Implementation Guidelines for Intersectional Peer Violence
Preventive Work

IGIV

Grundtvig Multilateral Projects 2010 -2011

State of the Art Report and Needs Analysis

Austria

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Preface

The following report discusses results of the status quo analysis on intersectional peer violence preventive work in Austria. Different publications and homepages on the institutionalized level of official politically supported campaigns were analysed as well as selected publications which were introduced and distributed in the field of open youth work.

At the same time a needs analysis was conducted. The second part of the report deals with the results of the qualitative survey among experts of youth work, which has focussed on their experience with peer violence and peer violence prevention in connection with social arrangements of dominance and subordination. Social categories and mechanisms of subordination and oppression were addressed. In addition to that, needs for further education are defined, on which the intersectional approach for violence prevention in the field of youth work should focus within the IGIV project.

Literature Review Report

In order to conduct an accurate status quo analysis in the field of intersectional peer violence preventive work in Austria, the Austrian team has selected some publications and programs of high influence. The documents were analysed according to the proposed methodology within IGIV.

The topics of diversity, heterogeneity and intersectionality with special regards to policy and institutional levels were addressed. In order to find relevant documents, the Austrian team tried to concentrate on descriptions of pedagogical projects and projects concerning violence prevention following preventive project descriptions which matched with the complexity of the intersectional approach. The intersection of categories (e.g. migration/gender) and dominance structures (racism/sexism) should be visible, social positions of youth groups should be negotiated and discussed within overlapping systems. Furthermore peer violence prevention should be addressed.

As the following report shows, programs and documents provided by political institutions and institutions of open youth work differ in a significant point of view. While politically promoted peer violence prevention programs tend to discuss peer violence prevention in a "neutral" way – disregarding different concernments of peers in different societal relations of dominance and subordination – handbooks and projects distributed by institutions of open youth work tend to discuss violence prevention in connection with intersecting social categories.

Political Programs against Peer Violence

"White Feather" – a Peer Violence Prevention Campaign in Austria

In 2007/2008 the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture has started the peer violence prevention campaign "White Feather – Joint Action for Fairness and against Violence "[2]. This strategy is based on three central aspects:

- The integration of stakeholders against peer violence in school and kindergarten
- Networking with (international) experts for the implementation of peer violence prevention on a national level
- Implementation of theoretically based and empirically evaluated peer violence prevention programs

Pupils, parents and teachers are addressed as main target groups. Specific and efficient support as well as primary prevention programs are provided within the main strategy of "White Feather". It includes three important goals (promotion of sensibility and knowledge, promotion of social competence in dealing with unrequested behaviour and promotion of moral courage) as well as specific measures (e.g. qualification, development of educational psychology and peer mediation, implementation of agreement of understanding, networking with experts, scientific evaluation, fairness award, integration of gender aspects, etc.). The general strategy is based on national and international research results on violence and bullying in schools, especially on the work of Spiel, Strohmaier and Atria at the Faculty of Psychology, University of Vienna. Within their work, characteristics of perpetrators and victims at schools have been addressed as well as certain aspects of intercultural relation and peer violence.[3]

"White Feather" supports the implementation of evidence based prevention programs (e.g. ZERO, Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, ...), theoretically based and evaluated along selected quality criteria.

Based on research results of Spiel, Strohmeier and Atria (e.g. Spiel and Atria 2001/Strohmaier and Spiel 2009), the scientists developed WiSK[4], a peer violence prevention program with a special focus on social and intercultural competence in schools. It is characterized by its integrated school policy approach, which includes measures on three different levels: school, class, individuals. Within "White Feather" two WiSK training courses took place from 2008 to 2010. While intercultural

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[2] www.weissefeder.at
[3] For further details, http://www.maennerberatung.at/docs/0603_peerthink_countryReportAustria.pdf
[4] http://www.univie.ac.at/wisk.psychologie/

competence is addressed within the WiSK program the interconnection of social categories is neglected.

The campaign can be described as a strategy of high importance in the field of peer violence prevention in Austria with special regards to policy and the institutional level. A detailed analysis of the internet presence of "White Feather" shows that diversity and heterogeneity are addressed, but solely focussed on single categories such as gender or interculturality. Gender specific forms of violence are described ("difference approach"), information and instruction material for gender specific violence prevention is provided. In addition to that gender competence and gender equality were included as special assessment criteria for the "Fairness Award 2010"

"Fairness Award"

The "Fairness Award" was implemented by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture. It is usually awarded to projects and measures at Austrian schools which focus on a productive and fair cooperation of school partners, avoidance or solving of problems and/or the promotion of respectful cooperation. Cooperation agreements are also awarded.

In 2010 a special assessment criteria on gender competence and gender equality was implemented. Among other topics, further information on "gender", "violence prevention", "peer mediation" and "intercultural learning" is provided on the. homepage.[5]

Gender sensitivity is defined as an approach that fosters the development of potentials, apart from gender dualism and gender typical limitations. Therefore the influence of gender specific socialisation processes in society should be made transparent for all teachers and pupils. Gender equality is required on the level of educational principles, coeducation and language. A specific connection between gender and violence is addressed. A gender sensible approach to peer violence is highly recommended. An intersectional approach is not described.

Although a connection between gender and peer violence has been taken into account, further information in the section „violence prevention"is discussed in a "neutral" way – disregarding different concernments of peers in different societal relations of dominance and subordination.

Handbook on Violence Prevention in Austrian schools

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[5] http://www.fairnessaward.at

The Austrian Centre for Personality Development and Social Learning has published a handbook on violence prevention in cooperation with the University of Vienna (on behalf of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture) in 2009: Kessler, Doris/Strohmeier, Dagmar (2009). Gewaltprävention an Schulen. Persönlichkeitsbildung und soziales Lernen. Vienna [Violence Prevention at Schools. Personality Development and Social Learning].

The preface describes the target group of the handbook as teachers and school directors. The handbook includes a short description of the "White Feather" campaign, definitions of terms, research results, different concepts of violence prevention, methods and tools as well as selected literature and good practice examples.

The description of different forms of violence in schools show practical relevance (everyday examples, pictures, etc.) and at the same time a stereotypical presentation of boys and girls. Boys are presented in connection with physical violence, stealing, blackmailing and racism while girls are solely displayed in connection with psychological violence. Research results on peer violence at school in Austria are described with a special focus on gender but are lacking the societal/structural background. Interconnections apart from gender and age are not discussed either. The main message concerning peer violence and gender refers to gender typical forms of violence. Gender is described as an important criterion of difference (boys tend towards physical violence, observe and accept physical violence more often than girls; while girls tend towards psychological violence etc.). Reasons for peer violence are discussed (among others) in relation to violent behaviour of parents towards their children. A boy-father-perpetrator- and girl-mother-victim-line is perpetuated. Although research results are outlined with a specific focus on gender and (very little focus on) ethnicity, the prevention concepts are not linked to these results. Especially concepts of violence prevention, methods and tools give the impression that measures of peer violence prevention should be provided in a general manner, not concerning specific social categories and interconnections between categories.

In the glossary racism, homophobia, structural violence and male violence are described. Racism is defined in a rather unclear and incorrect way namely as superior term for any negative behaviour against people, who socially affiliate to a certain group of people, characterized by gender, religion, ethnical group, sexual orientation or handicap.

Open Youth Work

BOJA, a competence centre for open youth work, supports youth workers all over Austria with information, further qualification, networking, quality assurance and lobbying for youth work. Among others gender sensitizing work with young people, diversity and (violence) prevention are declared as main topics of open youth work in Austria. An in-depth view of these topics of open youth work shows some references to intersectional youth work.

Under the point "Diversity", **a handbook on migration, integration and intercultural dialogue** in the field of youth work is introduced (Akzente Salzburg [Hg.] [2008]. Impulse. Handbuch für Jugendarbeit. Band 5. Migration, Integration und interkultureller Dialog. Verlag Akzente Salzburg.)[6]

This handbook is described as a practical handbook, which covers selected aspects of "migration" in different fields of life of young people, such as school, family, friends, youth centres, work and education and other societal institutions and regulations. The different articles focus on the topics of migration and intercultural dialogue in open youth work as well as in the context of institutions, on structural and political framework (e.g. equality law, intercultural mediation, representation of migration in executive authorities, on intercultural learning, on gender aspects of youth work in the context of migration and on violence and conflicts. In general, youth work with migrant boys seems to be a core topic of several chapters in the handbook, focussing on identity development and on specific practical projects in youth work with boys.

In the preface, the main aim of the handbook is described: the authors want to give hands-on recommendations for youth work in practice in the context of migration. Good practice projects, tested tools and methods are introduced as a basis for further development.

The target group of the content, described in the document, is the group of young people with a migration background. In most of the articles with practical advices the interconnection with gender is addressed.

For example, in the article "Is it a Man's World?" (2008) Gruber describes concepts of gender sensitizing youth work with boys who have a migration background within the youth centre IGLU. Like other centres for open youth work in the urban area, the youth centre is mainly frequented by boys, in this case mainly by boys with a migration background. The concepts of open youth work had to be reworked and new concepts had to be implemented due to the fact that the number of young boys with a migration background increased over the last decades. Gender sensitizing concepts have also been integrated and gender roles of men and gender stereotypes in society are reflected critically in the daily work with boys. Restrictions and limitations of future life plans – derived from gender typical ideologies – should

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[6] http://www.akzente.net/IMPULSE-Band-5.2091.0.html

become transparent, developed or (at best) rejected. Special offers for different target groups in the youth centre are provided. At the same time, IGLU avoids a difference approach that shapes in- and out-group relations. On the contrary, an empowerment approach, which strongly tries to relate to the specific life situation of young people is pursued. Differences between cultures are treated as learning resources. Gender homogeneous group offers – here the boys group "Boys World" – should provide a safe place for critical reflections on gender typical life plans.

In this case an intersectional approach of practical youth work is described and the intersectional categories are strongly connected to the societal background (e.g. gender roles in Austrian society and in origin society, insecurity of migrant status in Austria, etc.). Although no specific focus on violence is mentioned, gender sensitizing work is targeted towards the development of sensibility and self-consciousness, "that allows to act free from racism and sexism" (Gruber, 2008: 20). The general approach of IGLU seems to focus on primary violence prevention. Gender sensitizing concepts for the work with young boys with migration background are regarded as a way to reach this target.

Under the point "gender related work", **a handbook on gender related concepts of open youth** work is introduced, which was published in 2010 (Steirischer Dachverband der Offenen Jugendarbeit [Hg.] [2010]. Geschlechtsbezogene Zugänge in der Offenen Jugendarbeit. Anregungen zur Arbeit im Handlungsfeld. Graz).[7]

This manual presents an overview of gender related youth work in theory and practice. It includes theoretical contributions, good practice examples and descriptions of gender related concepts and important frame conditions as well as a glossary and was written for people who are active in the field of open youth work.

In the preface, gender-related work is discussed with reference to different life situations of young people. Social categories like class and migration are introduced as interconnecting with gender.

An article on masculinities and femininities as everyday practice in gender relation and as model of orientation for boys and girls is related to the concept of hegemonic masculinity (R. Connell) and to Angela McRobbie's concept of representations of femininities. Following these theoretical approaches, the article discusses gender as interdependent category (Scambor 2010).

Two articles discuss gender-homogeneous youth work with boys and girls as dealing with a great variety of life circumstances among gender groups. Rauw (2010) refers to a contradiction in youth work with girls: while youth work with girls critically reflects

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[7] http://www.dv-jugend.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Pdfs/geschlechtsbezog_OJA_23.06.doppel.pdf

on patriarchal dominance relations, it is – at the same time – incorporated into the patriarchal way of thinking, because gender difference is regarded as a main characteristic of patriarchy. Rauw suggests a specific approach to overcome the reproduction of gender construction in everyday life by means of gender homogeneous work with girls: a place of freedom has to be provided, which allows to focus on differences among girls. In this way, the gender dualism is replaced by a concept of difference and gender is discussed as an interdependent category with a strong focus on subject related work.

Stuve (2010) points to the necessity of gender-homogeneous work with boys. Work with boys focuses on boys individually at the intersection of different societal dominance relations. Complex life situations require an intersectional approach, which interweaves gender with other societal dominance relations. Similar to Rauw (2010) Stuve asks for a place of freedom where boys get the possibility to overcome social arrangements of dominance and subordination. Consequences for an intersectional approach of gender reflective work with boys are described:

- Orientation on hegemonic masculinity (role model) should be reflected critically/alternative life concepts for men should be discussed/counterparts to one-way orientations (competition, etc.) should be found

- Tendencies towards homogenisation of boys ("boys are..."/"boys need ...") should be avoided

- Starting with small steps towards a broad spectrum of possibilities (not limited by gender dichotomy)

- Take the risk of conflicts! Set boundaries when it comes to sexism, racism or other mechanisms of subordination and discrimination.

Needs Analysis

In order to define specific needs of youth workers and experts on which the intersectional approach for violence prevention in the field of youth work should focus within the IGIV project, four group interviews and two interviews with experts were conducted between April and September 2010.

Four focus group interviews were carried out.

Three of the focus group interviews took place within a training course for open youth work in Styria, conducted by the provincial government of Styria. Participants of the focus group interviews were youth workers from different youth centres in rural and urban areas of Styria.

The focus group interviews were conducted in the following way: in the beginning, the concept of intersectionality was presented and the main aims and products of Peerthink as well as targets and specific programs of IGIV were introduced (Homepage and Power Point Presentation). Afterwards the participants were asked to reply to the following questions in small working groups:

- Can you define social categories (gender, skin colour, class, age, ...) which have a certain effect on subordination and dominance among peers? Which intersections are of importance ?

- Are there any ongoing tensions within your youth centre, which lead to conflicts and troubles from time to time ?

- What are the everyday tensions and conflicts in the youth centre ?

- What do violent situations between peers look like? Which forms of peer violence take place (physical violence, verbal violence, ...)?

- How do you react on peer violence in the youth centre?

After the working group session, the focus group interview was carried out. The participants were asked to summarize the results of the working group discussions, to present concepts/theories/methods/policies/approaches they use in their everyday work and to talk about their needs for support and further education, especially according to the topic of intersectional peer violence preventive work.

The first focus group discussion was conducted with eight participants (three women/five men). The other focus group discussions were carried out with smaller groups, due to the fact that participants of the first focus group had problems to talk about needs and suggestions on the level of content.

One of the four focus group interviews was conducted with three experts in the field of work with boys at the Men's Counselling Centre Graz.

Two expert interviews were carried out.

One interview was carried out with the administrator of the Styrian umbrella organisation of open youth work, due to the fact that he has a broad overview perspective on open youth work in Styria as well as in the whole of Austria (he is a member of the board at BOJA, a competence centre for open youth work in Austria) and provides further qualification for youth workers.

The second interview was led with the administrator at Men's Counselling Centre Graz, who accompanied a three years process on peer violence prevention in a school in a rural area of Styria.

Important Areas of Tension within Youth Work

> *"I think that every difference can trigger and cause tensions. In which form ever, … People define themselves by special features and as a result they isolate themselves from others and when we don't know each other, than we are more cautious at the beginning or a little bit reserved and maybe that reinforces prejudices. Thereby tensions can be caused."* (Youth Worker)

Cross Work and Boys with a Migrant Background

Some (male as well as female) experts point to the fact, that female youth workers' authority often gets undermined by boys, mainly of those with a migration background. It is not possible to name a special ethnical group, it is treated as a phenomenon in general.

Some of the interviewees assumed that this behaviour derives from fathers displaying patriarchal role models in the families of origin. Respect is seen as very important for the work with adolescents with a migration background.

> *„To me, they seem very tense. I have the feeling, that adolescents with a Muslim background, it doesn't matter if it's a boy or a girl, have to live with many restrictions and they are afraid of breaking them … For them it's positive to see other ways of living."* (Youth Worker)

In general adolescents tend to accept the superior position of female youth workers, but they cannot understand that male and female youth workers are equivalent. If the female youth worker is alone in the group less problems regarding acceptance are reported.

Girls with a migration background are described as cooperative in open youth work. Within the focus group their role is discussed in strong connection with female youth workers. It seems,that they feel more comfortable with female youth workers, due to the fact that their rights of participation at home are often reduced in comparison with male family members.

Class and Migration – Categories of Exclusion

Within one of the focus groups, the intersection of class and migration was discussed with a critical focus on special offers for certain youth groups. Overlappings of

different cultures were discussed: there are young people with a migration background, who have a higher education and have a well regulated family life, compared to some Austrians , who fight against problems*, "which we would attribute to a migration background".* Especially during the last years, migration became an important topic in Austria and it was given much attention. During this process, special offers were conceived for certain youth groups (boys with migration background,etc.). Such differentiations are reflected critically within youth work, because youth workers are afraid that their efforts on integration and inclusion are not valued anymore.

Migration is discussed in public as an overestimated topic, that covers other topics and problem fields, like e.g. „*the fall of the middle class* ", which increased poverty also among adolescents. On the political level this is not seen as an important topic at all. Some youth workers miss discussions about socio-political changes, where migrants only represent a part of the whole process.

An expert reflected critically on migration as socio-political phenomenon. The topic has turned into a main focus of youth work in Austria. He is sure that a lot of media images have helped to form specific needs for youth groups with a migrant background. The expert questions these needs, which seemed to derive from the social category "migration" and he describes examples of "secondary effects", where young people justify their failure to a certain part referring to their migration background.

> *"The real reasons why some cannot participate in everyday commodities are not addressed. That someone can't read and write is not addressed, not to mention calculating. Because his migration background is seen as the reason why he doesn't get apprenticeship. Someone else who isn't able to read and write won't get an apprenticeship either, but this fact is concealed"* (Expert)

This situation leads to a polarization (migration versus class), where always the"others" are blamed for bad conditions. Due to the existing powerlessness on both sides this is described as a difficult problem in youth work. The social category "migration" solely leads to "secondary effects": the migration background represents a stigma which explains any drawback.

Areas of tension usually develop at the lines of exclusion between different youth groups. Conflicts always occur when different youth groups exclusively lay claim to the youth centre. Some youth workers refer to the circumstance that heterogeneous youth groups are more flexible in handling changes, heterogeneity helps them to adapt to changing situations.

There is an increasing tendency in Austrian youth policies to provide special offers for special youth groups (girls, boys, adolescents with a migrant background) which raises the problem of polarization again and again. But some experts are convinced

that the focus of youth work should be put on a broad spectrum of very diverse living environments of getting along with each other in spite of all the individual differences should be a central aim in youth work policies.

In practice, team work and cooperation of young people with different levels of education is often difficult. In rural areas this works better than in urban areas, since fewer offers are provided. Adolescents are more likely to accept being part of a heterogeneous group of young people.

Due to heterogeneity, young people are able to experience different possibilities and life circumstances and they are more likely to appreciate others. In addition to that it is less probable that they take on the role of a victim (e.g. "Everything is difficult, because I have a migration background. Therefore I don't get a chance").

Class

Especially experts in the field of work with boys experienced social class as one of the most important areas of difference within boys groups. The category is not necessarily connected with migration – it can be like that, but it does not have to be like that. Difficult social conditions are discussed more often than e. g. the circumstance of migration.

- According to social class the experts experienced different images concerning masculinities. Socially disadvantaged boys tend to develop traditional images on hegemonic masculinities (e.g. men are responsible for the orgasm, a o.).

- Socially disadvantaged boys are more likely to get physically aggressive, whereas boys from advantaged social classes are more likely to manage conflicts verbally (at least at the beginning of conflicts). The experts talk about the connection between social class and social competence: The lower the class, the less socially competent.

Racism

Concerning racism some youth workers describe the problem of an adequate approach to certain situations. In case of verbal attacks, for example if someone is insulted as an "alien", they are not sure how to handle the situation. In general, they would make clear that such attacks are not appreciated within the youth centre, but they are not able to achieve a sustainable change of habits. Methods and tools for an adequate treatment and peer violence prevention are therefore highly welcome in the context of open youth work.

Two youth workers report that in their institutions of open youth work the categories migration and language represent the most important areas of conflicts.

In discussions with adolescents about aversions against migrants, a similar pattern is reported by different experts. Typical prejudice and stereotypes are reproduced within these discussions, e.g. - *"they take away our jobs, etc."*, but an in-depth discussion often shows very clearly that no one of the adolescents would like to perform the mainly unpleasant work under insecure conditions. On the one hand an in-depth view is necessary but on the other hand, the youth worker and the teenagers have to get in contact with each other by quarrelling, discussing and arguing. This is seen as a main basis for something like a sustainable work with young people, especially in the time of adolescence when own positions and limits have to be concerned.

Language

The ability to read and write is discussed as one of the areas of tension, but it is not necessarily connected to migration, teenagers without a migrant background are also concerned as the following example shows:

> *"I work with a boy who articulates in a rather fragmented manner although he was born in Austria and he grew up here. His parents do not really care about him. He attends an integration class and he is acting like a kid with a migration background: he speaks the language as if he came from another country. This is easier for him, because he is an Austrian who isn't able to speak German very well, although he was born here. Pretending to be from another country is easier for him."* (Youth Worker)

In many youth centres it seems to be impossible to set offers which are aligned to language, e. g. with the request to note something down. It is not caused by a lack of interest it is rather caused by illiteracy. Within network profiles young people usually write the way they speak. They create their own language out of inability.

Homophobia

> *„Every day this subject is pulled up in some way. Gay. 'You gay sod' ".*

> *„ ... when I don`t like it. The colour is gay, the pocket is gay, the car is gay. They depreciate. … I don't like this and therefore this is gay. This can be a sports-car. If the colour does not fit, it's gay. … This can be a very male thing."* (Youth Worker)

Homophobia is not discussed with a special focus on migration. Independent from their social background adolescents tend to use the term "gay" in a derogative way. Within the focus group interviews it is discussed as a general view, due to the fact that homosexuality is still not accepted and integrated into society. To be lesbian is not discussed as a topic among adolescents, it is rather ignored. Everything they don't like is "gay" – no matter if it's a person or a thing.

For boys homosexuality seems to play a much bigger role than for girls. A female youth worker talks about an example of a homosexual boy who strongly cooperates with a girls group. Everybody knows that he is gay. In general he does not get attacked or insulted personally for being gay, but he has problems with the fact that the term "gay" is used as a derogatory term for everything that is not appreciated.

Disability

Concerning the aspect disability there is a lot of degradation on the one hand and welfare on the other side. *"We are thoughtful, but we would not like to be disabled"* is often the message among adolescents. Being different often has an adjusting function within youth groups.

Subcultures and the Role of Girls

One of the experts within a focus group discussion reported that he and his team of a youth club were confronted with areas of conflicts among different youth subcultures (e.g., Punks, Skinheads, …). There are, for example, youth cultures in which girls are positioned in the foreground while in other subcultures girls are "in the corner". Especially Skinheads or teenagers who affiliate themselves to the Metal Scene find it amusing when the boys attack each other physically. Skinheads often act in a very sexist and derogatory way towards girls, while in the subcultures of Punks, Gothics and Emos girls seem to be well integrated.

For some of the experts the question appears why women mostly take the role of the *„nice singers"*, while other important and active roles are rather occupied by boys. This question is discussed in relation to all the subcultures mentioned previously. These experts think that this is because the presence of gender role stereotypes and equal rights are still not the norm. On the contrary – a backlash is seen in this aspect of youth work.

Different Nationalities

One of the experts who works in a youth centre which is mainly frequented by boys with a migration background says that migration represents the main issue of conflict, although the majority of the young people have a migration background. Different nationalities represent a further area of conflict. Although it is remarkable that in general young people with a migration background get along with each other well. Conflicts around different nationalities mainly occur when it comes to controversies concerning other topics (e.g. music, hairstyle,….).

In this case the house rules at the youth centre forbid to use nationality as an insult word. In general, adolescents use different insults, but it happens nevertheless an outbreak from the well-known rules.

Urban Versus Rural Areas

Different dynamics in youth work according to regional specifics are also noticed. Especially in the field of violence preventive work with boys, offers in the city are usually required for so-called "problem schools". The number of young people with a migration background is usually very high there. It is almost not possible for youth workers to conduct a workshop program with pupils of these schools because they use defence as a main pattern of behaviour, whereas in rural areas it is comparatively easy to carry out a workshop according to the prepared concept

Although specific needs in urban schools are noticeable and should be discussed within the workshops, a certain structure as well as certain core topics should be guaranteed and not lost due to fulfil the needs of the boys. Offers of work with boys have a higher chance to succeed if boy's needs are taken into account.

According to the region were boys live, different pictures about hegemonic masculinities are developed. In the country role models are more likely to be sports idols, while in the city often representatives of youth cultures and people with a higher social status (e.g. large car, high income,…) serve as role models.

Another characteristic is mentioned by experts who work with boys: boys in the countryside are often members of associations (fire brigade, youth club), whereas boys in cities are rarely members of associations. This circumstance is casually defined with anonymity and the fact that boys with a migration background (higher numbers in cities) in general have less access to associations.

Living in the city is seen as much more individualized than living in the country. Therefore it provides more freedom on the habitual level, while the situation is quite difficult on the countryside if young people do not correspond to established norms.

Methods and Approaches in Everyday Work

Experts for work with boys at the Men's Counselling Centre Graz conduct gender homogeneous work with boys especially in the context of schools. Violence Prevention work with boys is provided (mainly secondary and tertiary prevention). At the same time *gender reflective work with boys* is offered, where the topic peer violence is often a central point of discussion. Recently more workshops on the topic of sexuality and gender are conducted since there is a high demand in this respective field. Some time ago a peer violence prevention project („*Stop violence*") was carried out in different schools. In some cases it was conducted as a long-time project, which lasted a few years.

Peer violence prevention with boys is also provided as a *coaching unit*. Experts carry out these coaching units in different schools.

Although at the moment a so called peer violence prevention project with boys is not conducted, the experts point to the circumstance that peer violence is always an important topic in workshops with boys. For their work with boys the experts got the Styrian Award for children's rights (TrauDi) in 2009.

They described the following approaches on which their work is based within a focus group interview:

- "Stop Violence" is a project which was carried out in different schools during the last years. The approach on violence prevention is not solely focused on boys, but it tries to include people in school in general (teachers, directors, social workers) in a more systematic way. Teachers are multipliers within "Stop Violence".

- In gender sensitizing work within homogeneous boys groups, the main emphasis is put on variability. Diversity among boys is taken as a resource and differences can coexist– this is one of the main targets within work with boys. Although the experts experienced a certain pressure towards unification within boys groups.

- Balance-Approach (Winter/Neubauer). Some experts try to integrate the balance approach of Winter and Neubauer in boys groups. The approach is targeted towards the balance of specific characteristics in work with boys. For example. if the atmosphere in the group is characterized by competition, a counterpart to this tendency has to be found and integrated – e. g. cooperation. It is a resource oriented model of youth work. The balance approach is not only suitable for the workshop participants, but can also be applied for youth workers. One of the experts points to the importance of balanced work with boys groups: youth workers have to manage the

ambivalence between appreciation of the boys and the limits, which have to be set. In addition to that it is important that youth workers do not present themselves as being impeccable, but also show vulnerability.

- Critical reflections on male role models are initiated and conducted through certain methods like the following: "men picture index card" is a method which concentrates on the strengths of participants. The following question is raised: which type of men/boy is attractive for women/girls and men/boys. Inferiority feelings and stereotypes (e.g. trained bodies are attractive for others) get transparent. At the same time different attitudes become evident. The exercise is targeted towards a critical reflection of idols and ideal typical images of men.

- Defences of boys – described as an important challenge - have raised critical reflection about workshop programs and frame conditions for work with boys. The workshops are usually conducted in schools and the experts are commissioned by school representatives. Defences of boys might derive from a strong connection to school culture, where pupils are lead through a curricula. Certain needs of adolescents are rarely mentioned. Therefore the experts started to dedicate the first part of the workshops to certain needs of the boys. Although not all the topics that come up in this way can be discussed within the workshop, adolescents might get the feeling that their needs are of importance and that they are listened to.

- Experiences of powerlessness in groups can be helpful because they contain information. The content has to be worked out by reflection. One of the experts describes an example of powerlessness and possible intervention when strong rejection and degradation is evident: the workshop will be interrupted and the youth worker tells the boys that they have five minutes time to discuss whether they would like the workshop to be resumed or not. He leaves the room in the meantime and waits for their decision. In one of the cases where this method was applied the boys decided that the workshop should continue and they independently made up the regulation that someone who disturbs the workshop has to do ten push-ups. As a result degradations against youth workers stopped, while they continued among the boys. They demanded the rules they made up and were able to work with each other. The feeling of participation and responsibility seemed to be very important.

Obstacles

<u>Lack of Resources</u>

- Crowded room conditions (lead to exclusion and displacement). Open youth work still is conducted mainly indoors. Open youth work in public spaces is still not subsidised.

- Low personal resources (allow to preserve the status quo but there is no possibility of development)

- Low qualification of youth workers in the field of open youth work. But the situation has recently changed since the requirements for subsidies of the provincial government of Styria do not allow unqualified people in the field of open youth work anymore.

Lack of Sustainability

Some experts of open youth work spoke about the limits of educational work with adolescents. All the youth centers have house rules and therefore they know the limits quite well. But as soon as they leave the premises and as soon as social control of the youth worker is missing, this does not work any longer. This situation is discussed as something like a limit of educational work. Youth workers feel a bit helpless concerning habits and attitudes of young people outside the youth centre. Reflecting their behavior and attitudes with them is seen as an important ongoing measure but sustainability is not given at all. Usually solution strategies between peers are to be found within the context of the youth center, mostly with the help of the youth workers and in the course of time the adolescents themselves become creative.

Less Work with Multipliers (Teachers and Parents)

Especially the experts of work with boys at the Men's Counselling Centre in Graz complain that work with multipliers cannot be guaranteed due to the fact that teachers and parents are not involved within peer violence prevention processes at school. They point to the necessity of cooperation with multipliers for a sustainable process of violence prevention and they are sure that the habits in dealing with peer violence will not change as long as multipliers are not involved. In some cases workshops with teachers took place before the workshops with the boys started, but parents were never really involved (unless a particular situation demands a parents-teacher conference).

Good Practice Example: How to Handle Peer Violence at School?

In one of the interviews the administrators at the Men's Counselling Centre in Graz, described an interesting example of peer violence prevention. The expert accompanied a three years process on peer violence prevention in a school in a rural area of Styria.

This project first started with so called "stop violence" workshops with boys and girls at school (carried out by experts in the field of work with boys and work with girls). Then the school was selected for a pilot project in peer violence prevention:

> „They (the teachers in that school) were at that time highly in need
> for help – like in many other schools. But they were able to say:‚'Ok,
> we have to find someone who gives us support in this situation' "
> (Expert)"

They managed to say "we need some help". Both, the school principal and the teachers were overstrained at that time. The school seemed to be well known for its willingness to take pupils with exhibited conspicuous behaviour and – at the same time –competences and resources to deal with "trouble makers" were not evident. In general only very little possibilities of exchange between teachers were to be seen: the conferences were not the right place to discuss the topic of peer violence prevention in this school.

When the pilot project started the experts focused on certain main aspects:

- When teachers at the school criticised the work of the experts who carried out violence prevention workshops with boys, the school culture in dealing with violence in general appeared and it was discussed and reflected. Results of a first reflective and supervised process among teachers focused on the fact that the target in connection with violence prevention had to be changed at school: experts do not support schools by forming pupils in a way that they become calm and easy to handle so that the teachers can continue working with them very easily. Secondly it became clear that peer violence will not disappear if workshops are solely focused on boys.

- The focus of the work in the field of peer violence prevention had to be shifted from boys to adults. "*The challenge and quality of the project lies in the work with teachers*" (Expert)

- The experts insisted on one main aspect of violence prevention: the teachers had to get in contact with each other; *"We cannot deal with peer violence in a way that everyone fights on his own.*" (Expert) First of all teachers had to communicate with each other to exchange their experiences and secondly they had to allow extra time for this process: *"The process will not be finished in less than three years"* (Expert)

„... within the first or second module a senior teacher described his situation, how bad he felt. … he was in physically bad conditions and pupils constantly attacked him. … he was sure that the situation was getting worse and he was not able to stand it anymore .... next to him sat a female colleague, after he had finished, she said: 'Isn't it unbelievable? Now we have worked in the same school for 10 years and I didn't know anything about you'." (Expert)

- After the first workshops with the teachers a supervision group was established which met every six month

Within the three years process some important aspects at school were discussed and changed: it was considered important that the school principal set boundaries and limits, intervened sometimes and provided resources for teachers. For the group of teachers, self-confidence and security were important topics. The teachers were supported and encouraged to set limits and take their own position especially in communication with parents. Within this three years process a "social class" was implemented which was exclusively provided for pupils who were involved in violent situations. It was conducted as a temporary intervention with intensive support (seven pupils, two teachers).

Finally peer violence has not disappeared at this school, but teachers learned to cope with it. The whole situation at school became more relaxed because one important focus of attention was concentrated on the topic of peer violence and important general conditions were established within this three years process. A certain "culture of peer violence prevention" had to be established at school. The interview expert is sure that such a culture is not common in Austrian schools. Therefore he emphasizes the necessity to integrate the topic of peer violence prevention in standard education programs for teachers. *"It has to become part of school culture."* (Expert)

Future Perspectives of Youth Work

„I think that the focus [migration] *mostly doesn't fit .... the real question is, why some adolescents cannot participate in everyday commodities ... In general, adolescents in areas of high population density and less participation in everyday commodities are more likely to frequent institutions of open youth work. ... This is a fact and it can't be talked over nicely."* (Expert)

The expert refers to the necessity of restructuring the offers of youth centres. The classical leisure time activities are not longer sufficient for the demand. Leisure time work is often seen as traditional youth work. Since many young people do not have a lot of spare time anymore, the focus should not be set on leisure time activities any longer. Open youth work should rather concentrate on informal education and participation of youth in important fields of life (education and work). At the moment resources of open youth work are not affiliated to this field of work, although there are a lot of already existing concepts. Employment and education, information and counselling are discussed as important fields of open youth work. It should not be reduced to particular offers, instead it should become a central topic of youth work.

Needs for Support and Further Education

Further Education and Knowledge

- Diverse cultures and subcultures

Detailed information about various cultures, religions and subcultures (e.g. homepage) for youth workers as well as for adolescents are discussed as essential basic knowledge for youth work. The information should be provided in a practical and user-friendly way. Tools and resources of the Peerthink project are acknowledged in a very positive manner.

- Gender Equality

A female youth worker talks about girls support in the youth centre, where she works (20% to 25% girls): „*We support girls … If two people register at the same time* [a boy and a girl], *the girl will get the chance, we want to show that girls are favoured."* Supportive measures for girls, girls' days and a girls' space, all these measures were implemented to raise the number of girls in the youth centre. The expert points to the fact that boys constantly ignore limits in their behaviour towards girls and many girls, especially those with a migration background think that this is okay. Therefore a specific need is defined, resulting in implementing special offers which are focused on equal treatment and equal rights. These offers are supposed to be especially aimed for boys and in this way juridical consequences of unequal treatment should be made visible.

Dealing with Prejudice

An overview of prejudice against young people with a migration background followed by practical strategies, methods and tools how do deal with prejudice is mentioned as an important support for youth workers, which is still missing. Youth workers report that peers often misunderstand each other and consequently trigger reactions based on these misunderstandings. Hence, adolescents often get no adequate answer to their questions (e.g. pork is rejected, because pigs live only on excrements. Why do Austrians nevertheless eat pork?)

Peer Violence Prevention

> *"That seems to be a phenomenon simply of adolescents, that they need to position themselves through violence."* (Expert)

In centres of open youth work peer violence seems to be a rare phenomenon, due to low-threshold work with adolescents and the fact that young people usually appreciate the offers and the voluntariness of open youth work.

Young people are frequently exposed to peer violence, but conflicts mainly happen outside the youth centres and become virulent inside the youth centre by narrations. In rural areas conflict solution strategies among adolescents are perceived as being more present than those of young people in urban areas who are more likely to avoid each other in the case of conflict.

Also further education in the field of peer violence prevention is seen as an increasing need of youth workers, especially concerning prevention and sensitization. A special need is addressed: work with adolescents on the topic of peer violence prevention should be possible on different levels due to the constantly predominating kinds of conflicts (controversies among boys, relationship conflicts, etc.). It becomes even more difficult, if anonymity is given (e.g. a boy goes to the disco in another village and starts to fight there with others). It would be meaningful to reflect on violence experiences and to show visible consequences of violence (e.g. injuries, like a broken nose).

Methods and Tools Based on Analysis

A youth worker who is experienced in youth work in the context of migration is in need of reflective methods. Youth workers do not have a certain means to rebuke the youngsters when they insult each other, because they do it all the time in their living environment. It is also remarkable that adolescents immediately get along with each

other again after they have attacked each other. An evidence-based method that allows young people to reflect their manners (especially in the context of migration) effectively should be provided. In addition to that an analytical tool that helps to deal with conflict situations is needed.

Diversity in Team Structure

- *Heterogeneity*

Some of the experts describe open youth work as a professional field of action and therefore it is not enough to employ people who are only interested in spending their spare time with young persons. Multi-professionalism within teams is necessary.

> *"The more heterogeneous the better."* (Expert)

> *"The complexity of society should appear there exactly the same, but not at the expense of a qualification."* (Expert)

High requirements on professional work with adolescents by the provincial government of Styria often exclude people with a migration background due to their lack of qualification, although they would provide a great personal resource. Therefore it is regarded as important to support them in the future. So far there are only a few youth workers with a migration background (first and second generation) throughout Styria. Experiences in the past show that the inclusion of youth workers with a migration background goes hand in hand with a change of clients (e.g. Turkish youth workers are followed by Turkish young people). Adolescents within youth centres should mirror the juvenile population of the respective catchment area.

- *Inclusion of role models*

The acceptance of differences plays an important role in youth work (as in other fields of life). An expert describes an example of dealing with difference based on concrete role models: As already mentioned the term „gay" is mainly used as an derogatory word among young people. In one of the youth centres described by the expert, a homosexual youth worker was employed. Although the adolescents knew that he was gay, this circumstance was never brought up for discussion. He was accepted and appreciated by the young people. After a short period of time they did not use the term "gay" in the youth centre anymore without complaining or saying a single word about it. They started to use other insults. On top of that the "role model" made transparent, that a relationship between two men raises the same problems as in heterosexual relationships.

"Diversity of people should be treated in a common way [as part of normal life]*. This is the best, I think."* (Expert)

Intersectional Approach as a Method Against Defence

"… because I believe that this approach raises my empathy and/or gives me the possibilities to prepare creative methods, where I say 'Ah, here I can do this or there I can pick up something.' I would nearly say if it isn't completely… It can always be linked to the topic sexuality …" (Boy's Worker)

Experts at the Men's Counselling Centre who work with boys talked about an example where offers were completely boycotted among a socially disadvantaged boys group. The boys seemed to be resistant to offers from outside – this was also a common experience of teachers at school.

"Does it really work we are doing? We come from outside, animate the boys somehow. Do workshop programs in cooperation with teachers and include what teachers think is good for the boys. And we do not know if the boys think the same. These are socially disadvantaged boys." (Expert)

In the experts' point of view the whole workshop should be rearranged: first the boys should be asked what they actually expect from the workshop. *"Perhaps the blockade is a program ?"* (Expert)

In this example the intersectional approach is discussed as an important approach, which allows to widen the focus on certain areas of conflict outside school as well. For such a situation it would be helpful to have a means, which supports youth work in an efficient way.

Conclusion of National Needs Analysis

Description of Experts

Four group interviews and two interviews with experts were carried out between April and September 2010.

Three of the focus group interviews took place within a training course for open youth work in Styria, conducted by the provincial government of Styria. Participants of the focus group interviews were youth workers from different youth centres in rural and urban areas of Styria.

One of the four focus group interviews was conducted with three experts in the field of work with boys at the Men's Counselling Centre Graz. Work with boys is a specific sub department at the Men's Counselling Centre Graz, it conducts gender homogeneous work with boys especially in the context of schools. Violence prevention work with boys is provided (mainly secondary and tertiary prevention). At the same time *gender reflective* work with boys is offered, where the topic peer violence often occurs as a core point of discussion. Recently an increasing number of workshops on the topic of sexuality and gender were conducted, since there is a big demand in the respective field. Some time ago a peer violence prevention project („*Stop violence")* was carried out in different schools. In some cases it was conducted as a long-time project lasting over several years.

One expert interview was carried out with the administrator of the Styrian umbrella organisation of open youth work which provides relevant conditions in the respective field (qualification and further qualification for youth workers, networking, quality management tasks, relevant literature and brochures, library). Target group: open youth workers.

Another expert interview was carried out with the administrator at the Men's Counselling Centre Graz, who accompanied a three years process on peer violence prevention in a school in a rural area of Styria. The Men's Counselling Centre is a non government organisation which is targeted on men's work in the field of counselling and therapy, gender sensitizing work with boys, work with perpetrators, research in the field of critical men's studies and gender studies and gender mainstreaming.

List and Description of most Salient Social Categories and their Intersections which were drawn from the Interviews

<u>Cross work was exposed in connection with migration. F</u>emale youth workers' authority is often undermined by boys, mainly of those with a migration background. It is treated as a general phenomenon. On the other hand it is pointed out that girls with a migration background seem to feel more comfortable with female youth workers, due to the fact that their rights of participation at home are often reduced in comparison with male family members.

<u>Migration</u> is discussed as an overestimated topic, which covers other topics and problem fields, like e.g. „*the fall of the middle <u>class</u>* ", which increased poverty also among young people. Media discourses and images have helped to define specific needs for youth groups with a migrant background. This leads to "secondary effects" of "migration", which means that young people tend to justify everything with reference to their migration background. Nowadays special offers were devised for certain youth groups (boys with a migration background, etc.). Such differentiations are reflected critically within youth work, because youth workers are afraid that their efforts concerning integration and inclusion are not valued anymore.

<u>Social class</u> is exposed as one of the most important areas of difference within boys groups. The category is not necessarily connected with migration. According to social class, different images of <u>hegemonic masculinity</u> are evident. A link between social class and social competence is drawn: the lower the class, the less socially competent.

The <u>ability to read and write</u> is discussed as one of the areas of tension, but it is not necessarily connected to migration because adolescents without a migrant background are also concerned (interconnection class and/or migration). Within network profiles usually adolescents write the way they speak. They create their own language out of inability.

<u>Homophobia</u> is not exposed with a specific interconnection to class or migration. Independent from social background adolescents seem to play with the term "gay" in a derogatory way. But a specific interconnection to <u>gender can </u>be noticed: to be lesbian is not discussed as a topic among young people (it is rather ignored). Everything they do not like is "gay" – not matter if it is a person or a thing.

<u>Subcultures and the role of girls. </u>Areas of conflict may appear among different youth subcultures (e.g., Punks, Skinheads …). The role of girls in these groups differs a lot: there are, for example, youth cultures in which girls are positioned in the foreground while in other subcultures girls are "in the corner". Especially Skinheads or adolescents who affiliate themselves to the Metal Scene find it amusing when the boys attack each other physically. Skinheads often act in a very sexist derogatory way, towards girls, while girls seem to be well integrated in the subcultures of Punks, Gothics and Emos. All in all, gender role stereotypes and equal rights are still not to be seen (girls are still *"nice singers")*.

Among youth groups of <u>different nationalities</u>, ethnical affiliation may represent the main issue of conflicts. These conflicts mainly occur on the level of symbolic representations (e.g. music, hairstyle,….).

Identification and Description of Needs according to four Thematic Fields

Needs for Specific Knowledge

- <u>Diverse cultures and subcultures.</u> Detailed information about various cultures, religions and subcultures (e.g. homepage) for youth workers as well as for adolescents are discussed as essential basic knowledge for youth work. The information should be provided in a practical and user-friendly way.

- <u>Gender equality</u>. It is exposed, that some of the boys constantly ignore limits regarding girls and many girls, especially those with a migration background think that this is okay. Therefore special offers for young people are needed, which focuse on equal treatment and equal rights. These offers should be devised especially for boys. Juridical consequences of unequal treatment should be pointed out.

- <u>Dealing with prejudice.</u> An overview of prejudice against adolescents with a migration background followed by practical strategies, methods and means how do deal with these prejudices is mentioned as an important support for youth workers. Youth workers report that statements between peers are often misunderstood and cause reactions based on misunderstandings.

- <u>Peer violence prevention.</u> Further education in the field of peer violence prevention is seen as an increasing need of youth workers, especially regarding prevention and sensitization. The special need of working with adolescents on the topic of peer violence prevention should made be possible on different levels due to the ongoing central conflicts (controversies among boys, relationship conflicts, etc.). It becomes even more difficult, if anonymity is given (e.g. a boy goes to the disco in another village and starts to fight there with others). It would be useful to reflect on experiences of violence and to make consequences of violence visible (e.g. injuries, like a broken nose).

Needs for Specific Methods and Tools

All the needs, listed below, were identified by the interviewed persons.

- Methods and tools based on analysis. One special need was defined in connection with analysis. An evidence-based method that allows adolescents to reflect their manners, (especially in the context of migration) effectively should be provided. Also an analytical tool, that allows to deal with conflict situations should be provided.

- The intersectional approach is discussed as a means against defence. One of the experts working with boys accented that the intersectional approach raises his empathy and/or gives him the possibilities to prepare creative methods. It is discussed as an important approach, which allows to widen the focus on certain areas of conflict outside school as well. It would be helpful to work with an analysis tool which supports youth work in an efficient way.

Needs for Organisational Mechanisms

- Diversity in team structure. Some experts stress the fact that complexity within society should be represented within the field of youth work. At the moment the high requirements for professional work with adolescents, defined by the provincial government of Styria, often exclude people with a migration background due to their lack of qualification, although they would provide a great personal resource.

- Inclusion of role models. The ability to deal with difference can be based on concrete role models. One of the experts described a situation where the evidence of a homosexual youth worker who was accepted and appreciated by the young people, helped to get rid of the term "gay" as a derogatory term. . Furthermore the "role model" helped to deal with the topic of homosexuality in a quite common way.

Needs for Resources of Sustainability

- *"Get in contact and take your time."* One of the experts accompanied a three years process on peer violence prevention in a school in a rural area of Styria. The project started with workshops for boys and girls, but it quite soon shifted to working with adults. "*The challenge and quality of the project lies in the work with teachers"* (Expert) Work with pupils was seen as one small step on the way to change the school culture towards peer violence prevention. Therefore teachers had to communicate with each another to interexchange their experiences and secondly they had to allow extra time for this process: *"The process will not be finished in less than three years."* (Expert). During this pilot project peer violence at school did not disappear,but teachers learned to deal with the situation. The whole situation at school became more relaxed

because an important focus of attention was set on the topic of peer violence; important general conditions were established within this three years process. A certain "culture of peer violence prevention" had to be established at school. The interview expert is sure, that such a culture is not common in Austrian schools. Therefore he talks about the necessity to integrate the topic of peer violence prevention in standard education programs for teachers. *"It has to become part of school culture."* (Expert).

- <u>Work with multipliers (teachers and parents).</u> Especially the experts in working with boys at the Men's Counselling Centre complained about the circumstance that work with multipliers cannot be guaranteed, due to the fact that teachers and parents are not involved within peer violence prevention processes at school. The experts point to the necessity of cooperation with multipliers for a sustainable process of violence prevention. The experts are sure that the culture in dealing with peer violence does not change as long as multipliers are not involved. In some cases workshops for teachers took place before the workshops for boys started, but parents were never really involved (unless a particular situation demanded a parents-teacher conference).

- <u>Change the focus of open youth work to real life situations.</u> Since many young people do not have a lot of spare time anymore, leisure time activities should not be in the centre of attention any longer. Open youth work should rather focus on informal education and participation of youth in important fields of life (education and work). At the moment resources of open youth work are not connected to this field of work, although there are a lot of already existing concepts. Employment and education, information and counselling are discussed as important issues of open youth work.

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