



Centre européen de ressources pour
la recherche en travail social (CERTS)

European resource centre for
research in social work (ERCSW)



Amsterdam School for Social science Research

Universiteit van Amsterdam
Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences

Youth work in deprived neighbourhoods of Europe: Is there still any opportunity for social mobility of the urban youth?

European seminar to be held at the University of Amsterdam (the Netherlands), 12-13 September 2008

- Call for abstracts -

Over the last century a wide range of social professionals has been dealing with deprived young people, trying to improve their living conditions and/or favour their social mobility via access to school, additional professional training, culture, leisure, and so on. To begin with, most youth workers relied on volunteer organisations with either religious or political background. From the rise of the Welfare State, some youth workers have also been commissioned under governmental funds. Public-led youth work sometimes refers to a universal approach (via activities open to all young people, thus not necessarily deprived young people), sometimes to a targeted approach (via activities that are focusing youth in danger, for instance under justice assignment, or the promotion of public health for youth at risk) or both.

Over the last few years, youth work has been facing new challenges due to the emergence of new forms of deprivation and exclusion among youth and changes in governmental policies that are increasingly focusing on targeted approaches rather than on universal approaches. At the same time, young people from urban deprived neighbourhoods are increasingly regarded as threat to public order and for the quietness of ordinary citizens, as feelings of insecurity and fear of crime are becoming a major concern for mass media and governmental policy. As a result, youth workers are increasingly urged to deal with young people along a “hard approach” in which central attention is paid to getting them off-the-street and preventing them to break public order. To which extent is it compatible with educational approaches aiming at social mobility among youth at risk? To what extent behaviour management and diversion contribute anything to social mobility?

The organising committee of the 3rd CERTS seminar invites scholars based in different countries to present their research works (completed or not) about *youth work practices in urban deprived neighbourhoods that are aiming at providing young people with alternatives to poverty and/or criminality in order to favour their social mobility*. How are the assignments defined? What are the professionals involved? What is the theoretical background of the practices? What are the main challenges that youth workers are currently facing? The discussions of the seminar will aim at getting a clear picture of what “youth work” in urban deprived neighbourhoods actually means in the various European countries and what “educational approach” means when it is not directly linked to schooling or professional training but rather raising awareness about rights and duties, supporting how to face discrimination, strengthen social networks, and so on. Furthermore, we will discuss the impact of the recent changes in the social background and the policy background on the practice of youth work and the results of youth work practices in terms of social mobility of the deprived urban youth. The working languages will be English and French. As during previous CERTS seminars, attendants will make use of the language they are most comfortable with but they are all expected to have basic knowledge of the two working languages. In order to support mutual understanding, all papers will be handed out before the seminar as well as abstracts in both languages. Moreover, the use of powerpoint presentation will be highly recommended. The organising committee is exploring opportunities for publication of the accepted papers shortly after the seminar.

Abstracts of papers should be submitted in either French or English **before 23 May 2008** to the scientific committee in the form of an e-mail attachment (400 to 450 words) addressed to Evelyne Baillergeau (evelyne.baillergeau@ssss.gouv.qc.ca and e.baillergeau@uva.nl). Submitters will be informed by 6 June 2008 of the acceptance of their abstracts.

Scientific committee: Evelyne Baillergeau (CREMIS/Université de Montréal & ASSR/Universiteit van Amsterdam), Jan Willem Duyvendak (ASSR/Universiteit van Amsterdam), Rineke van Daalen (ASSR/Universiteit van Amsterdam), Elisabeth Callu (ENPJJ, France), Marta Llobet (Universitat Barcelona), Graeme Tiffany (Independent education consultant, United Kingdom).