



# **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN RESOLUTION 2250 WITHIN THE WORK OF YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS**

**CASE STUDY: YMCA FINLAND AND THE FIVE KEY PILLARS OF THE RESOLUTION**

**ymca**<sup>▽</sup>  
**finland**

## **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The purpose of this study is to support the preparation of the national action plan for the UN resolution 2250, Youth, Peace and Security, and to supplement the data collected regarding the consultations of the 2250 Network of Finnish NGOs. This survey is intended to serve as an example to illustrate how the operation of a youth organization can promote the UN resolution 2250 for its part. On one hand it is intended to increase the visibility of the work that is already done by youth organizations and NGOs in the context of the 2250 agenda, and on the other, to re-frame the operation from the perspective of the resolution, which enables its strategic development in a manner consistent with the international contexts. This example focuses on the operation of YMCA Finland.

## **A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ORGANIZATION**

The YMCA is the largest youth organization in the world, established in London in 1844. Since the beginning, the wellbeing and livelihood of young people have been part of the organization's agenda and youths are still a target group for the organization regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, state of health or sexual orientation. The YMCA operates in more than 130 countries reaching more than 60 million people, and the organization holds a robust and independent status in the civil society in various countries. In Finland, the YMCA is also known as NMKY or Namika and its history of operation reaches back 129 years. Domestically, the YMCA first and foremost engages in professional and versatile youth work nationally through more than 30 local associations. The local associations carry out regional peace work in their own communities, where the youths are. The YMCA Finland has been a member of the 2250 Network since 2017.

## **FINNISH MOTION BRINGS YOUTH, PEACE & SECURITY TO THE CORE OF THE GLOBAL WORK CARRIED OUT BY THE YMCA MOVEMENT**

*In addition to the national process taking place in Finland, the theme of Youth, Peace and Security is relevant due to the fact that in July 2018, the YMCA Finland submitted a motion to the YMCA World Council to address the issue and the motion was approved. This means that in addition to the 130 national associations, promotion of the resolution is recommended for the 11,000 local associations throughout the world. This decision will be visible on several levels, as the World Alliance holds consultative and partnership statuses in several UN organizations, such as the Social and Economic Council and the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR. In addition, the YMCA Europe's office engages in active advocacy in various EU institutions.*

Over the motion, the global YMCA movement now recommends the following three measures:

- All national YMCA associations should follow the 2250 process in their countries and actively participate in it, for example by influencing the preparation of national action plan and engaging young people to participate. Additionally, the World Alliance and the YMCA Europe should do the same within their forums;
- All regional, national, and local YMCA associations should frame their operations from the perspective of the 2250 context, thus increasing the visibility of the work that is already carried out in this area – on the other hand this would also enable strategic development of the work in the spirit of the international guidelines;
- The World Alliance will make the theme one of its priorities and integrate it into its work.

## THE SURVEY AND ITS STRUCTURE

This survey is part of the re-framing process mentioned in the above recommendations, and at the same time an attempt to produce additional value for the preparation of the national action plan. The assumed approach is based on the five key pillars of the UN resolution. During familiarization with the resolution, we have attempted to find similarities with the Finnish society and highlight the most significant viewpoints in this context.

After outlining the action areas, the activities of YMCA Finland and its local associations have been divided amongst the action areas. A significant number of the activities is related to more than one action area, but for the sake of clarity each activity is only mentioned once under the action area where it is primarily considered to belong. After each activity has found its place, we have attempted to concisely describe, from the perspective of the resolution, how the activities realize the action area of the resolution. The survey has been carried out in cooperation with the YMCA Finland and its local associations. The action areas are discussed in the following chapters in the same order as in the original UN resolution.

### FROM THE MOTION TO TODAY

**2011:** Finnish NGOs submit a motion on a resolution regarding young people to the General Secretary of the UN.

**2015:** UN resolution 2250 – Youth, Peace and Security is approved by the UN Security Council.

**2016:** The resolution is designated a top priority of the national umbrella organization Allianssi, and the national 2250 Network is established.

**2016:** The Network prepares a statement and recommendations for measures and communicates them to politicians and public officials.

**2017:** The 2250 Network and advocacy work are expanded.

**2018:** In April, the Minister for Foreign Affairs Timo Soini announces that Finland will begin the preparation of a national action plan as the first country in the world to do so.

**2018:** YMCA Finland presented a motion to the YMCA World Council to address the issue and the motion was approved. This means that promotion of the UN Resolution 2250 is recommended for the 130 national associations throughout the world.

**2018:** The consultation process for the organizations and discussions with young people begin in the fall. The information gathered from these is used as input for the preparation of the national action plan. YMCA Finland has carried out a survey on how the YMCA operations advance the action areas of the resolution.

## OSALLISTUMINEN JA OSALLISUUS

## PARTICIPATION

HALLITUS, JOHTOKUNTA- JA  
TYÖRYHMÄTYÖSKENTELY

WORKING ON SUPERVISORY AND EXECUTIVE  
BOARDS AND IN WORKING GROUPS

OHJAAJAKOULUTUKSET

INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

FINYMCA-JOHTAJUUSKOULUTUS

FINYMCA LEADERSHIP TRAINING

CHANGE AGENT -KOULUTUS

CHANGE AGENT TRAINING

YMCA-KLUBI

YMCA CLUB

MUUT NUORTEN KANSAINVÄLISET  
OSALLISTUMISMAHDOLLISUUDET

OTHER INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCING  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

VAPAAEHTOISTYÖ

VOLUNTEER WORK

PARTIO

THE Y-SCOUTS

## KUMPPANUUDET

## PARTNERSHIPS

PERHETOIMINTA

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

ISÄ-LAPSI-TOIMINTA

FATHER-CHILD ACTIVITIES

PERHEIDEN MUKANA -HANKE

PERHEIDEN MUKANA PROJECT  
(activities for families)

HYVINVOINTI 2018

HYVINVOINTI 2018 (social activities  
for conscripts)

NUORISOTALOTOIMINTA

YOUTH CENTER ACTIVITIES

OSALLISTUMAAN-HANKE

OSALLISTUMAAN PROJECT (prevention of  
exclusion for families)

SAVUMERKEISTÄ LISÄTTYYN  
TODELLISUUTEEN & HAASTEHULINAT

DIGITAL CAPABILITIES PROJECT FOR ORGANIZATIONS &  
HACKATHON: SOLVING DIGITAL CHALLENGES

AAMU- JA ILTAPÄIVÄKERHOT

MORNING AND AFTERNOON CLUBS

YHTEINEN PÖYTÄ

YHTEINEN PÖYTÄ NETWORK (communal food aid)

RIPPIKOULUT

CONFIRMATION CAMPS

## ENNALTAEHKÄISY

## PREVENTION

KOHTAAMISPAIKKA TOIVO

MEETING PLACE TOIVO

MUSIIKKITOIMINTA

MUSICAL ACTIVITIES

CAMERA OBSCURA -TOIMINTAMALLI

CAMERA OBSCURA: VALUES AND HEALTH  
EDUCATION CONCEPT

TASKU – TUETUN ASUMISEN YHTEISÖT

LEIRI- JA RETKITOIMINTA

YÖKORIS

KERHOTOIMINTA

HANSA-HANKE

URHEILU JA LIIKUNTA

E-SPORT JA DIGITAALINEN NUORISOTYÖ

HYVÄ RYHMÄHENKI -TOIMINTAMALLI

KOULUSOVITTELU

TASKU – SUPPORTED HOUSING

CAMP AND TRIP ACTIVITIES

MIDNIGHT STREET BASKET

CLUB ACTIVITIES

POP-UP YOUTH CENTER IN HANSA SHOPPING MALL

SPORTS AND EXERCISE

E-SPORT AND DIGITAL YOUTH WORK

THE GOOD TEAM SPIRIT CONCEPT

SCHOOL MEDIATION

## **SUOJELU**

ETSIVÄ NNUORISOTYÖ

KIINTOPISTE-HANKE

## **PROTECTION**

OUTREACH YOUTH WORK

KIINTOPISTE PROJECT: INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT FOR YOUTHS LIVING OUTSIDE THE MARGINS OF SOCIETY

## **SOPEUTUMINEN YHTEISKUNTAAN**

LIIKUNTA KOTOUTTAVASTI

PAIKKA AUKI -OHJELMA

TYÖHARJOITTELU

MAAHANMUUTTAJAPALVELUT

KEHTYSYHTEISTYÖ

TYÖPAJATOIMINTA

MESSIN PAJA

MESSIN TILA JA MESSIN KOHTAAMISPAIKKA

TOIMINNAN AVULLA TYÖELÄMÄÄN

STARTTI-STARTTIVALMENNUS

## **DISENGAGEMENT AND REINTEGRATION**

SPORTS FOR INTEGRATION PROJECT

“PAIKKA AUKI” PROGRAM: EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE FOR THE STRUCTURALLY UNEMPLOYED

WORK PILOTS

IMMIGRANT SERVICES

INTERNATIONAL PROJECT COOPERATION

YOUTH WORKSHOPS

MESSI YOUTH WORKSHOP: REHABILITATIVE DAYTIME ACTIVITIES

MESSI OPEN SPACE FOR YOUTHS AND MESSI MEETING PLACE

INTO WORKING LIFE THROUG ACTIVITY

“STARTTI” START-OFF COACHING

# 1. PARTICIPATION

In this context, the first action area of the resolution, Participation, refers to influencing the decision-making on both local and global levels. Decision-makers should not only talk about young people, but actually talk with them, which would allow young people to represent themselves. The needs and hopes of youths should be recognized in order to reinforce inclusion and provide meaningful paths for their lives. This also means supporting local initiatives from young people and providing youths the opportunity to influence their future and that of their environment. This could involve advocacy within a congregation, an organization or a political party.

## 1.1. Supervisory Board, Executive Board, and Working Group Activities

The rules of YMCA Finland recommend that one third of the decision-makers on the supervisory and executive boards of the associations should be under the age of 29. At the moment, the board of YMCA Finland, the executive boards of YMCA Vantaa and the YMCA Turku, and the board of the Helsinki YMCA include youth representatives. In addition, youth representatives are also included in the communication and international affairs working groups. YMCA Finland also has a youth representative in the executive board of the YMCA World Alliance and several youth representatives in various program groups of YMCA Europe.

## 1.2. FINYMCA Leadership Training (the YMCA Finland)

The national two-year leadership training provides young people the tools to represent their associations and engage in international association activities. The training reinforces the self-esteem of the young people and helps them to identify their own abilities. During training, the youths also learn about comprehensive youth work and its significance, the causes of inequality in the world, and dialogue between different religions. Many of the young people who have completed the training now work in the executive boards and working groups of local associations as well as the national alliance. The training can also provide a springboard toward an international career.

## 1.3. The Change Agent Leadership Program (the YMCA Finland and the World Alliance)

Some of the youths who complete the FINYMCA training are accepted into the global leadership program of the YMCA World Alliance. It is intended to empower young leaders to become agents of change within their communities. The program consists of online assignments, training, mentoring, and local projects to develop youth services. The Change Agents learn skills that they can use to impact their communities and network internationally with other young leaders. Since 2014, 350 young people have become Change Agents and are now leading the change in 67 different countries around the world.

## 1.4. Instructor Training (Helsinki, Turku)

In Helsinki and Turku, versatile instructor paths have been created for young people. In Helsinki, assistant clubs are organized for 12–14-year-olds and group leader training for youths over 15 years of age. The training provides skills and also engages the young people to keep them within the sphere of activities and provides a place and community where they can gather regularly. In the assistant clubs, the training consists of small tasks that are appropriate to their age and skill-level in various activities. The assistants provide an example to younger kids and it is their task to help and guide the others. Acting as an assistant, young people get the opportunity to learn to carry out assignments responsibly while receiving experiences of success. In the two-level group leader training, young people develop their capacity to act in an assignment with responsibility at camps and in clubs. The training includes practicing versatile group leadership skills, and the youths who complete the training have the opportunity to apply to become group leaders or camp group leaders for the association's camps, clubs, and confirmation training.

In the three-year leadership training offered in Turku, youths who are at least 15 years old get to learn and develop various skills, gradually giving the youths more responsibility in leading various groups. The first year consists of practicing group dynamics, play programs and program planning and implementation, while the second year focuses on specific groups, wilderness skills, and internationality, and the third includes camp planning, adventure training, and working as an instructor. With the training path and instructor activities, the young people get to see that their skills are appreciated, which in turn increases the effectiveness of the operation. While the young people receive additional responsibility, their influencing opportunities also increase.

### **1.5. The YMCA Club (Helsinki)**

The YMCA club is a weekly gathering for the young people who participate in the youth work of the YMCA. The YMCA club is an informal event where youths can meet their friends and the employees. Young people are provided a regular community, where they themselves make decisions on the contents of the operation. In the YMCA club, the youths also have the opportunity to influence other activities organized for young people and plan content for youth camps and other events.

### **1.6. The Y-Scouts**

Y-Scouts is full of action on land, on sea, and in the air. The local associations of the YMCA Finland act as backing communities for 15 troops in Helsinki, Tampere, Turku, Kuopio, Jyväskylä, Joensuu, and Oulu. The scouts raise young people to become active members of society, and thus participation in scouting activities can also be seen as supporting the implementation of the other action areas of the resolution. The scouts provide the opportunity to advance in various assignments step by step from a young age, thus gradually receiving more responsibility and becoming involved on various levels of decision-making. In the scouts, young people are at each time given a slightly larger role they can grow into under the supervision of a safe adult who supports the youth in their responsibility.

### **1.7. International Volunteer Work (the YMCA Finland)**

Volunteer work provides young people a channel to influence matters they consider significant. Volunteer work means working for the common good. The YMCA Finland provides various opportunities to engage in international volunteer, such as development cooperation projects that make it possible for the volunteers to share their know-how and time. For example, study visits for volunteers have been organized as part of a development cooperation project in Lebanon, where Finnish know-how was put to good use by utilizing the Midnight Street Basket concept. Another option to engage in volunteer work is provided by the Kontti project (container) that collects relief supplies to send to the Gambia. The YMCA also opens up versatile opportunities for volunteer worker mobility between the YMCA countries in various camps and operational centers.

### **1.8. Other International Participation and Influence Opportunities**

The global YMCA network provides several participation, influence, and training opportunities in Finland and around the world. Through these participation opportunities, The YMCA creates relevant paths to young people in various stages of their lives. The youths are provided training paths on local, national, and international levels. These opportunities enable young people to advance to various positions of trust and participate in international events. Through the YMCA, young people are provided the opportunity to influence, for example, in the international summit on climate change and the European and UN youth forums as well as in several Erasmus+ projects. The YMCA Finland is also establishing a youth-led network where young people receive information on and can discuss these opportunities and other international topics.

The network also contributes the perspective of young people as part of the advocacy engaged in by the YMCA and working actively on the theme of Youth, Peace and Security increases the inclusion of young people. The theme has also been discussed with YMCA's international partners and they are supported in their local advocacy work. For example, plans exist for a 2250 advocacy project in Kosovo.

### **1.9. Youth Peace Prize (the YMCA Finland)**

In 2019, the YMCA Finland is launching the Youth Peace Prize. The prize is used to highlight active agency of young people and increase the visibility of their peace work. The purpose of the prize is to acknowledge young people and increase awareness of their central role and involvement in building sustainable societies. The YMCA is a rather appropriate grantor of such a prize. The wellbeing of young people and providing relevant and peaceful activities have been part of YMCA's agenda for 175 years. Throughout history, three Nobel Peace Prizes have been awarded to parties associated with the YMCA. The YMCA also had a significant role in humanitarian work during the First and Second World Wars. Today, the World Alliance of YMCA represents us in the global peace arena, such as various UN agencies. Domestically, our local associations engage in regional peace work.

## **2. PROTECTION**

The second action area of the resolution is Protection. Young people must be recognized as a specific group with specific needs. Specific attention must be paid to the fulfillment of the human rights of young people, and the resolution reminds the member states of the obligations imposed by international law with regard to the protection and rights of various population groups, such as women, children, refugees, and disabled people. The resolution calls for protection of civilians, young people included, from all violence, specifically mentioning gender-based and sexual violence.

### **2.1. Outreach Youth Work (Helsinki)**

The Y-Care outreach youth work helps and supports young people under the age of 29 living in Helsinki who have lost their path. The purpose of the outreach youth work is to bring the youth in contact with the services provided for them and protect them from falling outside the social structures. When necessary, the youth is supported in dealing with the authorities, for example. The content of the activities is always based on the youth's requirements and meetings are organized in a location specified by the youth. The meetings are used to discuss what the youth and the employee can do in order to realize the youth's goals. The outreach youth work stands beside the youth. Participation is both voluntary and free of charge for the youth.

### **2.2. The Kiintopiste Project (Helsinki)**

The aim of the project is to identify youths who are no longer recognized by others and find those who live outside social structures. Where regular social services are inadequate, young people are provided long-term, individual support through Kiintopiste, to allow the youth to once again feel like they are part of society. The operation also highlights the various, specific obstacles young people face when trying to access the services. The project develops new peer-support-based operational models.

## 3. PREVENTION

Prevention is the third key pillar of the resolution. With their actions, young people can reinforce solidarity and social inclusion, as well as prevent both large and small conflicts. It is important to provide a safe space where the youth is acknowledged and engaged, and which supports the activities of young people. Youth-friendly operation models also support peace education. This can, for example, refer to respecting human rights and developing civic skills, which promotes active participation in social processes. Activities that promote tolerance, the culture of peace, and dialog between various groups prevent all forms of discrimination and conflicts. At the same time, providing concrete know-how that supports the education and livelihood of young people also prevents social exclusion.

### 3.1. Club Activities (Helsinki, Vantaa, Klaukkala, Turku, Tampere, Kuopio)

Several local YMCA associations offer active and safe club activities built around various different themes. The purpose of the clubs is to provide a safe place for children and youths to spend time together engaged in various activities, under the supervision of a reliable and professional instructor. Among others, clubs for exercise, art, cooking, and various other themes are organized in different locations. The clubs are open to all and, in principle, free of charge.

Example: The YMCA Vantaa operates a club in a rental housing community, which was established based on neighborhood mediation. The situation arose from the cumulation of problems in an area of limited means and disorderly behavior of youths, including fighting and tagging. The club is a constructive way to become acquainted with the neighbors and provides positive and relevant activities to children and youths in their own environment. The participants are between the ages of 6 and 16, and some of the youths have become teenagers over the course of the club's operation. The oldest of the participating youths are offered new activities through the YMCA. With the operation of the club, mischief and other problems within the housing community have decreased. The club is an excellent example of the peace work that youth organizations can engage in within the environments where youths and children spend their time. Coming to where the children, youths, and their families are, enables reaching those who would be beyond traditional organizational activities. Club activities have also been organized in other facilities where young people spend time. For example, in the Hakunila area youths often gather in the library when other places are closed. The YMCA has organized clubs for girls and board game clubs in the library, thus calming down the environment.

### 3.2. Trips and Camp Activities

The largest of our local associations offer versatile trip and camp opportunities, such as children's camps, day camps, hiking trips, sports camps, theme camps, and confirmation camps. The camps offer children and youths meaningful activities and experiences with other children and youths, in the company of safe adults. Camp activities invite people from different backgrounds to engage in concrete joint activities and to pursue common goals. Evidently, this develops cooperating skills, provides encounters of different worldviews and activates the participants to be self-imposed. Furthermore, participants and instructors share the same living circumstances in camp sites which reinforces equal treatment of all. The youths often have the opportunity to influence the content of the camps or participate in the direction of the camp and trip activities. At its best, camp environment is proven to be an excellent platform to promote shared values and goals such as tolerance, equality, youth engagement, active citizenship and social responsibility.

The proximity of nature in outdoor activities highlights also the importance of environmental awareness and sustainability. In addition to all this, camping activities develop various practical and useful skills and knowledge that benefit participants in their everyday lives. Camps are organized throughout the year, particularly during the holiday periods of schoolchildren. The camp specialists of the YMCA Finland also act as instructors in Erasmus+ projects, for example. We also provide support for the establishment of camp activities in Kosovo.

### **3.3. Sports and Exercise**

The YMCA's local associations offer low-threshold sporting activities, competitive sports, fitness clubs, camps, and disabled sports in 26 different localities, in 22 different sports. Physical exercise is one way of engaging children and youths in a safe environment. With sporting activities, the experience of belonging to a group, teamwork skills, and health education are particularly important. Basketball in particular emphasizes respecting both your teammates and the opponents, as well as the rules. Team activities can bring together youths from significantly different backgrounds. Sporting activities provide young people experiences of success, but also allow them to become accustomed to and learn to deal with failure. Sporting activities are also characterized by perseverance and goal-orientation, which are important skills for young people and also bear fruit in other areas of life. The sport of basketball was developed by the YMCA and the YMCA ideology is strongly present in the sport. The development of volleyball and futsal are also associated with the YMCA. Several local YMCA associations support the opportunities of children from low-income families to engage in activities.

### **3.4. E-sports and Digital Youth Work (Tampere)**

The YMCA e-sports provides the opportunity to try electronic sports and compete at the top level in Finland. The YMCA e-sports develop the youths' skills in groups, individual performances, and social interaction. The amount of discipline-specific practice required by electronic sports is significantly higher than in traditional sports, but the youths are also taught the importance of taking breaks and engaging in associated activities in the spirit of health education. Similarly to other sporting activities, team activities can bring together youths from significantly different backgrounds and is characterized by perseverance and goal-orientation. The youth teams practice handling adversity without giving up and they are reminded of the importance of looking ahead. Children from low-income families are also provided support for engaging in e-sports activities. Digital games are also used as tools for youth work in other activities of the association, such as the Messi open space.

### **3.5. Midnight Street Basket (Helsinki, Turku, Tampere)**

Midnight Street Basket is a regular leisure activity provided for young people free of charge. The operation brings together different young people from varying language and cultural backgrounds through exercise and reinforces their encounter experiences. Inclusion is integrated into the operational model, as the youths themselves decide where and how the activity is organized. At the same time, the activities are organized in a way that prevents polarization between the different groups. Similarly to the participants, the instructors and volunteers also come from varying backgrounds and represent different demographics. In particular, the operation promotes the well-being of youths from migrant backgrounds and their integration into society. The operation also decreases inequality by, among other things, facilitating participation in team activities and providing a close-knit community for disadvantaged youths through the means of youth work and mentoring. Midnight Street Basket also employs young people participating in the operation as instructors and provides many of them with their first working experience.

### **3.6. Musical Activities**

Several local YMCA associations provide versatile opportunities for engaging in musical activities in music institutes, orchestras, choirs, bands, brass bands, and music play schools. A musical hobby provides an environment that supports the youth's personal goals and development. Music provides pleasure and offers a channel for self-expression and connecting with other people. Music can also provide means for handling different emotions and states of mind, which adds to the significance of the activity.

The music institute of the YMCA Turku established a local pilot project in the fall of 2018 to also provide band training for specific groups. The specific groups are represented by, among others, people with mental, physical or visual disabilities, people suffering from learning disabilities, and people recovering from mental illnesses. The band training consists of group-based training, which takes the individual abilities and challenges of each participant into consideration. Playing together provides an opportunity to enjoy music and interact socially.

### **3.7. Meeting Place "Toivo" (Turku)**

Toivo is an open gathering place to young people between the ages of 17 and 28 with coping-related challenges or who require specific support. "Toivo" is used to organize stimulating daytime activities for the youths, intended particularly to support the development of interaction and social skills. The operation prevents loneliness and social exclusion and provides a safe space where young people have access to proficient help and guidance, and where they can spend time. Each youth has distinct needs, but everyone is welcomed at "Toivo".

### **3.8. Pop-up Youth Center in Hansa Shopping Mall (Turku)**

With the project, a youth space was opened in a shopping mall, based on the need to find the youths a place where they were permitted to hang out. The pop-up space in question is a low-threshold center, which is open each weeknight for young people between the ages of 13 and 17, with several youth workers present at all times. The young people are treated on an equal footing, without discrimination, and everyone has the opportunity to be heard. The rules of the center were created together with the youths and their requests are taken into consideration in the operation of the space. The youths come from very different backgrounds – the center is visited by child protection clients, immigrants, native Finns, youths from regular and special schools as well as youths who struggle with mental health issues, for example. Despite their different backgrounds, the youths encounter each other without prejudice and learn from each other. In a safe space with instructors present, potential conflicts can also be handled together with the youths. Where necessary, youth workers are mobilized in other areas of the shopping mall and young people can be directed toward the right services.

### **3.9. School Mediation (Turku)**

This concept is used to prevent bullying by means of street mediation. The children and youths resolve their conflicts amongst themselves, with the adult mediators, who are trained youth education professionals and provide a safe framework for this. The result of the mediation is determined by the youths on their terms. The mediators engage the conflicting parties on an equal footing and without prejudice, and thus the fair encounter provides the children and youth the opportunity to be heard. The street mediation is a way of learning improved models for interaction.

The operation is organized in cooperation with the guardians and schools and, where necessary, the youths and their families are also directed toward other services. In 2019–2020, the street mediation concept will be expanded and targeted at young offenders. The aim of this is to intervene disrupting behavior and conflicts between young people by mediating minor offenses where the prosecution depends on the complainant, primarily with a work obligation.

### **3.10. “TASKU” Supported Housing (Turku)**

Supported housing is part of the community and after-care provided by the child protection services. The operation supports the young people in becoming independent and practicing everyday life, such as going to school or work, spending, and taking care of themselves. The youth practices living independently under the guidance of a support family who live in the same building. The youth’s individual needs are the starting point of the operation and it is primarily intended to prevent falling outside of the social structures.

### **3.11. Camera Obscura: Values and Health Education Concept (the YMCA Finland)**

The concept is built around a mental image adventure. The structure in which the mental image adventure takes place consists of seven rooms. The visitor hears a story through headphones, based on which they advance from room to room. The adventure includes an introduction and a debriefing session. The concept is part of the learning-based activities that reaffirm the youth and the community, which is well-suited for substance abuse education in schools as a means of student welfare, promotion of mental health, and social reinforcement. The purpose of the operation is to allow the youth to experience their own uniqueness and value, and it serves their need to be seen and heard.

### **3.12 The Good Team Spirit Concept (the YMCA Finland)**

This concept increases the visibility of group dynamics and demonstrates the experience of contributing factors in group activities. The aim of the concept is to increase awareness of creating socially safe communities. The manner of implementation activates the participants and engages them in shared knowledge building. The implementation consists of a four-part group exercise, which utilizes virtual reality (VR). As part of the exercise, the participants use VR headsets to watch a short film about a class. The exercise is used to find ways of acting in accordance with your own values and those of the group. The purpose of the operation is to promote the participants’ mental, social, and ethical capacity to act.

## 4. PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships form the fourth action area of the resolution. The resolution invites UN member states to increase resources to ensure the inclusion of young people and support the youths in promoting peace. The resolution encourages states to engage local communities and civil society entities for the development of safe environments for young people. The cooperation between states, organizations, youths, families, and religious and educational institutions is intended to promote social cohesion and, at the same time, prevent factors that could lead to extremism or violence.

### 4.1. Father-Child Activities and Family Activities

The aim of the father-child activities is the development of interaction between the father and child through club and camp activities. Many other operations also comprise family activities, as according to the three-part mission mind, body and spirit of the YMCA, the YMCA's approach towards the people who participate in our activities should be as comprehensive as possible. Family wellbeing is seen as improving the wellbeing of the individuals as well.

### 4.2. The Perheiden mukana Project (Tampere)

The Perheiden mukana project (activities for families) is organized in cooperation with the Martha district association of the Pirkanmaa region. The operation engages families in challenging situations, such as low-income, single parent or immigrant families. The essential tools used in the operation include camp and trip activities, open engagement activities, and information on home economics provided by the Marthas. Families are directed toward the operation by the social service provided by the city of Tampere, the Finnish Association for Autism and Asperger's Syndrome, and the Tampere City Mission. In addition to the Martha association, the rental housing provider VTS-kodit is an essential partner to the project. The project also cooperates with other projects organized by the association, in particular with the Osallistumaan project (prevention of exclusion for families). The father-child activities previously arranged by the association have also been integrated into the project.

### 4.3. The Osallistumaan Project (Tampere)

Donations from companies and communities are used to support the opportunities of families with children in challenging situations to engage and participate in activities. The aim of the operation is to reduce the sense of inequality and prevent social exclusion and loneliness. The operation promotes the social inclusion of the participating families. The families are directed toward the operation through various cooperating entities in the field of family work. In fact, the operation is intended to complement the already existing service structures. The goal of the project is to create a model, which could be used to coordinate the realization of social responsibility. The experience of the companies and communities on how they wish to be a part of this realization is also significant.

### 4.4. The Yhteinen pöytä Network (Vantaa)

The YMCA Vantaa is part of the Yhteinen pöytä Network that is reinventing the food aid operation through the means of community dining and discarded food. The aim of the operation is to replace food banks with a more communal way of providing food aid. Reducing the loneliness experienced by people is at the heart of the concept, together with improving the individuals' capacity to act and increasing their wellbeing. Food also serves as an everyday element that increases the sense of security and cooking together is an empowering activity. For example, the project has led to the creation and reinforcement of a cooking club initiated by the youths. The organizers of the club have gradually been given other small responsibilities and have grown to become trainees and employees in the community. Discarded food is also utilized in other clubs, youth evenings, and a community café, which welcomes approximately thousand people each week.

This chain of responsibility is organized in cooperation with local shops, Laurea University of Applied Sciences, the City of Vantaa, and the congregations in the area.

#### **4.5. Morning and Afternoon Clubs (Helsinki, Vantaa, Tampere, Turku)**

The aim of the morning and afternoon activities is to support the educational work carried out by the homes and schools. Under the Finnish Basic Education Act, morning and afternoon activities should promote the wellbeing of the child and their equal treatment in society, as well as prevent social exclusion and increase inclusion. Many local YMCA associations organize morning and afternoon activities in cooperation with the cities and towns in which they operate. In Helsinki and Tampere, the clubs also engage in internal cooperation with other operations of the association, such as the music institutes. The morning and afternoon activities provide a safe environment to children, where trustworthy adults engage the children in a sustained and regular manner and provide guided and motivational activities.

#### **4.6. Youth Centers (Helsinki, Vantaa, Tampere, Turku, Oulu)**

The cooperation between the cities and the YMCA in youth centers enables reaching those youths who cannot be reached by the other services provided by the city. For example, the youth center operation in the Puistola neighborhood in Helsinki is part of the service production of the Helsinki YMCA, which can be implemented in line with the association's ideals by introducing other activities organized by the association as well as utilizing its expertise.

#### **4.7. Confirmation Camp (Helsinki, Turku)**

In addition to the Christian themes, confirmation camp is a source of useful tools for life and meeting other people. The confirmation camp is organized in cooperation with the congregations. For some youths, it is important to provide the opportunity to participate in the confirmation camp in a new group, somewhere outside of the home congregation or everyday community. In Tampere for example, a dedicated confirmation training camp is arranged for the youths who frequent the Messi open space. In Vantaa, the active congregation community enables the inclusion of youths who have worked as confirmation camp group leaders in the sphere of operation by offering them traineeships and apprenticeship training if, for example, they are taking a gap year.

#### **4.8. Hyvinvointi 2018 (the YMCA Finland)**

The purpose of the project was to develop activities that could be used to improve the social capacities of young people fulfilling their national defense obligation. The project was carried out in cooperation with the Defence Forces of Finland, Sotilaskotiliitto, and organizations working in the fields of national defense, youth work, and social and health care. During the project, the YMCA developed a group-based discourse concept, which is intended to expedite the establishment of social interaction amongst the recruits. Becoming acquainted with the house mates and creating mutual trust improve the youths' capacity to act. The project also comprised leisure activities, which can be used to contribute to the coping of the conscripts.

#### **4.9. Savumerkeistä lisättyyn todellisuuteen and Haastehulinat (the YMCA Finland)**

The purpose of the Savumerkeistä lisättyyn todellisuuteen project is to reinforce the capabilities of associations working in the field of social and health care to utilize digital technologies for engaging with people. The participating associations present a current digitization-related challenge that is relevant to them. The people included in the activities of the associations, volunteers, and employees try to find solutions to these challenges together with young adults. The process is based on an association-driven application that utilizes the Hackathon concept.

The process provides experiences of empowerment and inclusion to the volunteering young adults who participate in the project as they are given the opportunity to develop the operation of their community. Interaction produces experiences of success, inspiration, and significance. In Vantaa for example, the Haastehulinat Hackathon project also led to the creation of several good ideas for the development of the youths' neighborhood. The project is carried out in cooperation with associations working in the fields of youth work and social and health care in 2017–2020 in three counties. The project includes additional cooperation with three separate Universities of Applied Sciences and their students.

## **5. DISENGAGEMENT AND REINTEGRATION**

The fifth and final key pillar of the resolution is Disengagement and Reintegration. This key pillar refers, among other things, to acknowledging the specific needs of young people and increasing gender-sensitive and equal opportunities for education and employment. Education should be relevant from the perspective of the labor market and develop working life skills. Together, education, training, and employment prevent the marginalization and support the reintegration of young people. The resolution emphasizes the partnership between young people, youth organizations, and peace operators in the development of youth employment and entrepreneurship programs.

### **5.1. The “Messi” Open Space and “Messi” Meeting Place (Tampere)**

Low-threshold activities support the reinforcement and restoration of resources and coping skills for youths who have, in some sense, fallen outside social structures, such as school, working life or friend groups, or who have a strong sense of detachment from the surrounding society. The target group of the activities is linked by experiences of loneliness or being bullied, which may be caused by specific characteristics. The creation of community spirit is at the core of the operation. The activities do not require commitments from the youths, and instead participation is based on the specific resources and capacities of each youth. The “Messi” open space and “Messi” meeting place also engage in active cooperation with other operators. The instructors attempt to guide the young people toward other supportive functions, education or working life. The “Messi” open space provides evening activities for young people between the ages of 13 and 20. The open space emphasizes educational values. The “Messi” meeting place provides daytime activities for young people between the ages of 18 and 35 and focuses on providing tools that the youths can use to move forward in their lives.

### **5.2. The Messi Workshop: Rehabilitative Daytime Activities (Tampere)**

The Messi youth workshop comprises rehabilitative daytime activities in the form of guided group activities for young people aged 16–22. The operation is intended to restore or rebuild the youths' connection with both the surrounding society and themselves. The activities provide a substitutive experience of connectedness particularly to young people who are lonely or bullied at school. The experiential nature of the activities improves connections with other youths and the society in the broad sense. Belonging to a group and sharing experiences within the group are important elements of the activities. Shared experiences are used to lessen the burden of social situations and to practice operating within a group – the exact things from which the youths may have been socially excluded from. The activities reach specific groups whose mindset is characterized by loneliness, anxiety, lack of perspective, social marginalization, fear of disappointment, and fear of being judged. The aim of the operation is to engage and bind the youths to a weekly rhythm, thus facilitating their integration into society.

### **5.3. "Startti" Start-off Coaching (Helsinki)**

The "Startti" start-off coaching consists of regular group-based coaching activities, which are intended to restore, step-by-step, the young person's capacity to act on a level that would enable them to participate in other regular long-term activities outside of the home with the goal of employment or education.

### **5.4. Youth Workshops (Helsinki)**

The YMCA Helsinki runs a youth workshop without walls. The workshop is designed for the youth work, exercise, and wellbeing fields. In addition to weekly group coaching, young people are offered training in genuine working environments of jobs with children and youths. Work training placement may be offered at the YMCA Helsinki or at the premises of its partners. In addition to training, the youths are given a personal coach, who monitors their wellbeing and supports them in identifying their next steps after the workshop period. One of the steps could be finding the apprenticeships with the YMCA Helsinki or its partners.

### **5.5. Work Pilots (Vantaa, Tampere)**

The short-term work try-outs arranged through Work Pilots also act as a tool for youth work, reinforcing the youths' experience of social inclusion. Even short-term employment can create a strong contact with the young person and often leaves a positive impression. Work and improving livelihood are empowering experiences and essential elements of personal security. Practical work experience supports young people on their way toward adulthood and the working life. For many youths, this provides their first work experience, and thus these opportunities are provided to as many people as possible. At the same time, work try-outs also provide a window into the operation of the local YMCA association, as they reach many young people who might not otherwise find their way to the activities organized by the associations or youth organizations. The YMCA has particularly promoted this concept in Vantaa.

### **5.6. The "Paikka auki Program": Employment Assistance for the Structurally Unemployed (Helsinki, Tampere, Oulu)**

The "Paikka auki" aid program is intended to advance the employment of those with difficult employment prospects by offering jobs in associations in the field of social and health care. The operation provides employment for young people under 30 years of age outside working life and those with partial work ability within the association's general interest activities or offers apprenticeships. This program is used to advance the participants' working life capacities and opportunities for further employment, while corresponding to the implementation of The Finland's Youth Guarantee scheme.

### **5.7. Into Working Life Through Activity (Helsinki)**

The aim of the Into Working Life Through Activity project is to reinforce the conditions of employment of 25–35-year-olds from migrant backgrounds. The operation utilizes people who have migrated to Finland earlier and have already integrated into society as peer instructors. The peer instructors assemble groups consisting of people from their own communities who find it challenging to connect with the Finnish society. The participants are first bound to the joint leisure activities, after which they can be introduced to personal coaching or training. The peer instructors act as a bridge to the service systems of the Finnish society, and also provide hope regarding future opportunities through their examples and personal experiences.

## **5.8. Immigrant Services (Turku)**

Immigrant Services include individual case management for immigrants under 30 years of age, civic education, and so-called social interpretation: support for interacting with the Finnish authorities and the legal system, for example. This service supports social cohesion and attachment to the Finnish society. The young people are guided towards education and employment opportunities and provided instruction for managing their personal finances. This instruction is used to prevent the social exclusion and marginalization of young immigrants.

## **5.9. Sports for Integration (Tampere)**

The project consists of organizing relevant, communal activities for asylum seekers and youths with refugee status living in the Tampere region. Integration into the Finnish society is supported by exercise and sports. Exercise is used as an easily approachable form of work, as it brings people together regardless of their language and cultural backgrounds. Working as part of a group, the participants' language skills are improved, which is one of the factors facilitating integration. Where necessary, the participants are directed toward other services as well. The project provides support to our partners, such as the reception center of Tampere, meeting places, and sports clubs in the planning and implementation of the sporting activities for asylum seekers and refugees.

## **5.10. International Project Cooperation (the YMCA Finland)**

The YMCA Finland engages in versatile project cooperation with international partners. As the largest youth association in the world, the YMCA supports young people wherever they are. Improving the livelihoods of young women in particular has been the underlying theme of our development cooperation projects. The YMCA supports this through the means of vocational education, working life skills, and entrepreneurship. Another theme in the project cooperation has been the advocacy work related to the United Nations Resolution 2250: Youth, Peace and Security, which is intended to improve the inclusion of local youths in their societies. The YMCA Finland has been engaged in development cooperation for almost 40 years in the Gambia, and since 2017 in Lebanon. Through project cooperation, the YMCA can also offer versatile participation opportunities for both the Finnish and the local volunteers.

In Kosovo, the YMCA Finland has supported the re-establishment of the association and initiation of operations since 2010. The future cooperation is focused on the agenda of Youth, Peace and Security, as well as establishing and developing the operation of the local camping center. In this context, the skills of young Finnish volunteers and employees are being utilized in both areas.

The YMCA Finland supported the establishment of the Gambia YMCA in 1979 and has since supported the Gambian youths through development cooperation projects. These projects have primarily focused on youth education, vocational capacities and employability, and health education. In 2019, the YMCA Finland is launching a new project that will focus, in particular, on the improvement of sustainable livelihood opportunities of young people who have attempted to migrate to Europe and been returned to the Gambia. The project also comprises advocacy, which is intended to correct misconceptions related to emigration amongst fellow youths.

At the same time, the purpose of the advocacy is to facilitate the re-integration of returning youths and prevent stigmatization. In this work, the United Nations Resolution 2250: Youth, Peace and Security is an essential tool and the related know-how of Finnish youths is utilized within the cooperation.

The vocational education of Syrian refugees and young women is the focus of the cooperation between the YMCA Finland and the YMCA Lebanon. In addition, the project is intended to promote peaceful coexistence of the Lebanese host population and the refugee population through community activities and psychosocial support. Finnish volunteers have actively participated in the development of collective activities in Lebanon. In 2017–2018, the project provided education and vocational capacities to over 370 youths, offered psychosocial support to more than 700 children and youths, and organized 40 community events, which included more than 2,500 participants. More than 65% of the young people trained in 2018 were women.



**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

[ymca.fi/2250](http://ymca.fi/2250)

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**YK:N PÄÄTÖSLAUSELMAN 2250 TOTEUTUMINEN**

**NUORISOJÄRJESTÖJEN TYÖSSÄ**

**CASE STUDY: SUOMEN YMCA JA PÄÄTÖSLAUSELMAN VIISI OSA-ALUETTA**

