



## Developing quality and competence in youth work

**KEKS** is a network of 44 Swedish municipal departments for youth work.

### **We believe:**

- that the over-all aim of youth work is to support the personal and social development of young people.
- that the mission of youth work is to stimulate and support activities that are based on and requires young people's active engagement and responsibility.

### **We see:**

- youth work as an arena for informal and non-formal learning.
- youth centres and projects, as well as different kinds of culture and leisure activities, as means for reaching our aims.

### **We know** that in order to do this we must:

- base our activities on the needs, interests and experiences of young people as perceived by themselves and meet them as capable individuals and resources.
- be actively inclusive and reach out to and welcome all groups of young people.

### **We argue:**

- that participation is a process in five steps, from creation to evaluation, that should be owned and run by young people.
- that participation leads to health and resilience, to the development of skills, attitudes and values, and to active citizenship.

**We claim that this participatory process and the learning it creates is, and should be seen as, the core outcome and aim of youth work.**

### Based on these ideas **we have:**

- common measurable aims regarding both quantitative outputs and qualitative effects.
- a web-based system for documentation of both statistics and analyses of activities.
- a common system for follow up on how young people perceive their participation and learning as well as what young people we reach and the costs related to this.

### **This means that:**

- we can show to what degree we reach our aims.
- we have a solid ground for systematic and continuous development.
- we can make knowledge-based advocacy for youth work.

On the basis of this **KEKS' main task** is to support our members in the development of competence, methods and organisation. We do this through seminars, courses, thematic work groups and tutoring as well as through publishing manuals and guidelines. We also engage in research.

We are governed by a board where all our members have a seat and we finance our operations mainly through membership fees, but also through project funding from, among others, the EU.

**Do you want to know more?** Please visit [www.keks.se](http://www.keks.se) or send an email to [info@keks.se](mailto:info@keks.se)

## **Becoming a member in KEKS entails the following:**

Through our annual youth centre questionnaire to young people you get:

- A complete picture of your operations regarding
  - ✓ How well you reach your target group.
  - ✓ How young people experience the social atmosphere, treatment and accessibility
  - ✓ To what degree young people are actively participating.
  - ✓ To what degree young people take part in decision-making.
  - ✓ The relation between your costs and the quality you deliver.
- The ability to see how your results develop over time.
- The possibility of making comparisons between your results and the results of others.

Through our group/project questionnaire you get:

- A complete picture on how your group activities are functioning regarding
  - ✓ Which young people you reach.
  - ✓ To what degree they are actively participating. (If the activity is created, organised, prepared, carried out and evaluated by young people and how they perceive ownership and support.)
  - ✓ How youth workers handle young people's participation and learning.

... both in general and in regard to specific groups.

Through our web-based system for documentation, The Logbook, you get:

- A complete system for documentation of both statistics regarding visitors/participants, and what kind of activities they take part in.
- An on-line diary for making notes and structured analysis, as well as for efficient communication between youth workers.

Through our development support you get free access to:

- Conferences, seminars and courses on different topics open to all staff.
- Thematic work groups where staff get to exchange experiences and best practices.
- Support and tutoring for managers and staff.
- Support in initiating and running international projects.
- InterCity Youth – the European Network of Local Departments for Youth Work, where KEKS is one of the member organisations.
- Our vast network of contacts, including authorities, educators and researchers in Sweden and internationally.

Last, but not least:

- You will have a seat in our board where all decisions, from economy to content, regarding our operations are taken.
- You become a part of a dynamic network, leading in the development of youth work.

## **KEKS quality assurance system**

KEKS defines quality as “the degree to which we meet our aims”, i.e. the better we are at meeting our aims, the higher the quality of our work.

KEKS quality assurance system consists of:

- An annual questionnaire for young people visiting youth centres. It consists of two parts; one containing questions about the respondent (age/sex/background/school results, etc.), and the other containing questions regarding how they perceive safety, participation, support to take own responsibility, etc.
- A group/project questionnaire answered by young people who have taken part in creating and running activities for themselves and/or others. It contains questions about the respondent, about in what way and to what extent they have participated, and about how they have perceived the atmosphere, support, etc.
- A template for statistic and economic data regarding the number of visitors, number of open hours, staff costs, etc., from all member departments and youth centres.

In the end of the year the results from the questionnaires, statistics and economic data are compiled to an annual report consisting of indicators (key figures) for every youth centre and member department (municipality) where one can see development over time, as well as in relation to other departments and youth centres.

Based on an analysis of these results (which also can be differentiated regarding sex, age, background, etc.), the youth centres will be able to set measurable objectives for the next year. Examples of such objectives are “We will increase the share of girls visiting us to 40%” or “We will increase the participation index to 60%.”

An essential and mandatory part of this work is also to discuss these results with young people, inviting them to take active part in the development of youth work.

In cases where the results, due to different reasons, are difficult to interpret or where it is experienced that more knowledge or raised understanding is necessary, KEKS initiate different types of more in depth studies.