paper to create a wave of solidarity and start a deeper reflection on this issue. We intend to create a platform for developing other projects linking our countries, using the Internet (e.g. websites, newsletter, posters) and tackling other kinds of violence.

The collected signatures will be sent to American, EU and CoE institutional bodies, bearing in mind that this is a global problem and we - the young people of Europe - have something to say about the problem of violence in the world.

Let's stop the spiral of violence by creating a wave of international peace. Make your contribution by signing..... Thank you!!
