



# Protocol for Certification of Competencies

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## YOUTH CONNECTIONS

*We are fostering the development of new social and intercultural competencies and critical thinking tackling discrimination, segregation and racism, thus preventing acts of extremism and violence.*

### **Partners**

Merseyside Expanding Horizons Limited - United Kingdom (Coordinator)

AGIS, NOTE et INNOVE - France

Promimpresa SRL – Italy

Asociacija "Aktyvus jaunimas" - Lithuania

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### **About ICEP**

Institute of European Certification of Personnel (ICEP) certifies the verifiable formal and non-formal competencies of professionals and individuals through standardised requirements, procedures, and quality assurance measures according to International Standards. ICEP specialises in Eu-funded projects, focusing on Education & Training and the socio-economic inclusion of vulnerable people. Experienced department managers manage all project stages: developing the proposal, leading or co-leading a partnership in implementing activities, monitoring finances, evaluating results, and disseminating outcomes. ICEP is based in Bratislava, Slovakia.

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## Introduction

*We are all a bit like Sophocles' characters [...] because we are humans. One day we are afraid; a moment later, we have the heart of a lion. Sometimes we are Ismene, some others we are Antigone, but if we were all capable of putting ourselves in the other's shoes, we would indeed live in a better world.*

*(An anonymous child)*

A key tenet of the Youth Connections project is to enhance the roles of young people. Young people can be the catalysts for inclusive, engaging and resilient societies by promoting people-to-people interaction and dialogue in addressing intercultural issues. Youth work is a 'keyword' for a range of social, political, cultural and educational activities organised for with and by young people. The Youth Connections partnership strongly believes that youth work is also about the place of young people and their concerns in society and the public sphere. It is about influencing culture, politics, and power relations, particularly where young people are disadvantaged, marginalised, or excluded.

Globally, the health, economic, and protection crises created by the COVID-19 pandemic have disproportionately affected the vulnerable and marginalised. The project mainly focused on young refugees and other third-country nationals risking multiple marginalisations based on their migrant background in combination with other possible forms of discrimination such as their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or political opinion.

The partnership developed innovative educational resources and culturally sensitive methodologies for youth workers based on these challenges. Youth workers incorporate these resources into intercultural settings to foster dialogue between young Europeans and young migrants. Their advocacy has resulted in the YC Policy Recommendation Report. The report aims to provide clear policy recommendations to encourage and promote the effective integration of young migrants through quality youth work in social inclusion. The report acknowledges the need to value, recognise, and support the youth sector's vital role in helping young people recover from traumatic experiences and mitigating the pandemic's impact.

The Protocol for Certification of Competencies is the guide to validate and certify the competencies of any professional making use of the innovative learning approach, training contents and tool developed by the Youth Connections project.

# What is Youth Work, and who is a Youth Worker?

*Empathy is the most powerful weapon [...] —*

Augusto Boal, Brazilian theatre practitioner, drama theorist, and political activist  
(16 March 1931 – 2 May 2009)

Since the early 2000s, acceptance of the positive role that *youth work*, based on the principles of non-formal education, plays for social integration, active citizenship, and young people's employability has grown significantly. This growing awareness has put youth work and non-formal learning high on the political agenda for many national governments and international institutions. Since the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg in 1972, the Council of Europe has supported youth work, developing a wide range of training courses for people and organisations involved in youth work, non-formal educators, public servants, and researchers from researchers across Europe. The courses range in themes from human rights and anti-racism to conflict transformation and social inclusion, participation and democracy.<sup>1</sup>

In 2017, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)<sup>2</sup> of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to the Member States on youth work which is currently the only international policy document offering reference points, benchmarks, policy and quality standards for youth work.

Before explaining youth work recognition and competence development frameworks, it is important first to analyse what is understood by "Youth Work" and the "youth worker" profile.

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<sup>1</sup> Find out more about the educational work and publications of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe at <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth>

<sup>2</sup> Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on youth work -31 May 2017 Deputies). [https://search.coe.int/cm/pages/result\\_details.aspx?objectid=0900001680717e78](https://search.coe.int/cm/pages/result_details.aspx?objectid=0900001680717e78)

Youth work is a broad term covering a wide variety of social, cultural, educational, environmental and political activities by and for young people, in groups or individually. Youth work is delivered by paid and volunteer youth workers and is based on non-formal and informal learning processes that focus on young people and voluntary participation.

It promotes young people's development in a multi-faceted manner, enabling them to become active outside their families, formal education, and work. *Youth work is quintessentially a social practice, working with young people and the societies in which they live, facilitating young people's active participation and inclusion in their communities and decision making.*<sup>3</sup>

Youth Workers are socio-educational facilitators who facilitate young people's learning and personal and social development to become autonomous and responsible citizens through active participation in decision-making processes and inclusion in their communities. The youth workers are engaged in various settings and extracurricular projects, which give young people opportunities for learning, personal growth and social development. These young people can develop skills to enhance their employability, creativity, intercultural dialogue. They can gainfully become involved in volunteering, active citizenship, project initiatives, dialogue with institutions, and active participation in public policy decision-making at the local and national levels. Particular attention is given to the most vulnerable of these young people and the fight against all forms of prejudice and social discrimination they face.

Youth Workers lead activities with youth primarily in inclusive, open, and safe environments. They use engaging and creative techniques and methods to facilitate dialogue and bonding and prevent discrimination, intolerance, and social exclusion. In general, the whole youth work sector has been challenged during the Covid-19 pandemic to replace their in-person services with their work almost entirely online, using various digital tools, content, and activities. The transition from in-person to online delivery has been very rapid. This digital 'gap' warrants particular attention from governmental and non-governmental actors, as well as new resources to reduce it. The pandemic also highlighted the challenge of sustainability for youth organisations.

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<sup>3</sup> Youth Work Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4, p. 9.

# Youth Work Key Competencies and Validation

*Youth work is a 'keyword' for all kinds of activities with, for and by young people of a social, cultural, educational or political nature.*

*Council of Europe*

The EU has designated 2022 the European Year of Youth, a significant opportunity to contribute to a better future for young people. This recognition aligns with the objectives of the 2019-2027 European Union Youth Strategy proposed by the European Commission as the framework EU Youth Policy Cooperation 2019-2027 and the European Youth Goals<sup>4</sup>.

The EU Youth Strategy aims to foster youth participation in democratic life, supports social and civic engagement, and ensure that all young people have the necessary resources to participate in society. The Youth Connections project matches the EU Youth Strategy to encourage young multicultural communities to become agents of change through local initiatives planned at the EU level to tackle discrimination and foster social inclusion.

According to the Youth Connection Methodological Framework Research findings, youth worker education and training programmes vary throughout European countries. Youth work-study programmes exist in some countries but not others. Not all countries recognise youth work as a profession. In some countries, youth work is mainly carried out by volunteers, in others by paid staff. Some countries have a longer tradition of youth organisations than others, and concepts and approaches to youth work differ widely from country to country, and competencies are always contextual (intercultural work, youth work, social work etc. For this reason, competence development frameworks can and do vary according to target groups, youth Workers and work contexts.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://youth-goals.eu/>



Through Youth Connections Protocol, the partners want to find common ground to recognise and validate Youth Worker competencies considering the long-standing practice of the Council of Europe in youth leader and worker training and the Competence-based validation model<sup>5</sup>.

## The Protocol's objectives: Why was the Youth Connections Competence Validation Protocol developed?

*'[...] there needs to be a core framework of quality standards for youth work responsive to national contexts, including competence models for youth Worker, and accreditation systems for prior experience and learning [...]'.*

*Council conclusions on the quality of youth work (2010),*

*final declaration of the 2nd European Youth Work Convention (2015)*

In establishing policies that safeguard and proactively support the establishment and further development of youth work at all levels, the Youth Connection Competence Validation Framework aims to:

- Create a specific and clear validation and certification path of the skills, testing new approaches to developing and assessing social and intercultural competencies and critical thinking.

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<sup>5</sup> CEDEFOP 2009, BBT 2009

- Provide a source of inspiration and a reference document for national and international Youth Organisations and Social service providers who offer youth worker training. Furthermore, this competence model supports youth workers in the self-assessment of their competencies and helps them identify areas where they need further training.
- Help institutional stakeholders determine youth workers' occupational profiles and society's recognition of this profession.
- Identify and describe youth worker competencies better; this will help improve the image and recognition of youth workers in society. At the same time, we have developed strategies, tools and educational materials that will make capacity-building more effective.

The Youth Connection Competence Validation Protocol focused on competencies identified from the project Partner Organisations and needed to prepare, implement and evaluate learning pathways for youth Worker/facilitators to foster diversity and social inclusion of the targeted youth. This Protocol is not to be seen as a "must-have" list of competencies, and it does; however, it includes several desirable competencies and behaviours that reflect healthy underlying attitudes. The Protocol is a basic model: it is not exhaustive, is not set in stone, and it should serve more as a dynamic framework that will keep evolving.

## How does Youth Connections Competence Validation Protocol work?

According to the Classification of European Skills, Competencies, Qualifications and Occupation (ESCO)<sup>6</sup>, which identifies and categorises skills, competencies, qualifications and occupations relevant for the EU labour market and education and training, a Youth worker profile comes with an occupational profile and a list of the knowledge, skills and competencies that experts considered relevant terminology for this occupation on a European scale.

The ESCO's definition of Youth Worker is:

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<sup>6</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/home?resetLanguage=true&newLanguage=en>

"Youth Workers support, accompany and counsel young people, focusing on their personal and social development. They manage community projects and services through one-to-one or group-based activities. Youth Workers can be volunteers or paid professionals who facilitate non-formal and informal learning processes. They are engaged in a large spectrum of activities by, with and for young people".<sup>7</sup>

Together with the several definitions of the youth worker<sup>8</sup>, two different kinds of youth Worker profiles are identified: junior and senior youth Worker. These profiles relate to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), which provides a common reference framework that compares the national qualifications systems, frameworks, and levels. By making competencies and qualifications more transparent, the EQF is an instrument for promoting lifelong learning. This framework covers both higher education and vocational training, and it will make it easier for individuals in the EU to communicate the relevant information concerning their competencies and qualifications.

ICEP cross-referenced the Classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupation (ESCO) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and structured the Youth Connections Certification Protocol for Youth workers.

This Regulation is binding for both the Parties (Certification body and the aspiring Youth Worker). Certified Youth Workers are recorded in the Register of Certified Youth Workers specialising in diversity and inclusion.

The Youth Connections certification of competencies will follow these three different phases:

- Identification and Document verification
- Assessment and Validation
- Certification

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<sup>7</sup> Code ESCO 2635.3.27

<sup>8</sup> The Youth worker profile includes all these profiles: youth programmes social worker, youth employment advisor, youth project team worker, welfare advisor, youth project team leader, youth social worker, social worker youth justice, senior youth worker, youth and community worker, youth mentor, youth advisor, youth advocate, youth guidance worker, youth support worker, juvenile care worker, youth centre worker.

1. *Identifying non-formal and informal learning* is a process that "... records and makes the individual's learning outcomes visible. This learning process does not result in a formal certificate or diploma, but it may provide the basis for such formal recognition." <sup>9</sup>
2. *Assessment of learning outcomes* is defined as "... appraising knowledge, skills and competencies of an individual against predefined criteria, specifying learning methods and expectations. Assessment is typically followed by Validation and certification." There are two different types of assessment:
  - Formative assessment: which is "a two-way reflective process between a teacher/assessor and learner to promote learning", and
  - Summative assessment is "the process of assessing (or evaluating) a learner's achievement of specific knowledge, skills and competence at a particular time". Validation (4) of non-formal and informal learning "... is based on assessing the individual's learning outcomes and may result in a certificate or diploma"<sup>10</sup>. The term "*validation of learning outcomes*" is understood as "the confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competencies) acquired by an individual in a formal, non-formal or informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with the requirements of a validation standard. Validation typically leads to certification.
3. *The certification of learning outcomes* is the process "... of formally attesting that knowledge, skills and competencies acquired by an individual have been assessed and validated by a competent body against a predefined standard. Certification results in the issue of a certificate, diploma or title"<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> (CEDEFOP 2009, p. 15).

<sup>10</sup> (CEDEFOP 2009, p. 15).

<sup>11</sup> (CEDEFOP 2009, p. 15).

## Reference documents and definitions

The standard Certification of competencies procedures requires the collections of all the following documents, that we call Annexes, while for the specific case of the Youth Connections Certification Protocol for Youth workers, ICEP is providing just the **Youth Worker Certification Scheme** (see Annex II below):

- Annexe I - Certification of Competencies Request (not provided)
- Annexe II - Certification Scheme for Youth Worker
- Annexe III - Personnel Certification Regulation (not provided)
- Annexe IV - Policy (not provided)
- Annexe V -Code of Ethics (not provided)
- Annexe VI - Privacy Policy (not provided)
- Annexe VII- Declaration of the aspiring Youth Worker (not provided)
- Annexe VIII- Template of the Final Assessment for the Certification of Competencies for Youth Worker (not provided)

## Conditions for the concession and maintenance of certification

All people aspiring to be certified Youth Workers can submit Certification of Competencies Request without discrimination for nationality, sex, religion, race, and political orientation.

To obtain and maintain certification over time, the aspiring Youth Worker must:

- identify and comply with all the requirements specified in the Youth Worker Certification Scheme

- provide ICEP (Certification Body) with any necessary and mandatory information and documents
- respect, even over time, all the provisions of the Youth Worker Certification Scheme
- keep the conditions for the entire period of validity of the certification
- in case of complaints, provide ICEP (Certification Body) with all information and documents necessary for the correct management and resolution
- undertake to use the certificates and logos and ICEP (Certification Body) certification marks correctly, as explained in this document.
- respect the deontological code unconditionally read and accepted by signing the Certification of Competencies Request

## Certification of Competencies procedure.

Aspiring Certified Youth Worker who wants to obtain the Certification of Competencies must make a specific written request to the Certification Body (Certification of Competencies Request – Annex 1), which must be dated, signed and sent to Certification Body with all the attachments.

Signing the Request implies accepting the procedures for using certificates and logos, certification marks, and the deontological code.

Once received, the Certification Body carries out a preliminary examination, informing the aspiring Youth Worker of the acceptance or refusal of the Request. The Certification Body can request additional relevant to the assessment.

It is also possible to request the Certification Body support to correct the Certification of Competencies Request.

## Phase 1: Identification and Document verification

Once received the Request with all the required documentation, the Certification Body starts the verification procedure.

In the case of lack of documentation, a formal request is sent by mail or fax to the aspiring certified Youth Worker, who then has ten working days to comply.

After receiving all the documentation, the Certification Body rejects the request and notifies the applicant of the decision. The Youth Worker will receive the official decision, with an explanation if necessary, by post.

In the case of rejection, the Youth Worker may appeal the decision by providing further information. If the reasons are deemed acceptable, the Certification Body can re-evaluate the Certification of Competencies Request by confirming or modifying the decision. In the latter case, the decision is final.

## Phase 2: Assessment and verification of skills

Phase 2 of verification is carried out under the direct responsibility of the Examiner, delegated by the Certification Body.

The exam can be conducted remotely via testing or in-person with an examiner and a witness

This phase consists of the Examiner's verification of the veracity of the information contained in the Certification of Competencies Request and the supporting documents. Verification can be by telephone or "face-to-face" interviews with Institutes, Universities, organisations, companies, bodies or organisations, and by directly interviewing the aspiring Youth Worker.

The applicant must consent to the Certification Body to contact organisations and persons cited in the documentation provided.

This phase aims to ascertain the truthfulness of the information and assess the Youth Worker's competencies.

At the end of this evaluation process, the Examiner can either express a favourable opinion or carry out additional surveys.

## Exam and Competencies assessment

The Exam and Competencies assessment are parts of the second phase of the certification process, conducted by the identified Examiner and monitored by Certification Body staff (Witness).

The written exam, which can be done 'in situ or remotely, consists of 60 multiple choice questions for the Junior Youth Worker and 90 multiple choice questions for the Senior Youth Worker and covers all CPS topics. The written exam lasts for ninety minutes with a pass mark of 80%.

The exam aims to evaluate candidates' competencies using their specific knowledge, skills, and tools related to the job's profile, as explained in the Certification Scheme (Annex II).

The practical exam consists of an assessment by the Examiner of the Competencies of the Youth Worker. Candidates will take the exam in the classroom or remotely by video (e.g. Zoom), and there will always be Certification Body (Witness) supervisory staff present.

The candidates need to score at least 60% of the marks to pass. After the written test, the practical examination will ensure the independence and impartiality of the Examiner and the Witness. Each part of the exam carries a score.

If the Youth Worker candidates achieve a minimum score or above in the written and practical exams, they pass and are deemed qualified.

The Examiner and Certification Body staff will guarantee the correct management of the exam, such as:

- ensuring compliance with all health and safety requirements.
- verifying that any need for special assistance beforehand request is met
- illustrating the methods of conducting the exam and the criteria for passing them



# Independent Evaluation of the Certification Re-Examiner

After the first examination process is complete, a Re-Examiner will review and ratify the Examiner's assessment.

## Findings

The digital data from all the verification and evaluation process stages conducted by the Examiner and the Re-Examiner is held for at least five years. Systematic backup and security checks are carried out routinely.

## Grant of certification of Competencies

Once the Youth Workers have passed the examinations, they will be granted the certification in the Register of Certification Body - Register of Certified Youth Workers. This information becomes public.

Together with the Certificate of Competencies, the Certification Body logo and mark is sent to the certified Youth Worker in electronic format.

The issued Certification of the Competencies is valid for five years from the date of issue and is subject to annual reviews in correspondence with the interim yearly deadlines.

At the end of the five years of validity, it is necessary to fill in and send the Certification of Competencies Request again only for the required parts (personal data, registration of activities related only to the last three years) before the expiration of the Certificate of Competencies validity.

The process of evaluation and granting of renewal is precisely the one described, with the only difference being that the written or oral examinations, or both, are re-taken if the reference standards are updated to a new edition.

## Maintenance and monitoring

During the entire period of validity of the Certificate of Competency issued, the Certification Body will conduct control and monitoring activities to verify compliance with all the requirements of the Certification Scheme for Youth Worker. If discrepancies emerge from the requirements defined by the Certification Scheme during the validity period, Youth workers must comply with the instructions to keep the certification. Failure to comply with the commitments will cause the temporary suspension, reduction or revocation of the issued Certificate of Competencies.

## Modification, extension and reduction of the granted certification of the competencies

At any time, the Youth Workers can request a modification of the Certification of Competencies. To do this, they must complete the Certification of Competencies Request and send it to the Certification Body, enclosing the additional documentation to support the request.

Once the request has been received, the Certification Body carries out the verification activities according to the previously described procedures and decides whether the modification, the extension or the reduction can be granted. In the case of reduction of certification, the aspiring Youth Worker is required to:

- return the original Certificate of Competencies, i.e. in the case of a temporary reduction, do not use the certification or logo or certification mark during the reduction period.
- delete documents that refer to the certification currently in force with the specific area before the reduction
- do not use the certification outside the scope specified in the Certificate following the reduction

# Modification of rules, guidelines, regulations and laws in the context of Youth Worker Certification Scheme

The Certification Body will implement the appropriate actions to ensure the validity of the certification if the Certification Scheme and the Regulations are modified by:

- changes in either or both professional and legal status of the Certification Body
- directives, regulations and laws in the framework of Youth Worker competencies

Youth workers affected by any changes must acknowledge and adapt to any new requirements within a reasonable time and appropriately.

## Validity and renewal of the certification contract

The Certification Contract and the Certification of Competencies are valid for five years and run from the date of submission of the Request.

After this period, the Youth Workers must send a new Request, complete the necessary parts, and send it to Certification Body, following the instructions above.

Once the request has been received by the Certification Body, the staff and the Examiner carry out the verification and evaluation activities.

The Certification Body communicates the awarding of the certification renewal to the Youth Worker.

# Waiver, suspension and revocation of the certification

## Waive

Certified Youth Workers may waive the Certification of Competencies in the following cases:

- If they do not accept any changes to these Rules
- If they do not accept any changes introduced by Certification Body in The Youth Worker Certification Scheme depending on the Youth Worker's needs
- The Youth Workers must communicate their decision, in writing, within three months from the date of notification of the changes by the Certification Body

They must then:

- Return their Certificate
- No longer declare Certification of Competencies and delete from all documents any related references or validations
- Cease the display of the Certificate, the logo and certification mark on the distribution of any material

Upon receipt of the waiver, the Certification will:

- remove the Certificate of Competencies
- remove the Youth Worker's name from the Certified Register

## Suspension

The Certification Body can suspend the validity of the Certification in the following cases:

- if the certified Youth Worker has misused the certificate, logo or certification mark
- if the certified Youth Worker has not put in place suitable corrective actions required by Certification Body
- If the certified Youth Worker does not send the documentation required during the annual assessment phases or send incorrect documentation

The suspension is communicated to the certified Youth Worker in writing, specifying the conditions and the deadline for restoring the certification.

During the suspension period, the certified Youth Worker cannot use the Certificate, the logo or the certification mark on any documentation, nor use the Certificate of Competencies in any form. The suspension can also be the consequence of an agreement between the certified Youth Worker and the Certification Body; the Certification Body formally notifies it by mail or fax.

The suspension does not change the validity period of the certification.

## **Revocation**

The revocation is decided and communicated in writing to the certified Youth Worker in the following cases:

- when the causes that led to the suspension of the Certificate of Competencies are not removed within six months
- in the case of a violation of the deontological code (Annex V)
- ascertained non-compliance with the provisions of this document and the annexes
- for sending false or counterfeit documentation
- for misusing the Certification, the logo or the Certification mark.

Following the revocation, the Youth Worker undertakes to:

- Return the original Certificate of Competencies
- Cease use of the Certificate of Competencies, the logo, and the certification mark in all documents

Withdrawal means that the Certification Body must delete the certified Youth Worker by the Register of Certified Youth Worker.

Formal notifications of revocation are sent in writing to the Youth Worker by the Certification Body.

# Claims, complaints, appeals and disputes

## Claims

A Certified Youth Worker may file a claim with the Certification Body in writing if he believes that the quality of the offered certification, maintenance or renewal services does not comply with the provisions of this regulation.

The claim must be presented to the Certification Body in writing (e-mail or fax or by post), stating the claim's nature precisely and accompanied by any supporting documents.

By verifying the veracity of the information, the Certification Body decides on the claim's validity in a constructive, impartial and timely way (max. five working days).

The Certification Body communicates its decision to uphold or reject the claim in writing (e-mail, fax, mail).

## Complaints and appeals

The certified Youth Worker may complain or appeal against Certification Body decisions, giving their reasons, within five working days from the date of notification of the decision. In that way, the certified Youth Worker does not have to accept the decision taken by the Certification Body immediately.

Once the Certification Body has received the complaint or appeal, it will examine it within ten working days. The Youth Worker and other people involved may be asked to attend a hearing during this time.

Certification Body will notify the applicant in writing form (e-mail, fax or mail) of the appeal's receipt, progress, and outcome.



### *Processing of personal data and authorisation for use*

In terms of processing personal data and authorisation for use, Certification Body will apply the provisions of the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and the Council, of 27 April 2016 "on the protection of natural persons concerning the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation)".

# ANNEX 1

Document Code: ESCO 2635.3.27

<p><b>Youth Connections Certification Scheme</b> <b>Youth Worker</b> <b>English Version</b></p>
<p><b>Grade: Senior Youth Worker (SW), Junior Youth Worker (JW)</b></p>

Profile		
<b>Senior Youth Workers (SW)</b>	<p>They develop and coordinate projects for young people through various activities and projects in the community created based on young people's social, behavioural and health development and security needs. They are engaged in a wide range of activities by and for young people (supervision of youth activities, work independently in their responsibilities). They can be volunteers or paid professionals who facilitate non-formal and informal learning processes.</p>	<p>Work experience as qualification requirements</p>
<b>Junior Youth Workers (JW)</b>	<p>They include people who support young people through various activities and projects in the community, based on social, behavioural and health development and the security needs of young people.</p> <p>These people don't work independently or take overall responsibility for the coordination of projects; they work under the supervision of more senior youth workers. The role's main purpose is to encourage youth activism and quality leisure time. Work can be carried out through employment in community organisations, associations or social services, bearing in mind the policies and instructions of the employer, with the support and supervision of the supervisor who may or may not</p>	<p>Even without experience and minimum qualified training in one of the ten areas identified by the Youth Connection project</p>



	be a youth worker.	
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## Standards and Guidelines

Standards and Guidelines	Contents	Notes
<b>Guide CEN 14</b>	Guidelines for standardisation activities on the qualifications and personnel of professions and personnel	(Latest edition)
<b>UNI Framework</b>	Outline for the development of standards in the field of unregulated professional activities	(Latest edition)
<b>ESCO</b>	European Classification of Skills, Competencies, Qualifications and Occupations	
<b>EQF</b>	European Qualifications Framework	
<b>Project documentation</b>	Project N°2019-2-UK01-KA205-062270  Training-Modules-for-youth-professionals-working-in-multicultural-settings	

<p><b>Senior Youth Worker (SW)</b></p> <p><b>Junior Youth Worker (JW)</b></p>	<p><b>The Youth Workers promote social participation and the development of the potential of young people individually or in groups or communities. They do this by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting social change to prevent social problems</li> <li>• work within communities</li> <li>• preparing youths for adulthood</li> <li>• applying anti-oppressive practices and assessing social service users' situations</li> <li>• monitoring the development of youth, building helping relationships with social service users</li> <li>• communicating on the youth's well-being</li> <li>• speaking with youth and contribute to protecting individuals from harm</li> <li>• delivering social services in diverse cultural communities</li> <li>• contributing to developing activities for the prevention of discomfort</li> <li>• facilitating inclusion, participation and social aggregation of young people to stimulate expression, communication and involvement of individuals or groups</li> <li>• contributing to the improvement of their quality of life</li> </ul> <p>Within the sector in which they operate, youth workers collaborate in planning and managing educational, recreational and cultural activities in direct contact with young people and individuals with different problems.</p> <p>These actions are part of a broader socio-educational path with other social workers</p>	<p><b>Senior Youth Worker (SW))</b></p> <p>Their professional qualifications are at an advanced level whereby they will operate independently, having acquired mastery and critical understanding of the context. They have developed specialised problem-solving skills in research and innovation to develop new procedures and integrate knowledge obtained in different areas. They can manage and transform complex, unpredictable work contexts that require new strategic approaches. They can take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and reviewing the strategic performance of teams.</p> <p>The Junior Youth Worker (JW)</p> <p>The profile has a basic level of competency. The JW can observe and map social contexts, promote social participation and innovation, and create realistic proposals for the benefit of the community.</p>
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such as professional educators, psychologists, intercultural mediators, social workers. Through theatre, games, physical activities, music and dance, the facilitator develops community life activities, both temporary and permanent, with preventive, educational and social integration purposes. The Youth Worker promotes the recovery and development of personal potential, inclusion and social participation, defining social, educational and recreational-cultural activities in response to identified needs. The facilitation of participation in all the activities in the training experience supports the participants, personally and in groups, on the learning path and job placement to achieve the objectives indicated based on the appropriate professional level provided by EQF. Its skills are employed in 3 well-defined areas:

1. STRATEGIC AREA, in which they will have to understand the local youth situation, the labour market and the development policies and ascertain, support and verify local models of development of youth competencies and skills and the level of inclusion and tolerance of diversity.

**Special Activities**

- Identify information needed for functional treatment of social and labour inclusion services
- Identify critical points that hinder inclusion policies
- Prepare and implement individual intervention plans (assistance, coaching and counselling) from the perspective of an inclusion strategy and in coherence with the needs of

	<p>the local situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt strategies to bridge cultural differences</li> </ul> <p>2. MANAGEMENT AREA, where they must: promote and facilitate individual and group learning of new paradigms of social inclusion and acceptance of differences; prepare, implement and monitor inclusion activities; ascertain individual needs for job placement assistance; develop and implement job placement assistance and tutoring interventions; plan and organise cultural inclusion activities</p> <p><b>Special Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement interventions to socialise and develop acceptance of diversity and gender equality.</li> <li>• Use training techniques to promote non-discrimination</li> <li>• Evaluate the internship</li> <li>• Support young people in information sourcing and selection of companies and job opportunities, CV writing, letter of application, interviews, etc.</li> <li>• Provide support interventions on individual rights and protection legislation in the host territories</li> <li>• Facilitate and manage inclusive group meetings</li> <li>• Manage issues related to linguistic inclusion</li> <li>• Implement and manage to face or online meetings that are engaging and inclusive</li> </ul> <p>3. AREA OF EXTERNAL RELA-</p>	
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	<p>TIONS, where they will have to manage local relationships with public administrations, companies, employment services, institutions and local employers.</p> <p><b>Specific activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue with local institutions and stakeholders</li> <li>• Ensure and update the requests and availability of companies to offer employment opportunities to young people</li> <li>• Manage conventions with companies and oversee the required fulfilments</li> <li>• Liaise with social services and assist with training programmes for cultural and workforce integration</li> </ul>	
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<b>EQF</b>	Knowledge Grade 7 – Skill Grade 6 – Competence Grade 7
<b>ESCO Code</b>	2635.3.27 - Youth Worker
<b>Linguistic Equivalents</b>	(ar) موظف شباب (bg) младежки работник/младежка работничка (de) Jugendarbeiter/Jugendarbeiterin (el) εργαζόμενος στον τομέα της νεολαίας/εργαζόμενη στον τομέα της νεολαίας (en) Youth Worker (es) trabajador social para trabajo con jóvenes/trabajadora social para trabajo con jóvenes (fr) animateur socio-éducatif/animateur socio-éducative (It)animatore socio educativo/animateur socioeducativa (lv) su jaunimu dirbantis specialistas (pt) assistente social especialista em trabalho com jovens (sk) pracovník s mládežou/ pracovníčka s mládežou

## First Certification Requirements Table

Requirements	Degrees: Senior Youth Worker (SW) Junior Youth Worker (JW)	
	Junior Youth Worker (JW)	Senior Youth Worker (SW)
<b>Instruction</b>	High school diploma or Degree (1st or 2nd level)	High school diploma or Degree (1st or 2nd level)
<b>Qualified training</b>	none	University Masters (in legal or economic subjects, or relating to the f training, education and orientation, or welfare and social sector) or

		qualification gained by professional experience as a Youth Worker of at least two years
<b>Specific training</b>	Specific training courses of at least eight hours in such topics as Gender equality, Socio-economic background, education and employment, cultural shock and cross-cultural adaptation, identity, diversity and discrimination, hate speech and tolerance, religion, human rights and legislation, migration and cultural diversity, intercultural communication, linguistic diversity.	<p>Specific training course of at least sixteen hours in such topics as Gender equality, Socio-economic background, education and employment, cultural shock and cross-cultural adaptation, identity, diversity and discrimination, hate speech and tolerance, religion, human right and legislation, migration and cultural diversity, intercultural communication, linguistic diversity.</p> <p>Or as an alternative:</p> <p>- At least ten years of experience as a Youth Worker</p>
<b>Work Experience</b>	Experience working in the social or entrepreneurial sector of at least six months or at least eighty hours of specific experience in the role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two years' experience in coordination, monitoring, and evaluation if in possession of a 2nd level degree</li> <li>• Three years' experience of working in the social or entrepreneurial sector or training or education and orientation sector if having a First level degree</li> <li>• Four years' experience of working in the social or entrepreneurial sector or training or education and orientation sector if in possession of an upper secondary qualification/professional qualification</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five years' experience of working in the social or entrepreneurial sector or training or education and orientation sector if in possession of an upper secondary qualification/professional qualification</li> </ul>
<b>Certification criteria</b>	Individual credential evidence dossier drawn up and signed following the provisions of Annex 4	Individual credential evidence dossier drawn up and signed following the provisions of Annex 4

## Validity

	<b>Degrees</b>	
<b>Validity</b>	<b>Junior Youth Worker (JW)</b>	<b>Senior Youth Worker (SW)</b>
	The certification is valid for five years.	

### Criteria and methods for evaluation, certification, surveillance, renewal, extension, suspension and revocation.

The description of all the criteria and methods adopted by ICEP (including the code of conduct) are clearly described in the applicable Staff Certification Regulation (RCER) in revision to which reference is made. Therefore, this Regulation is an integral part of this Certification Scheme.



# Requirements and Annual Maintenance Table

Requirements	Junior Youth Worker (JW)	Senior Youth Worker (SW)
<b>Professional ethics</b>	No adverse reports regarding compliance with the Staff Certification Regulation	No adverse reports regarding compliance with the Staff Certification Regulation
<b>Correct use of certification and brands</b>	No adverse reports regarding compliance with the Staff Certification Regulation	No adverse reports regarding compliance with the Staff Certification Regulation
<b>Complaints</b>	Absence	Absence
<b>Annual fee</b>	If applicable	If applicable
<b>Professional updating and continuous improvement</b>	<p>The certified <b>Junior Youth Worker (JW)</b> is required to fulfil what is required annually for maintenance and every five years for renewal, as described below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attendance, for at least eight hours per year in total in the thematic area of competence, of seminars, specialised conferences, refresher courses,</li> <li>perform a minimum of 80 hours per year of Youth Worker activities</li> </ul> <p>Note: the renewal of the certification will be confirmed only after a positive outcome of the assessment of compliance with the required requirements</p>	<p>The certified <b>Senior Youth Worker (SW)</b> is required to fulfil what is required annually for maintenance and every five years for renewal, as described below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attendance, for at least sixteen hours per year</li> </ul>

		<p>overall in the thematic area of competence, of seminars, specialist conferences, refresher courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● carry out a minimum of 160 hours per year of Youth Worker activities</li> </ul> <p>Note: the renewal of the certification will be confirmed only after a positive outcome of the assessment of compliance with the required requirements</p>
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## Renewal Requirements Table for five years

Requirements	Junior Youth Worker (JW)	Senior Youth Worker (SW)
<b>Professional ethics</b>	Compliance with the provisions of the Staff Certification Regulations	Compliance with the requirements of the Staff Certification Regulations

<b>Correct use of certification and brands</b>	Compliance with the provisions of the Staff Certification Regulations	Compliance with the requirements of the Staff Certification Regulations
<b>Complaints</b>	Absence	Absence
<b>Annual fee</b>	If applicable	If applicable
<b>Professional continuity</b>	At least six months of work activity in the role in the three years or 150 hours of coordination in the three years	At least twelve months of work activity in the role in the three years or 250 hours of coordination in the three years
<b>Professional updating and continuous improvement</b>	At least forty hours of updating in the five years qualified or recognised by theoretical/practical in the areas of education and employment, cultural shock and cross-cultural adaptation, identity, diversity and discrimination, hate speech and tolerance, religion, human right and legislation, migration and cultural diversity, intercultural communication, linguistic diversity	At least sixty hours of updating in the five years qualified or recognised by theoretical/practical in the areas of education and employment, cultural shock and cross-cultural adaptation, identity, diversity and discrimination, hate speech and tolerance, religion, human right and legislation, migration and cultural diversity, intercultural communication, linguistic diversity

## Main Exam Topics

Main Exam Topics		
	Content	Note
<b>Main Topics References of Clients or Employers</b>	Presentation of at least one letter of reference certifying that the Youth Worker has exercised the skills in the Areas: Strategic, Management and External Relations "with ethics, competence and scruple."	The presentation of the letters of reference exempts you from taking the written exam if you meet the access requirements
<b>Head Office References</b>	Presentation of at least one letter of reference certifying that the Youth Worker has exercised the skills in the Areas: Strategic, Management and External Relations "with ethics, competence and scruple."	
<b>Strategic area</b>	The training needs and management of the economic, instrumental and professional resources necessary to carry out the activities are based on the system of constraints and resources predefined by plans, projects, and regulations. Planning of the various professional contributions (analysts, designers, Youth Worker, tutors, guidance counsellors.) and preparation of preventive/corrective activities relating to the use of resources in the areas of education and employment, cultural shock and cross-cultural adaptation,	<p>The Written Test is a questionnaire made up of sixty multiple-choice questions covering all the topics covered by the CPS for the Junior Youth Worker and 90 multiple choice questions for the Senior Youth Worker.</p> <p>You are asked to find the correct answer from three options. A mark is given to each correct answer (and no marks for wrong or missing answers).</p> <p>The pass mark for the exam is 80%.</p> <p>The exam can be taken in person or online</p> <p>Practical exam:</p>

	<p>identity, diversity and discrimination, hate speech and tolerance, religion, human right and legislation, migration and cultural diversity, intercultural communication, linguistic diversity.</p>	<p>It consists of a test chosen according to the competency groups sampled for which certification is requested.</p> <p>The exam will focus on detailed knowledge and skills in CPS. An assessment with a maximum of 100% is achievable (a well-analysed case and clearly defined key topics), but the pass mark is 60% (sufficient analysis and main key issues identified).</p> <p>After passing the written exam, the practical exam will be carried out (20 multiple choice questions).</p> <p>The overall evaluation (E) must be calculated according to the following formula:</p> $E = 0.3 * ET + 0.7 * EP = 0.3 * \text{_____} \% + 0.7 * \text{_____} \% = \text{XXXXX}$ <p>ET is the evaluation of the theoretical test</p> <p>EP is the evaluation of the practical test</p> <p>The overall pass mark for both the theoretical and practical exams is 60%</p>
<p><b>Management Area</b></p>	<p>Coordination of the human, economic and organisational resources present; monitoring of actions and activity programs and monitoring of administrative progress based on the reporting of expenses</p>	



<b>External relations area</b>	Design actions to maintain and promote the updating of companies, the territory and suppliers on the progress of the training project (meetings, meetings, seminars, workshops)	
<b>Regional and national laws</b>	Laws, regulations, circulars implementing training management	

## Reference documents

We gathered existing material related to international certification of competencies schemes. The sources and materials that we used for the Youth Connections competence Protocol are given below:

- Council of Europe, website: [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)
- Council of Europe, Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on youth work (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 31 May 2017 at the 1287th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies), website: [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int).
- Youth Work Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4, p. 9.
- Youth Goals, website: <https://youth-goals.eu/>
- CEDEFOP 2009, BBT 2009, <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/it>
- European Commission, "Get to know ESCO", website: <https://ec.europa.eu/>, article link: <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/home?resetLanguage=true&newLanguage=en>
- Cedefop (2015). European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop reference series; No 104. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/008370>
- Manifesto of Adult Learning in the 21st century: The Power and Joy of Learning Publisher: European Association for the Education of Adults – EAEA.2019
- European Training Strategy A Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally. The European Training Strategy (ETS) in the field of youth.



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