



Empowering
young people

A stylized map of Europe in light blue, set against a dark blue background that resembles a globe. A yellow arc is visible at the bottom of the globe. The map shows the outlines of European countries.

**Promoting hands-on approaches
to make VET, education and
life-long learning more inclusive**

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About the YES Forum

Founded in 2002, YES Forum is a European network of organisations working with and for young people facing challenging situations. By promoting their social inclusion and developing their professional skills, we act to improve the life chances of vulnerable young people. YES Forum aims to create an environment where young people and youth professionals have equally accessible learning and work-related opportunities in Europe and beyond.

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Capacity Building in the YES Forum

All YES Forum members are working with and for young people, each following diverse forms of action and different approaches to learning. As a network, our goal is to ensure that all of our members have the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills and competences to effectively reach their goals and provide high-quality assistance to the young people they work with. Thus, among others, we provide room for peer learning and exchange of inspiring practices by regularly organising workshops, trainings and webinars open to our member organisations and for professionals working with marginalised young people.

More than events in which members can simply share their success stories, [the capacity-building activities aim at helping organisations understand a practice and/ or a method, recognise which parts of it could be applied in their own context and learn how to adapt it.](#)

We expect that through the activities aimed towards our members and educational professionals we can positively influence their day-to-day work with young people from vulnerable backgrounds. The experience and knowledge acquired through participation in capacity-building activities creates long term effects, including new and innovative approaches to be applied in the diverse fields of youth and social work, better cooperation between youth service providers and youth work organisations, and growing recognition of non-formal and informal learning methods within formal education, etc.

Our capacity building plan for the YES Forum network in 2022 revolves around three main objectives:

- to enhance the promotion and recognition of education professionals,
- to promote hands-on approaches to make VET, education and life-long learning more inclusive, and
- to improve intergenerational dialogue at work.

In this report, we focus on providing an overview of this year's activities through which we promoted hands-on approaches for inclusiveness in VET, education and life-long learning.

Hands-on Learning Approaches

By definition, a hands-on experience is "obtained by doing something, not by reading about it or watching it done" (Cambridge dictionary, 2022). The hands-on approaches in this report's context refer to education, VET and life-long learning approaches, where learning is acquired through experience.

[Hands-on approaches are primarily learner-centred.](#) Therefore, [the learner is invited to learn by doing.](#) Unlike methods focusing on merely observing, the hands-on approaches target learning through actions that allow for repetition, thus supporting encoding of information into long-term memory (Letrud & Hernes, 2018).

According to many scholars in the field of education who utilise “Learning Pyramids” models, some learning methods are intrinsically more efficient than others. Obanya, for instance, argues that the average retention rate of learning by doing is 75%, in contrast to the significantly lower retention rate (5%) of lecture-based learning (2012). The following Learning Pyramid (Fig. 2.1) illustrates the superiority of active learning methods over passive ones. Evidently, kinesthetic learning methods yield higher educational results than methods relying on visual and auditory input.

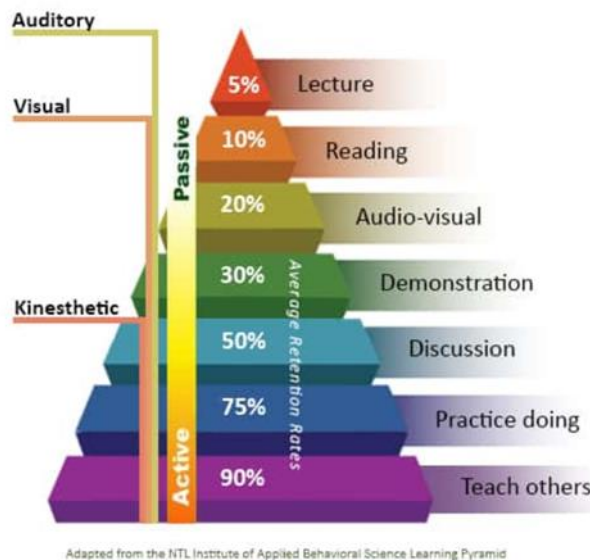


Fig. 2.1 The Learning Pyramid

Source: Educationcorner.com

Yet, critics have raised considerations that need to be addressed in order to ensure the effectiveness of hands-on learning approaches. Knowledge obtained experientially may need to be reflected on and contextualised, so that “incorporation of new information into a meaningful whole” can be possible. Otherwise, knowledge will not necessarily pass effectively into long-term memory (Letrud & Hernes, 2018, page 13).

In the case of YES Forum, we focused on specific learning methods which involved “immediate use” and aimed for “repetition” in the future. We specifically applied:

- the photovoice method and photography exhibitions for inclusivity in education and life-long learning,
- the “assisted training scheme” and professionals study visits for inclusivity in VET and
- internships with international students

The following sections further elaborate on each of those aspects.

Inclusivity in Education and Life-Long learning

State of the art

Definition

Education is a fundamental right according to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (art. 14), and as such, it should be protected with utmost care. As highlighted by the United Nations,

“All people, irrespective of sex, age, race, colour, ethnicity, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property or birth, as well as persons with disabilities, migrants, indigenous peoples, and children and youth, especially those in vulnerable situations or other status, should have access to inclusive, equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities” (UN, SDG4)

“Inclusive education” is a term that has been circulating across EU communications for several years now. As described in the “Council Recommendation on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching”, providing inclusive education means:

- including all learners in quality education from early childhood and throughout life;
- providing the necessary support to all learners according to their particular needs, including those from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, those from a migrant background, those with special needs and the most talented learners;
- facilitating the transition between various educational pathways and levels and enabling the provision of adequate educational and career guidance (2018/C 195/01, p.3-4).

Identified Challenges

Inclusive education is undoubtedly a powerful concept and a meaningful vision to strive towards. We can proudly claim that, thanks to the efforts of numerous advocates in the past, modern societies have ensured that education is available at large. A privilege that used to be reserved for upper-class males only, is now a public good offered to all through the compulsory public education system. However, does this mean that all present-day learners are fairly and appropriately included? Being provided with equal access to public education by law does not mean that all learners will have comparable educational experience. Studies focusing on formal education (e.g. 2017 Training and Education monitor, PISA) highlight how social and economic obstacles can affect performance at school and youth’s access to the labour market later. Clearly, there is always space for improvement, and we can start building the foundations for more equitable and inclusive learning by reflecting on and revising how we, as social and youth workers, deliver education to diverse groups of youth.

As the YES Forum’s expertise lies in the [non-formal education context](#), in the current report we will concentrate on this type of learning. It is frequently observed by professionals in the field that some categories of young people are still left outside non-formal learning initiatives. In some cases, participation in extra-curricular activities can be perceived as a luxury, or simply a waste of time.

The most observed reasons for exclusion of these young people are:

- participation fees,
- inaccessible locations,
- linguistic and digital barriers,
- need to work to provide financial support at home
- need to be at home to support with household chores and/or take care of younger siblings, etc.

Beyond the mentioned accessibility issues, young people may face barriers to joining non-formal education activities due to lack of awareness and visibility of such opportunities, as well as the criteria for participation in them.

Furthermore, we have to pay attention to the inclusive design of the learning activities. We need to ensure that young people's participation is not blocked by geographical, social, economic, and other obstacles and that all young people can practically benefit from them.

The participation in the activity per se should be designed and implemented in a way that their experience will be productive, and rightly adjusted to their needs and expectations, with the appropriate support provided to them.

YES Forum's approach

Activities implemented

At the YES Forum we embrace the idea that fostering learning opportunities has a high potential to transform our societies. Our goal is to reach as many young people as possible, especially those who face difficulties at different levels and traditionally get less opportunities. It is of utmost importance for us that our learning activities are open and practically accessible to everyone, no matter their background, and that our participants can gain the best suited skills to enhance their lives with.

As already explained, aside from providing inclusive access to opportunities, a crucial component of our approach is to offer quality inclusive learning experiences. To this end, we aim to prepare our social and youth work professionals accordingly, in order to "enable educational staff to promote common values and deliver inclusive education" (2018/C 195/01, p.4).

In 2022 we focused on learning opportunities that promote civic engagement, participation and active citizenship for all.

We tested the "Photovoice" method, and we later promoted it to our network and beyond.

Photovoice is a participatory research method combining a creative and accessible tool, photography, with a ready-to-use step-by-step process backed by robust theory.

In comparison to "traditional" participatory research methods, whether individual or at group level, photovoice is a uniquely inclusive method. It is unparalleled thanks to its main characteristics: a

community-based, participatory, qualitative research method which combines photography with grassroots social action.

According to the scientific literature on the topic, photovoice has been used effectively with various marginalised groups, of different ages, and has the power to creatively engage people no matter their educational, social, or economic background. Today, digital tools are more accessible, and a majority of people across generational cohorts are familiar with their use. The availability of photo cameras along with smartphones facilitates the implementation of such projects. A number of researchers, social workers and educators have discovered using photovoice in projects with youth to be greatly beneficial as it gives young participants the tools and skills to exercise an active role in their society.

The YES Forum has used the method with different audiences on more than one occasion, mainly as a tool for inclusion, empowerment and participation for young people from various backgrounds around Europe. This year we applied the method in an EU-level learning environment, in partnership with professionals with experience in youth work and/or technical experience in the use of photography and visually creative approaches, in the context of the “PhotoVoice - Participation & Empowerment in Youth Work (VOICE)” project. A central component of the project was providing current and future social and youth workers with training on the use of the photovoice method. The knowledge and skills gained through the training activities was incorporated in photovoice presentations and exhibitions displayed at our YES Forum events.

During our “YES Forum Annual Event” in Viareggio, the exhibition “The Photovoice Method for more Inclusivity and Empowerment in Social and Youth Work” served as a starting point for fruitful discussions among the event’s participants regarding the use of the method in social and youth work.

Later on, during our “YES Forum Policy Event” in Brussels, young participants who had joined the training in Viareggio enthusiastically presented their experience to a wider audience. They facilitated discussions among the Policy Event’s participants presenting the method and their experience working with it. They also shared their expectations, and the results they want to see in the future.

Furthermore, YES Forum has promoted the use of the method for learning purposes and youth empowerment at other smaller-scale events and meetings with relevant stakeholders.

[Positive outcomes and challenges](#)

Several youth workers from our network were directly involved in the training programmes offered within the VOICE project, learning by doing themselves, through gaining practice with the method. The co-creative aspect of the training gave them the opportunity to assume both the roles of youth worker and participant.

According to their feedback, the learning process was well-rounded and on point. As our target groups were quite diverse, even among our youth workers actively working for our members, we also received suggestions to finetune the learning items delivered. Some youth workers wished for more emphasis

on the theoretical aspects of the method (e.g. participants currently doing their masters degrees), while others appreciated paying more emphasis on the practical aspects of the process.

After the newly-trained in photovoice youth workers facilitated their own local experiments, the common feedback among their young participants was that they were really interested in the photovoice activities, but they felt that more time was needed to achieve the desired results. Through this feedback we were able to adjust our understanding of how much time is needed in reality for all photovoice steps to be implemented as instructed.

Importantly, following their own local experimentations with photovoice, the youth workers, can now critically evaluate what they can do within their circumstances (including time limitations, target group needs, facilities and equipment, etc.) to adjust accordingly what they learnt.

The impact on youth workers who had the opportunity to witness the process as outsiders is equally important to our network. The member organisations in our network were introduced to the method, and were provided with the material developed by the project partners, so that they can also use it and promote it towards other youth professionals in their own networks. Their feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Especially during the European Year of Youth 2022 which brought youth to the spotlight, exploring a method that can creatively involve and empower young people has been inspirational in many ways. The YES Forum members have consistently reported a high interest to use it in the future with their local youth and especially those regularly under-represented.

Inclusivity in Vocational Education and Training (VET)

State of the art

Definition

VET stands for Vocational Education and Training and refers to “the training in skills and teaching of knowledge related to a specific trade, occupation or vocation in which the student or employee wishes to participate” (Eurostat, n.d.a). It covers a wide array of skills and professions.

As highlighted by the United Nations:

“Equitable access to TVET [technical and vocational education and training] needs to be expanded while quality is ensured. Learning opportunities should be increased and diversified, using a wide range of education and training modalities, so that all youth and adults, especially girls and women, can acquire relevant knowledge, skills and competencies for decent work and life” (UN, SDG4)

VET is a priority area under the European Education Area initiative for the period 2021-2030. In the Council Recommendation on vocational education and training (VET) for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience, it is noted that relevant stakeholders should enhance cooperation, to ensure that:

“VET programmes are inclusive and accessible for vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities, low-qualified/ skilled persons, minorities, people with migrant background and people with fewer opportunities because of their geographical location and/or their social-economically disadvantaged situation” (2020/C 417/01, p. 7)

Identified challenges

Each country has its own approach when it comes to vocational education and training, as it is part of the national formal education curricula. Nonetheless, VET can also be provided in non-formal education initiatives, which is our focus in the current report.

The access to the labour market is generally challenging for young people, as they lack experience and skills gained through practice. [The high unemployment rates witnessed around Europe, with the EU average at 14.6% for young people under 25 years old, which nevertheless differs greatly among EU member states \(Eurostat, n.d.b\), call for innovative actions to address needs connected to inclusion in training for youth employability.](#)

Adding to the reasons for exclusion already listed in section 3, some groups of young people often lack basic soft skills recruiters expect to see (e.g. presenting oneself in an interview, dress code, etc.). Both their access to a training opportunity and their professional evolution later on can be influenced by these factors.

Moreover, young people frequently find themselves excluded from opportunities for vocational education and training by choice. They may not realise that on-the-job training is crucial in order for them to get equipped with professional skills. Often they urgently need a paying job to be able to support their families.

A key approach to tackle youth unemployment is to give all young people the opportunity to learn a profession from scratch, and provide more training opportunities and job placements for young adults coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. Our role as youth professionals is crucial in this process, as we can support youth through increasing their preparation for successful participation in training opportunities, as well as through mediating with the training providers for targeted open calls and structured counselling support.

YES Forum’s approach

Activities implemented

Through our work at the YES Forum, we aim to equip professionals with the right skills and tools, so that they are able to deliver their work effectively and assist as many young people as possible. Our intention is to help young people to thrive. We are working towards more sustainable solutions, which will guarantee that trained professionals can assist a large number of youngsters. As pointed out in the Council’s Recommendation for teachers, trainers and other involved staff, it is important to:

"[...] undertake initial and continuing professional development in order to: deliver high quality training; foster technical and digital skills and effective innovative training methods, including teaching in virtual environment; in line with state of the art vocational and digital pedagogy, work with digital learning tools, and in diverse and multicultural environments. Their career paths become more attractive through broader recruitment approaches, enhanced career opportunities, as well as strengthened cooperation between vocational teachers/trainers and companies and other workplaces;" (2020/C 417/01, p. 7)

In collaboration with training institutions, job centres, VET counsellors and youth professionals within and outside the network, in 2022 YES Forum aimed to provide both quality training for professionals on the field, as well as training for young NEETs in need of on-the-job training. To this end, YES Forum lead the project "It Works! Employable Youth". The project partners trained youth professionals how to effectively guide young people to enhance their employability opportunities. The participating youth workers also received a comprehensive handbook created by the project partners with materials and methodologies to inform and support their work.

Within the project, a number of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds participated at the pilot intervention "Assisted Training Scheme". After receiving soft skills guidance by the newly trained youth professionals, they were allocated in traineeships where they enhanced their work-based learning with the mediation of youth workers/ educators/ coaches/ trainers/ counsellors.

In addition, our network members' study visits constitute a core approach of our capacity building and good practice exchange. This year, youth professionals from within and outside the YES Forum had the opportunity to participate in study visits around Germany, and more specifically close to our network's base, in Stuttgart and surrounding areas (e.g. Ludwigsburg). They visited the members' facilities where vocational education and training activities are taking place, and they exchanged ideas on the right approach and creative involvement of young NEETs in different contexts.

Last but not least, YES Forum organised good practice exchange sessions among professionals in the VET field, in addition to youth professionals of the network taking part in external events. Our main event was the "Active Support to Employment" sessions organised during our YES Forum Annual Event. Policy experts from outside the network and project managers from within our member organisations presented their approaches on delivering innovative inclusive VET practices in the EU, with special emphasis on digital and green transitions and the intercontinental networking for VET. In addition, several youth professionals at the YES Forum secretariat followed the "#EURegionsWeek 2022 ALMA: a boost for all young people's inclusion", an informative session on a programme specifically targeted to the inclusion of NEETs in on-job training mobility opportunities abroad.

Positive outcomes and challenges

The "It Works!" project had inspiring results as the youth professionals involved in it had both the space to learn new methodologies, and to apply them to their youngsters during the project. They got trained on how to efficiently assist youth who face various challenges and who are not familiar with the labour market needs, thus ensuring higher inclusion and access to open calls.

They found the IT Works! handbooks and guidelines particularly useful, as they combine the experience of a number of professionals working inside the partner organisations, and experts within the advisory groups formed for the needs of the project. They remarked that youth professionals need to carefully assess the needs and expectations of their target groups, as not all activities presented in the handbook can serve equally well their intended purposes with any audience.

Through the application of the “assisted training scheme” youth professionals and youth created connections with public and private infrastructures. We are hopeful that these collaboration schemes will preserve a long-term mechanism for inclusive access to the labour market.

Our network benefited greatly from the study visits organised. [Showcasing the good practices in the field provides consistent inspiration and knowledge transfer around the network](#). At the study visits, the participants were able to discuss delivering VET to people representing various backgrounds and age cohorts, with a special focus on migrants, refugees, and those struggling with economic and social challenges. They were further supported on this mission by field experts. [The NEET category is heterogeneous](#), and as such, even if all youth workers work with NEETs, there are still important differences among them. A key insight shared by the youth workers who facilitated the visits highlighted the importance of having a safe social circle and strong personal motivation to ensure the continuous involvement of NEETs in the activities organised for them.

The feedback received from the participants showed us that certain successes, ideas, and problems are shared among youth professionals in Europe, while others are relevant to the national context. For example, our colleagues from Greece and Romania expressed their positive impressions regarding the German tools and mechanisms for NEETs training integration through non-formal education. However, they agreed that such approaches would most probably be blocked by the national law provisions and lack of implementation capacity connected to the formal educational system in their countries.

Our network appreciated the presentations given by policy experts and EU officials. Our representatives got informed about new opportunities and changes taking place at the European level. Bringing more light on the digital and green transitions being mainstreamed in the EU at the moment, as well as the focus on boosting young NEETs employability with new funding programmes, was eye-opening for all participants.

Inclusivity in Internships

State of the art

Definition

In this section, we focus on internships, meaning the experiences undertaken by a student or graduate who has already gained certain skills at school and/or university and is now applying these skills in the job market.

“Internships” do not have a dedicated place in EU law, and they are not a priority line in EU’s education policy. However, the EU’s action on the topic fits in the general strategy for member states cooperation in “education and training” and “higher education”.

The goal for member states as defined in the “Council Conclusions on a renewed EU agenda for higher education” is to “reinforce cooperation under the Erasmus+ programme and strategic framework for education and training including by promoting inclusiveness, excellence and innovation in teaching, fostering the civic and social responsibility of students and higher education institutions, encouraging relevant voluntary and community work and developing collaboration with the business sector.” (2017/C 429/04)

The Erasmus+ guide for the programming period 2021–2027 further highlights the importance of “including participants with fewer opportunities, such as participants with physical, mental and health related conditions, students with children, students who work or are professional athletes and students from all study fields underrepresented in mobility” (EC, 2022a, p. 44–45). The guide further clarifies the responsibility of organisations offering opportunities to respect this principle by considering equity and inclusion and assess applicants' merit and motivation holistically (EC, 2022a).

Identified challenges

In this session we focus on the aspect of access and equal treatment during internship placements.

Universities and alumni organisations play a great role in the future prospects of their students upon graduation. The role of such institutions is to teach graduates how to facilitate their entry into the job market, and offering them with quality internship placements is one way to do that. However, academic institutions often have other priorities, and they need to deal with lack of staff, big quantities of students, limited resources, etc. Their involvement is not always available, and their effort may not always be fruitful.

At the other end of the spectrum are the internship providers. Research centres, associations, NGOs, businesses, etc. who host students/ graduates are responsible for their on-the-job learning.

A young person desiring to do an internship may already face obstacles in securing an internship opportunity in the first place, due to lack of experience, social and/or economic background, linguistic and/or ethnical background, age, gender, etc.

Even when access is secured, an intern may deal with unfair contract conditions and underpaid or unpaid labour, and generally have an experience that does not add something to their skillset, like being involved in activities that have nothing to do with the job, such as filling tables, getting coffee or making copies.

Moreover, a common observation casts doubt on the inclusivity of the Erasmus+ traineeships programme given that even though it provides funding and establishes the ground for fair working conditions for interns, only university students or recent graduates are eligible for participation in the programme. To this end, it excludes a vast number of young people who need to get experience.

As internships are mostly underpaid or not paid at all, as in the case of vocational education and training, many young people cannot afford to partake unless they get financial support from funding programmes or the internship providers. Even when access is open, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds have to overcome more obstacles, although they may have managed to successfully complete their academic path.

[Our mission as youth professionals and as training placements providers is to work towards an inclusive society where young people are given an equal chance to be chosen for an internship opening and receive fair treatment before, during and after their internships.](#)

Thus, we should offer internship positions even to those who have no prior experience in their CV. An inclusive approach would, therefore, entail inviting to interview even those who may not seem as prepared for the role on paper. It is important to give a chance to graduates without prior experience to start their career in a safe learning environment, even with some delay, as it is possible that they did not have the chance or the appropriate guidance to do so while still studying.

YES Forum's approach

Activities implemented

[As a network of NGOs focusing on social and youth work, our work is two-fold: We both advocate for inclusiveness and fair conditions in internship access and implementation, and also create inclusive internship opportunities for students and graduates within our infrastructures.](#)

More specifically, we regularly provide young people with internships within our organisations, in order to give them the opportunity to apply the knowledge gained during their studies, at the most suitable position according to their skills and needs.

Our recruitment process prioritises the inclusion of students from diverse backgrounds. In 2022, YES Forum secretariat hosted three interns, and promoted the applications of several candidate interns to our member organisations around Europe.

The interns who were hosted at the Secretariat during 6-month placements were all international students or graduates with little or no prior experience. As already mentioned, [YES Forum strongly supports the idea that professionals in the youth field need to be constantly trained to deliver the best service to their target groups. Through our internship programme, we focus on preparing our interns to be fully employable at the end of their experience.](#)

YES Forum manages to train the interns entrusting them with hands-on tasks, as there is no approach more efficient than doing and learning from one's successes and mistakes. Since the beginning of their internship, our interns get assigned their own projects to co-manage and implement with the guidance of a supervisor. Among their main tasks are organising international events, leading workshops, writing publishable material. Our approach has so far been effective, but we do acknowledge that there is still much work to be done in this regard.

Moreover, in 2022 the YES Forum conducted workshops and participated in EU-wide consultations to promote inclusive access and fair conditions of internships in general.

Our interns facilitated a workshop at the YES Forum Annual Event titled “Internships - how to develop your talents and competencies”, with the participation of former interns, youth professionals from our members and young aspiring social and youth work students. The past and current state of art for internships in Europe was highlighted. The participants discussed in depth their concerns, lessons learnt and aspirations for the future of internships, and provided the network with interesting insights regarding the most common obstacles in the field. Extensive discussion was also dedicated to the different funding conditions and programmes in support of students at EU and national levels.

Last but not least, the YES Forum participated in the evaluation of the Quality Framework for Traineeships (EC, 2022b). This consultation was an important point for us to start thinking about what needs to be further improved in the field, as well as where the network stands as an advocate for inclusiveness in internships.

[Positive outcomes and challenges](#)

[The internship programme conducted at the Secretariat was beneficial for both the interns and the network.](#)

The interns involved managed to complete their tasks with success, and to gain practical knowledge in their fields of interest. They claimed that being responsible for their own tasks and projects, helped them to remain motivated and interested in their successful completion. During their internships, they were regularly involved in trainings and meetings, where they experimented with hands-on learning approaches (e.g. the photovoice method).

The Secretariat benefited greatly, as well. As our work is focused on young people, we always welcome fresh ideas coming from the young people themselves. Our young interns contributed with many new ideas and brought a critical outside perspective, formed by the challenges young people face nowadays.

The result of the workshop and consultation at the EU level, was that our network got informed about the state of the art of internships in Europe, and gained an opportunity to reflect on and discuss how internships can become more inclusive and what should be the focus of our work. The feedback received was invaluable, as we were able to contribute with up-to-date information and practical suggestions in the consultation for the Quality Framework for Traineeships. The results of these activities are developed in more depth in our “Policy paper on the inclusivity of hands-on approaches at VET, education and life-long learning”.

This year’s activities offered us much inspiration for our future activities. We are currently preparing an interactive platform for internships, where young people will be able to find training opportunities within the member organisations and partners of the YES Forum network.

Conclusions

The past year has been a year of innovative solutions for the YES Forum. After more than two years of social distancing and online gatherings, the network professionals managed to meet again and resume their onsite activities with fresh ideas.

Our youth professionals benefited greatly from the capacity building activities organised for them. As the European Year of Youth 2022 brought young people to the spotlight, and elevated the importance of training and upskilling of youth professionals.

Through a number of trainings, workshops and study visits, we created constructive learning environments for professionals working with young people, and especially young people facing multiple challenges in life. Creative tools and materials that facilitate their everyday work and provide them with new ideas were created and promoted within and outside our network.

With learning by doing activities, youth professionals with no prior experience, as well as more experienced professionals, were introduced to new approaches which they will likely incorporate into their work. The lessons learnt through these activities are elaborated in detail in a separate policy recommendation document, our "Policy paper on the inclusivity of hands-on approaches at VET, education and life-long learning".

At YES Forum we are positive that the next year will be equally, if not more, beneficial in terms of capacity building and good practices exchange. Our plan is complemented with new initiatives to develop interactive tools to facilitate young people's access to the labour market, as well as new training opportunities for youth professionals from within the network's member organisations.

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