

The Logbook

Web-based system for documentation and follow up of youth work

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Introduction

Youth work has a very weak tradition of documentation and follow up. The excuse for not doing this in a proper way has often been that youth work is so diverse, flexible and hard to define that it is not possible to do follow up in a more structured and continuous way. “Youth work cannot be measured” has been an often heard statement in the sector.

The scarce amount of follow up and evaluation that has been done has therefore been focused on limited aspects of single, isolated and time limited activities and projects. Very little documentation and follow up has had a holistic approach, taking both quantitative and qualitative factors into account, and been done in a way that has made results possible to compare over time and between different providers.

However, recent years European policy development has drastically changed this. The Council of Europe Recommendation on Youth Work and the European Charter on Local Youth Work have clearly defined the role and mission of youth work, as well as what it takes to deliver the desired outcomes.

Hence, there are no longer any excuses for not doing proper documentation and follow up, which these documents also clearly and strongly asks for.

I am proud to say that KEKS has been very involved in these processes and has been a forerunner regarding both policy development and documentation and follow up. We have already from the start in 2005 been focused on young people’s participation and personal development and the first version of The Logbook was launched already in 2009.

The current version of the system was developed within the Erasmus+ funded project “RISE - for common systems for documentation of youth work”. The project was implemented between January 2015 and December 2016 by KEKS, together with its partners: Hunedoara County Direction for Sport and Youth (Romania), City of Dublin Youth Service Board (Ireland) and Association of Estonian Open Youth Centres (Estonia). Beside the four formal project partners there was also a representative of the city of Helsinki (Finland) in the project.

After the project period The Logbook has been administered and further developed by KEKS, and is today the most well-developed system for documentation and follow up of youth work in Europe.

This does not mean that we are satisfied or that there is not still a lot to be done. On the contrary - the work with developing, strengthening and making youth work more recognised has only begun. Today we have the wind in our backs and KEKS is constantly growing and intend to stay at the forefront of development.

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KEKS

KEKS overarching aim is the further development and strengthening of youth work.

KEKS organisation consists of two interlinked parts;

- An informal network of local departments for youth work. The network is governed by its central board, consisting of two members appointed by each regional board¹. and
- A non-profit NGO, KEKS support organisation, where only the members of the main board of the network are members.

The members of the NGO and the main board of the network are subsequently the same persons. All major decisions regarding aims, economy and organisation are taken jointly by the central board of the KEKS network and the general assembly of KEKS support organisation. This way the member organisations of the network have full control over the decisions of the NGO. The board of the NGO functions as employer of KEKS Secretary general who is responsible for the implementation of decisions taken and for the KEKS office and staff. For a more detailed description of KEKS organisation and the various tasks and responsibilities, please visit keks.se/keks-in-english.

KEKS activities are financed through fees for using The Logbook payed by the local departments that are members of the informal network.

The Logbook is subsequently owned by the general assembly of the NGO, KEKS support organisation.

KEKS office is the super user of the system and responsible for the technical support of the system and can access the whole system but only for the purpose of managing the system, e.g. implement new functions and correct faults or technical errors.

Purpose of The Logbook

The main purpose and idea behind The Logbook is to gather the information needed in order to further develop quality youth work and to promote a reflective practice. The Logbook stimulates and promotes the development of a learning organisation that provides relevant and knowledge based youth work.

This is done through the combination of registering statistics, taking notes, distributing web-based questionnaires to young people and gathering data on costs (key figures), thus providing the combination of quantitative and qualitative information that is necessary for a holistic and sustainable development.

Documentation of statistics and notes is supposed to be done by youth workers as a common process after each work shift in order not to miss any information and stimulate common reflection, but can also be done afterwards and/or by single individuals.

¹ KEKS has (2022) eight regional boards, whereof six in Sweden, one in Slovenia and one in Finland.

All information gathered can be extracted through reports and results compilations that can be used as a basis for analysis, the setting of aims and objectives and the creation of action plans. The information gathered can also be used as a basis for further research.

At the same time this way of common, structured, continuous documentation and follow up provides unique possibilities for comparisons of outcomes over time and between different providers, and hence for benchmarking and mutual learning.

The system is user-friendly, easy to navigate and can be easily accessed through a variety of smart devices.

Additional values are that the system, through the “Activities page”, facilitates and streamlines the communication between youth workers and at the same time creates a searchable ‘memory bank’. Here youth workers can read what happened during days and activities when they were not present, prepare themselves for an activity when they need to replace a colleague or go back to search for an event that they want to do again.

Terms and conditions

When using the system you must follow GDPR and the legislation of data protection and child protection guidelines. The system is designed for documenting youth work, not of young people, and is hence not intended to collect sensitive information about young people. As with all work with young people child protection and data protection legislation should be clearly adhered to and carried out.

Here you will find the complete Terms of use: <https://thelogbook.eu/Account/Terms/>

Here are the links to the terms and conditions of Microsoft Azure, which is the cloud service where the information is stored. <https://azure.microsoft.com/en-us/support/trust-center/security/>

The terminology used in The Logbook is clearly defined in order to make documentation and follow up as uniform and reliable as possible, hence creating also a common ground for mutual learning and development. You will find all definitions in the [user guide](#).

The Logbook can communicate with other systems via API. This can be of use if you want to connect The Logbook to e.g. a booking system.

Structure of the system

Each organisation creates and manages its own hierarchy within the system, which can have multiple layers (e.g. Municipal level/District level/User unit level). The registration of data and distribution of questionnaires is done at the level of user units, which is the basic level of the hierarchy.

The individual users access the system through being invited by their organisation to the relevant level and/or user unit(s) and given the relevant rights by selecting the function

organisation admin or activity admin or both. The users will hence not be able to access information from other levels/units than the one to which they have been invited.

Documentation is done for open, drop-in, activities and for groups and other closed activities. The user units create 'boxes' where they register their statistics and make notes in a common template. They can create as many 'boxes' as they want depending on the number of different kinds of drop-in activities (e.g. IRL and/or on-line) and groups.

Reports to be used for analysing and reporting can be extracted at any level of the hierarchy and related to any information that has been put into the system. All information can also be reached via the built-in search function.

Documentation of statistics

In the system you can document statistics regarding:

- Number of activity hours in open, drop-in, youth work
- Number of activity hours in groups and other closed youth work
- Type of activities (e.g. sports or culture)²
- Which staff that is working (from pre-made list)
- Which volunteers that are working (from pre-made list)
- Number of young people taking part, divided on gender and age group*
- Number of young people assisting in carrying out activities, divided on gender and age group*
- Number of young people actively participating in producing activities, divided on gender and age group*
- Number of activity hours produced by young people

In the 'boxes' for groups you can also register information on:

- Type of group (e.g. project group, youth council, etc.)
- Target group
- Needs of the group
- Specific aims and objectives
- Planned outcomes
- Partners and collaborations

When you use the built-in follow up function for groups, what you have written here will be shown in the follow up template.

Young people can be registered anonymously or as individuals (aliases) through a built-in check-in function (please see below).

Activities that are to be documented can take place both physically and on-line. Please note that there are special guidelines and definitions for documenting on-line activities.

² Features followed by an * can be partially adjusted to local needs and conditions by the user organisation. This is done in the edit organisation function.

Documentation of notes

At the end of the template for registering statistics there is a space for writing comments and reflections on the work carried out.

Here can also be added pre-set questions to reflect on, e.g. “How did we work with counter-acting gender stereotypes today” or “how did we work with inspiring young people to start projects today”. The answers can then be extracted in a report and discussed in relation to aims regarding for example gender equality or young people’s participation.

Questionnaires to young people

The system contains two different questionnaires to young people;

- The group-/project questionnaire direct itself towards young people that have taken part in any kind of group activity or project.

The questions are focused on their degree of participation, how they perceive their participation and their learning outcomes. It also contains questions on the background of the respondents, e.g. age and gender.

It can be done at any time (e.g. at the end of a project) and as long as there are at least five respondents, the results can be extracted at any point in time.

- The annual meeting place questionnaire direct itself towards young people that are visiting youth centres or other similar premises where youth work is carried out.

The questions are focused on young people’s perception of safety/security, influence, participation and learning. It also contains questions on facilities, equipment, etc., and on background of the respondents (e.g. age, gender and school results).

It is carried out annually during three weeks in October, and the result is presented together with the total results from the group questionnaires and the key figures in the beginning of December.

Through these questionnaires the users of the system can see what young people get out of participating in youth work and what they might need to improve, which young people they reach (and don’t reach) and, when the total results are compiled, the costs for doing so.

Key figures

In the system there is a template for registering key figures. These figures are mostly gathered from what is documented in the system regarding number of participants and activity hours. In addition also net costs and the total number of young people in target group are to be registered. (This cannot be done automatically since the figures are to be gathered from different levels in different organisations depending on how they have built their hierarchy.)

In order to get a complete annual result combining qualitative effects with the target group reached and costs, this form is filled in once every year in the end of October.

Reports and search function

Reports can be filtered related to:

- The whole organisation, different units, different 'boxes' or combinations of units and 'boxes' (Drop-in and/or groups).
- Any period of time.
- Specific week days or combinations of week days
- Group types (for groups)
- Target group (for groups)
- Activity types

Reports contains (when it is registered and within the filter) information on:

- Number of activities
- Number of activity hours (divided on drop-in and groups and in total)
- Number of participants (divided on gender and age group and in total)
- Number of young people producing activities (divided on gender and age group and in total)
- Activity time produced by young people
- Participants per week day
- Participants per actual age (Only for checked-in young people)
- Volunteers
- Notes made
- Follow ups made

Reports are presented as:

- Charts – here you get an overview of the results. The charts can be downloaded in various formats to be used for presentations and reports.
- Tables - here you will see the information broken down into categories. There is an option to copy, export to excel and print the tables.

All information is also searchable by key word(s).

Annual compilation of results

Every year KEKS is compiling the annual results per organisation and user unit. This compilation contains all the results from the meeting place questionnaire, the group-/project questionnaire and the key figures.

They are presented in the beginning of December and show the results in relation to the results from the previous year, the average in KEKS and, for user units, the average of the organisation. They are also divided on gender if there are at least 15 girls and 15 boys among the respondents.

KEKS main board has also set overarching long term aims for what is considered to be over all good youth work, and the results are also shown in relation to these so called 'Good enough aims'.

Hence, this compilation gives a total overview of the results and enables organisations and user units to analyse their results, set objectives for the coming year and make up action plans.

Other features/functions

Check-in function

There is a built-in check-in function that enables young people to check in by themselves in The Logbook and register their age and gender, either as anonymous participants or by alias.

This can be done through providing a computer or tabled where they can check in or via a QR-code that can be downloaded from the system and made available to young people so that they can check-in via their mobile phones (which is very useful in on-line activities).

If the young person creates an alias and uses this when they attend any activity within your organisation the statistics for age and gender is included automatically and you do not have to record that information every time. This requires that the participant, or its legal guardian if the person is underage, has given their consent, in relation to GDPR and the terms and conditions, that their information is being recorded. An alias is to be considered as personal data if the person can be identified from the alias.

Upload documents

It is possible to upload documents that all users in your organisation can access. You can add file's up to max 100 mb by clicking the Browse button. You can also create different folders for different kinds of documents or activities.

Star-marking function

If there is something special that has happened that you want your colleagues to notice when they go to the Activities page (please see below) you can put a star on that entry by clicking the star next to the Save button when you add the activity. The star will appear at the Activities page.

Archive function

In order not to have too much information visible on the screen at the same time, this function makes it possible to archive:

- Groups that are no longer active
- Staff and volunteers that are no longer active

This information can be re-activated at any time.

Activities page

At this page you find all entries that are in the system. If you want to know what your colleague wrote about last night, this is where you go and choose the entry that you want to read. There is also an option to edit the details of entries already made, e.g. if something is missing. There is also a function to copy or print these files.