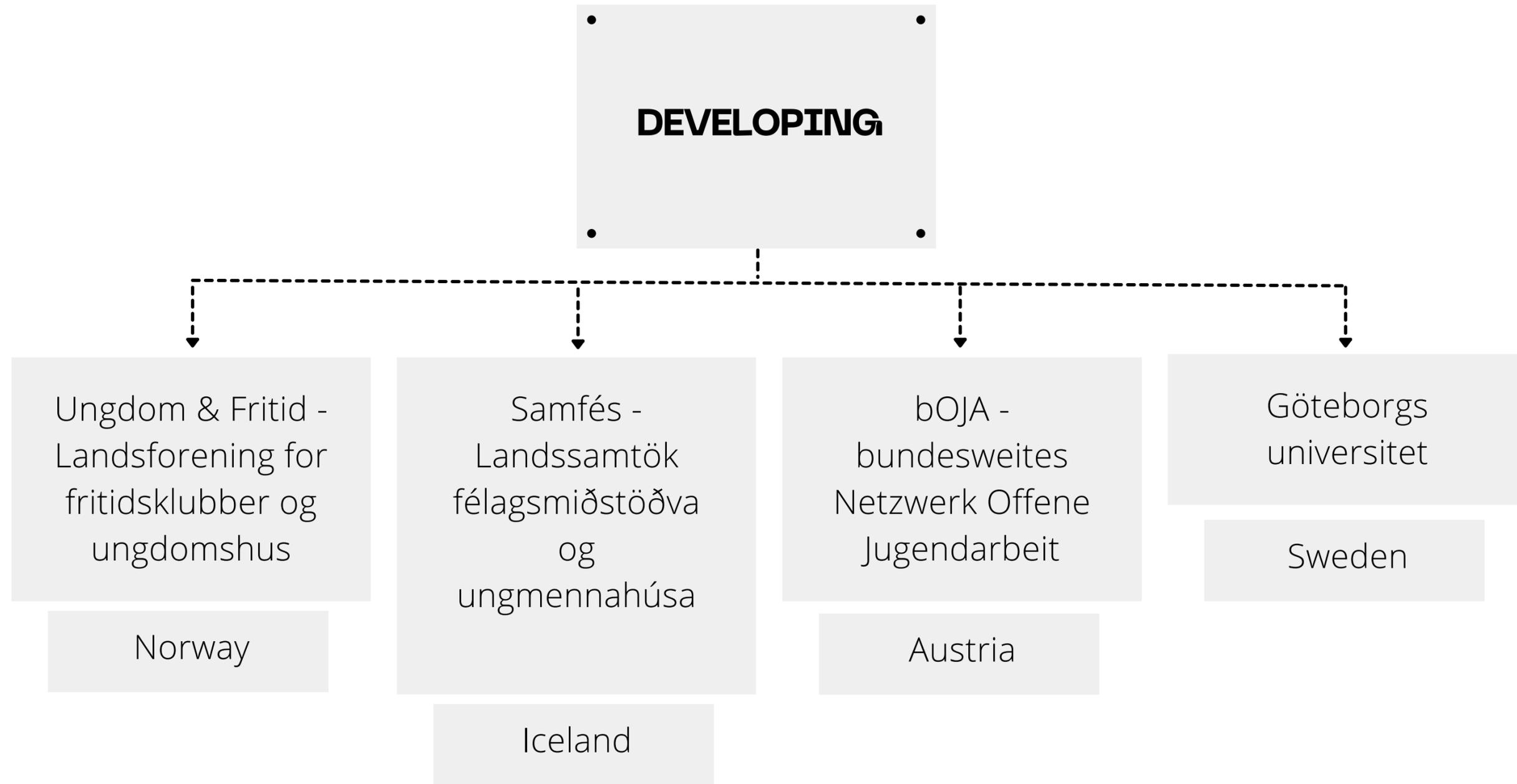


# EYWE

## EXPLORING YOUTH WORK EDUCATION

# COMPETENCE

# FRAMEWORK



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# Introduction

## DEVELOPING

The data for this competence framework was produced in **focus group discussions** at three meetings in the Erasmus+ project "Exploring Youth Work Education" during a period of six months in 2022. The main goal was to **capture the identity of open youth work** and what open youth work is for the participating youth workers. The data collected addresses knowledges, professionalism, and youth work practice.

## CONNECTING

In the discussions held two **logics** were found that are well known and often discussed in youth work. They are named "**epistemic**" and "**phronetic**" epistemologies of youth work. A third logic that was found is named "**nomadic**" epistemology of youth work. Subsequently, three different perspectives were developed from these logics. This competency framework attempts to put these three logics, developed in the research report, into a picture and **relate them to competencies necessary in youth work**.

## BUILDING

The competence framework first presents the **three perspectives** and their activities gained and developed from the focus group sessions. Then, the **five competence areas** that emerged from the research findings and the research output are shown. Subsequently, the perspectives and activities of youth work are linked to the competence areas. The aim is to show which **activities, competencies and attitudes** are manifested within the competence areas in regard of the three perspectives.

# Perspectives of Youth Work

## EPISTEMIC

The epistemic perspective is based on the values, norms and established knowledges of the organization and society at large. The **role of the youth worker is to educate and foster** and the youth are expected to internalize the norms, values and knowledges advocated by the youth worker. This approach is more commonly known as the "**top down** approach" and will be called as that in the further reading.

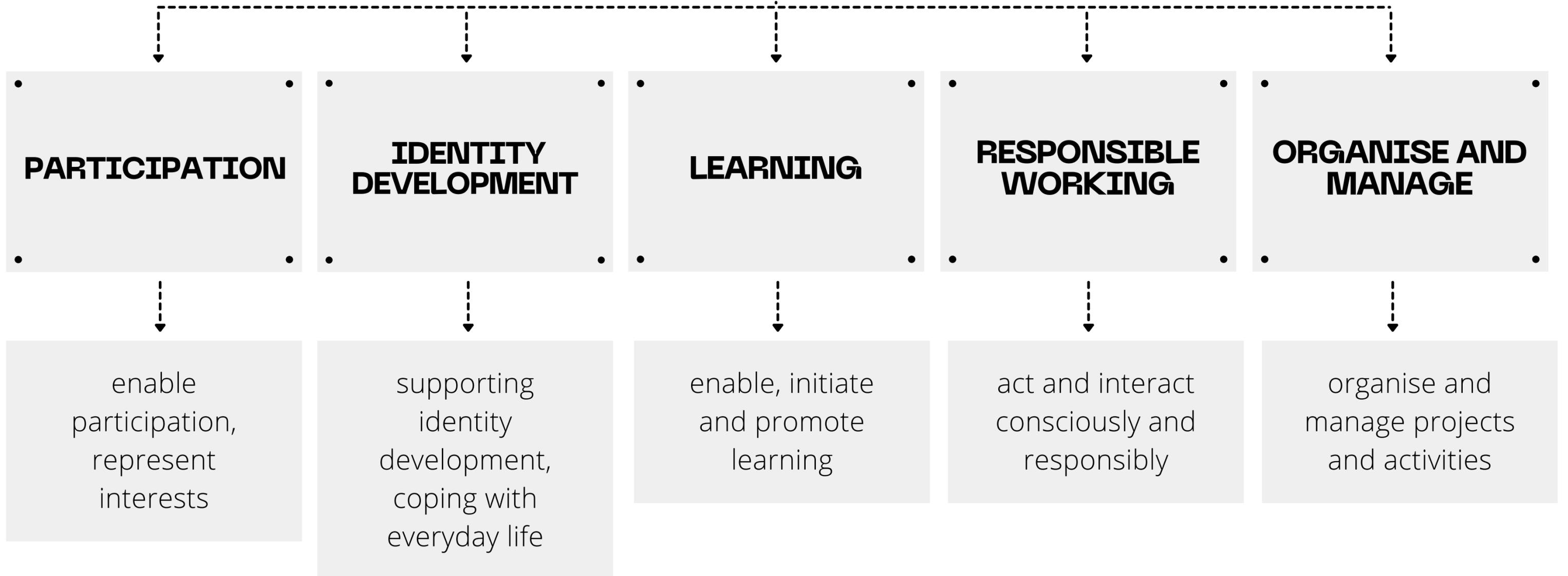
## PHRONETIC

In the phronetic perspective the activities are controlled by the youth. The **youth worker's role is to listen to the youth and help them make their case.** The purpose is to give the youth a voice to change the prevailing cultural order and thereby challenge the existing social and political order. This approach is more commonly known as the "**bottom up** approach" and will be called as that in the further reading.

## NOMADIC

In the nomadic perspective the youth workers role is to take a position of not knowing and not having ready-made answers. Instead, the **youth worker needs to take a mediating position and open-up for different knowledges to interact and create new knowledges** and new common interests. This is a new approach and will be called "**equal** approach" in the further reading.

# Areas of Competencies



# "Top down" Activities

## PARTICIPATION

- building relationships between youth and youth workers
- understanding different age stages and social classes
- having knowledge about the society and the people you work with

## IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

- being a good role model
- treating everyone equally
- setting boundaries for kids
- helping them navigate the challenges of everyday life

## LEARNING

- keeping up with societal changes
- organizing activities that promote active learning
- taking initiative over children
- knowing when to refer to someone with specialized knowledge or expertise.

## RESPONSIBLE WORKING

- keeping youth in order in an authoritarian way while showing respect
- managing conflicts with effective communication skills
- dealing with intercultural problems
- knowing different services with specialized knowledge or expertise for the youth

## ORGANISE AND MANAGE

- explaining the work that has to be done
- engaging in external communication
- managing budgets
- staying informed about new trends
- creating meaningful projects and activities for youth.

# "bottom up" Activities

## PARTICIPATION

- involving youths in decision-making processes and activities
- including them in the work
- listening to their needs
- leveraging their strengths to emphasize youth empowerment

## IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

- focusing on the emotional and personal growth of young individuals
- being open-minded, empathetic, and adaptable
- demonstrating a genuine interest in youth
- being helpful and patient, while reflecting on what happens

## LEARNING

- facilitating learning experiences
- being open to change
- being aware of the community in which one works

## RESPONSIBLE WORKING

- being mindful of one's actions
- overcoming fear by setting personal biases aside
- and focusing on serving young people for their well being and needs

## ORGANISE AND MANAGE

- collaborating in teams
- being able to work effectively with colleagues
- achieve common goals to successfully manage projects

# "equal" Activities

## PARTICIPATION

- operating at the same level as them
- fostering collaboration
- ensuring their perspectives and interests are genuinely represented

## IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

- helping them navigate the challenges of everyday life
- creating a safe space for expression
- showing genuine curiosity and interest in their lives
- fostering self-esteem and self-discovery

## LEARNING

- empowering young people to take ownership of their learning journey
- recognizing and utilizing their strength
- promoting a willingness to learn more
- encouraging innovation

## RESPONSIBLE WORKING

- building trust
- embracing change
- demonstrating tolerance

## ORGANISE AND MANAGE

- creating a neutral space where everyone feels welcomed, valued, and free from bias and judgment
- promoting creativity and open dialogue
- enabling the active participation and contribution of individuals to projects and activities.