# GUIDE FOR CREATING AND MAINTAINING SAFE SPACES FOR YOUTH IN ALBANIA



Support Albanian youth civic participation, community engagement and volunteerism, through promoting inclusive, gender responsive and structured dialogue and strengthening youth capacities at the central and local levels
(EC-NEAR/TIA/2024/EA-RP/0084)

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## ABBREVIATIONS

**Guide** - "Guide for creating and maintaining safe spaces for youth in Albania";

**LGUs** - Local self-government units;

**EU** - European Union;

**EU Youth Strategy** - EU Youth Strategy 2019–2027;

**EC** - Council of Europe;

**SKR 2022-2029** - National Youth Strategy 2022–2029.



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# I. ENTRANCE

Spaces where young people gather, receive services, carry out activities, learn, collaborate, and express their views play an important role in their personal, social, and civic development. For this reason, creating safe, inclusive, and friendly spaces for young people is an important element of working with young people and providing youth services and activities.

A safe space for young people does not only mean a well-maintained physical environment equipped with minimal safety conditions. It is also related to how young people are treated and respected, the possibility to participate without discrimination, protection from violence, abuse, harassment, and exploitation, respect for privacy and personal data, as well as the existence of clear mechanisms to seek help, report concerns, and receive necessary support.

For this reason, youth space safety should be treated as an ongoing process that includes prevention, risk identification, responding to concerns, referral to competent services, youth participation, and continuous improvement.

"The Guide for the Creation and Maintenance of Safe Spaces for Youth in Albania" (the Guide) has been developed to provide practical guidance for central state institutions, local self-government units (LGUs), youth centers and spaces, organizations, and professionals working with young people, to support the creation and maintenance of environments where young people can participate, express themselves, and carry out activities under conditions of safety, respect, and dignity. The Guide aims to help responsible institutions and actors in Albania create or adapt existing spaces to make them safer for young people.

The guide addresses the main principles and dimensions of youth space safety and provides guidance for identifying and assessing risks, preventive measures, responsibilities of staff and engaged persons, reporting and referral mechanisms, preparedness for emergency situations, youth participation, and continuous monitoring and improvement.

## I.1. Purpose of the guide

The purpose of this Guide is to provide a practical framework for creating, organizing, operating, and maintaining safe spaces for young people in Albania. The Guide aims to help institutions and



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youth service providers systematically address safety and integrate it into the daily functioning of the youth space. Safety is treated as a multidimensional concept that includes:

- physical security and the suitability of the premises;
- psychological and emotional security;
- protection from violence, abuse, harassment, and exploitation;
- the prevention of discrimination and exclusion;
- accessibility and inclusion;
- respect for privacy and protection of personal data;
- security in the digital environment and during activities outside the usual space;
- preparing for and responding to emergencies;
- the participation of young people in defining and assessing safety conditions.

### I.2. Specific objectives

The overall objective of this guide is to provide a practical framework for creating, organizing, operating, and improving safe, inclusive, and youth-friendly spaces, supporting risk prevention and management, protecting the rights and well-being of young people, and encouraging their active participation in building a safe environment.

Its specific objectives are to:

- clarify the concept and dimensions of a safe space for young people, including physical, psychological, social, and digital safety, as well as the principles of respect for rights, dignity, equality, and non-discrimination.
- to guide the identification, assessment, and prevention of risks that may affect the safety, well-being, and participation of young people in youth spaces and activities.
- to define measures and practices for creating and maintaining safe and accessible environments, taking into account the characteristics of the space, the activities carried out, and the diverse needs of young people.
- clarify the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the functioning of youth spaces, including leaders, staff, youth workers, volunteers, and other persons responsible for providing activities and services.
- to strengthen protection, reporting, response, and referral mechanisms by providing guidance for the initial handling of concerns and incidents and for liaising with competent structures and services.
- promote the protection of privacy and personal data and the safe use of technology and digital environments, in accordance with the applicable legislation.



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- strengthen the participation and involvement of young people in creating and improving safe spaces, involving them in risk identification, setting rules, gathering opinions, and assessing safety conditions.
- to provide practical tools for self-assessment, monitoring, and continuous improvement of safety, including checklists, risk assessment models, and tools for gathering young people's perceptions and opinions.

### I.3. Target Group and Guide Users

The guide is addressed to actors who have responsibilities, roles, or interests in creating, organizing, and operating safe spaces for youth, such as:

- central institutions responsible for youth policies and programs;
- LGUs and the structures responsible for youth and social services;
- youth centers and multifunctional youth spaces;
- youth organizations and civil society members;
- youth workers, coordinators, and youth space leaders;
- volunteers and other personnel engaged in activities with young people;
- providers of public, social, health, and community services who collaborate with youth structures;
- professionals and experts who support the development and functioning of youth spaces;
- partners and international organizations that support programs and initiatives for youth.

Indirectly, the Guide also serves the youth themselves. Informing them about rights, rules of conduct, ways to seek help, and reporting mechanisms is an important element in creating a safe environment.

### I.4. Scope of Application

The guide can be used in various settings where young people carry out activities, receive services, participate in consultation processes, organize, or interact with professionals and with each other.

It can be implemented, among others, in: public and multifunctional youth centers; youth spaces near local government units; community spaces that offer activities or services for young people; spaces used or managed by youth organizations and civil society organizations; temporary spaces created for youth activities; youth activities held outside permanent premises; activities and services that are carried out partially or entirely in digital environments; spaces of educational institutions used for activities, programs, initiatives, or services for young people;

The scope of implementation includes both the physical aspects of the space and the way youth activities and services are organized and delivered. For this reason, creating safe spaces for young



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people requires attention to environments, interpersonal relationships, procedures, communication, and response mechanisms.

The guide can be used at different stages:

- Before opening or creating the space, for identifying hazards and planning necessary measures.
- During the operation of the space, for the implementation of preventive measures, security monitoring, and handling of concerns.
- During changes or reorganization of the space, for risk reassessment and adjustment of measures.
- After an incident or concern, to assess the response taken and to determine measures that may prevent recurrence.

The guide does not seek to replace obligations arising from current legislation, institutional regulations, technical requirements, or professional procedures of the competent bodies. In cases requiring specialized intervention, the responsible youth structures must follow the relevant procedures and carry out referral to competent authorities or services.

### I.5. Connection with existing legislation on the functioning of youth spaces in Albania

Creating safe spaces for young people should be seen as part of a broader approach to the development and quality functioning of youth services and structures in Albania.

Security is not isolated from other elements of a space's functioning. It is related to how activities are planned, responsible staff organized, services provided, accessibility guaranteed, youth involved, and how the quality of interventions is monitored.

The guide should be read in harmony with the current legislation on youth, protection and human rights, equality and non-discrimination, accessibility, personal data protection, and other areas related to the safety and well-being of young people. At the same time, it offers a special perspective on the safety of youth spaces, translating the overall framework into measures and tools that can be used in daily practice.

The use of the Guide should not be understood as merely a formal process. The goal is for safety principles to be integrated into how youth spaces are planned, managed, and used. For this reason, a safe space for youth requires a combination of a suitable environment; clear rules; trained staff; protection mechanisms; youth participation; continuous monitoring.



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### I.6. How to use the guide

The guide is designed as a practical tool and can be used fully or according to the specific needs of a space for young people. It is designed so that the creation or improvement of safe spaces for youth is carried out through a continuous process, which includes several stages:

- **Identify** - Identifies the characteristics of space, ongoing activities, user groups, and potential risks.
- **Assess** - Identified risks are evaluated based on the likelihood of occurrence and their impact. The assessment should also include situations of young people who may face a specific risk.
- **Plan** - Preventive and corrective measures, responsibilities, deadlines, and necessary resources are defined.
- **Implement** - The planned measures are integrated into the daily operation of the space, including internal rules, code of conduct, youth information, staff training, and reporting and referral procedures.
- **Monitor** - Safety conditions and practices are periodically monitored through checklists, risk reassessments, gathering opinions from young people, and the use of other appropriate instruments.
- **Improve** - Monitoring findings and user experiences are used to identify gaps and determine concrete measures for improvement.

To make the use of the Guide as practical as possible, mechanisms for its implementation have also been included, which can be adapted according to the needs of the respective structure. They aim to help responsible structures better understand risks, identify gaps, and take concrete measures to ensure safe spaces for young people.

## II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL POLICIES

The concept of safe spaces for youth is supported by an intertwined framework of legal acts and strategic and policy documents. This framework includes provisions related to youth and youth spaces, as well as broader requirements in the fields of human rights, protection from violence, equality and non-discrimination, accessibility, child protection, privacy, personal data protection, and security in the digital environment.

For this reason, creating and operating a safe space for young people requires an integrated and cross-sectoral approach. The requirements applied in each case depend on the current legal framework, the age of the users, the nature of the space, the activities carried out, and the manner of service delivery.



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## II.1. The European Union Framework for Safe Spaces for Youth

The European Union (EU) policy framework for safe spaces for youth is particularly supported by the EU Youth Strategy 2019–2027[1] (the EU Youth Strategy) and the 11 European Youth Goals[2], specifically European Youth Goal No. 9 – "Space and participation for all."[3]

The EU strategy places the participation, inclusion, and empowerment of young people at the center of European cooperation in the field of youth. In this context, youth spaces are important for the personal, social, cultural, and civic development of young people and for creating opportunities for active participation.

European Youth Goal No. 9, "Space and participation for all," emphasizes the importance of open, safe, and accessible physical spaces that enable youth participation and are supported by appropriate professional capacities. This approach is also important for virtual environments, where safety, accessibility, and inclusion must be key elements when organizing activities and interacting with young people.

The same approach applies to virtual spaces, which must be accessible and safe for young people. Security is not limited to the physical conditions of an environment. It also relates to protection from violence, abuse, discrimination, and harassment, respect for privacy, accessibility, inclusion, well-being and psychological security, as well as security in the digital environment.

Alongside the policy framework for youth, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights contains provisions important for respecting human dignity, personal integrity, privacy, personal data protection, equality, and non-discrimination. In particular, Articles 21, 24, and 26 respectively address non-discrimination, children's rights, and the integration of people with disabilities.

An important element of this approach is also the participation of young people. Young people are not only considered users of space but also participants who can contribute to identifying needs, setting rules, organizing activities, and improving the environment in which they participate. From the above documents and instruments, several key guidelines are defined for creating and operating safe spaces for young people:

- Safety and protection – prevention and addressing of risks that may endanger young people;
- Accessibility and inclusion – equal opportunities for use and participation;
- Non-discrimination and respect – respect for dignity and diversity;

[1] EU Youth Strategy
[2] Youth Goals
[3] 9 Space and Participation for All



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- Participation – active involvement of young people in the development and improvement of the environment;
- Professional support – human capacities and appropriate support mechanisms;
- Digital security and privacy – protecting young people even in online service interactions.

### II.2. Council of Europe Standards and Documents for Safe Youth Spaces

The Council of Europe (CoE) has developed a framework of standards, recommendations, and instruments related to human rights, youth participation, youth work, equality, social inclusion, and protection from discrimination and violence. These instruments provide important guidance for addressing youth safety regarding rights, dignity, participation, and access to opportunities and services. Among the important documents on the topic of this Guide are:

- **Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4[4] on youth work** – conceptualizes youth work as a field of social, cultural, educational, environmental, and political activities, developed by, with, and for young people, based on voluntary participation and formal and informal learning. For youth spaces, it emphasizes the importance of youth-oriented youth work, active participation, social inclusion, and trained staff.
- **Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)7[5] on youth access to their rights** aims to improve young people's awareness and exercise of their rights, as well as the removal of legal, political, and social barriers. In the context of safe spaces, this relates to informing young people about their rights, the possibility to seek help, complaint and referral mechanisms, and protection from discrimination.
- **Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3[6] on youth access from areas with limited access to social rights** links youth inclusion with access to services, participation, non-discrimination, violence prevention, and social inclusion.

Additionally, the EC Guidelines[7] on the integration and inclusion of gender equality in youth activities provide practical guidance for creating inclusive environments, including measures against discrimination and harassment and mechanisms for reporting concerns.

[4] Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on youth work;
[5] Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)7 of the CM on young people's access.
[6] Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 of the CM on the access of young people to social rights;
[7] Gender mainstreaming.



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Overall, the EC standards and recommendations provide guidance for the development of youth spaces that respect the rights and dignity of young people, encourage meaningful participation, support inclusion and non-discrimination, and contribute to the prevention of violence and harassment. They also highlight the importance of well-prepared staff and appropriate mechanisms for addressing concerns and referring cases.

### II.3. Integration of the legal framework for safe spaces with legislation on rights and protection

The framework for creating and operating safe spaces for young people should be analyzed in relation to legal acts and other instruments regulating specific fields. For this reason, the safety assessment should not be limited to the physical conditions of the environment, but should also include the obligations applicable by legislation in the relevant fields:

- **Protection from violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect, and harassment** is a fundamental component of security. In this regard, an important reference is the Council of Europe Convention[8] on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (the Lanzarote Convention[9]), which calls for measures to prevent sexual violence, protect child victims, and prosecute perpetrators.
- **The EC Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2022–2027[10] -** defines areas of action related to the protection of children from violence, inclusion, health and well-being, as well as their rights in the digital environment. When youth spaces are used by persons under the age of 18, these guidelines must be taken into account together with national legislation on child protection and the relevant procedures.
- **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [11] sets** out principles and obligations related to non-discrimination, accessibility, and participation of persons with disabilities. In the context of youth spaces, accessibility must be considered not only in the physical environment but also in information, communication, and the organization of activities.
- **EU Regulation 2016/679 on the protection of personal data[12] constitutes** an important European reference in the field of personal data protection. Youth spaces may collect and process participant data, such as contact information, attendance lists, photographs, videos, and other information related to activities. For spaces operating in Albania, the processing

[8] Convention;
[9] Albania ratified the Convention on July 1, 2010;
[10] Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027);
[11] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
[12] Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council.



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of this data must be reviewed in accordance with the applicable Albanian legislation and, when the relevant conditions are met, with the applicable requirements of EU law.

### II.4. Albanian Legislation and Strategic Framework for Safe Spaces for Youth

Even in Albania, the concept of safe spaces for young people should be understood within an interconnected legislative framework, where youth legislation creates the specific basis for youth policies and structures, while requirements for safety, accessibility, protection, and inclusion are met by legislation in other fields.

Law no. 75/2019, "On Youth" (as amended) constitutes the main legal basis for organizing and developing youth policies. However, creating a safe space for young people is not only a matter of youth legislation. Depending on the nature of the space and its users, requirements related to the planning and security of the physical environment, accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities, child protection, equality and non-discrimination, protection from violence, privacy and personal data, as well as digital security are simultaneously applied.

#### II.4.1. Youth Legislation and the Safe Space Concept

Law no. 75/2019, "On Youth" (as amended) defines a youth center as a legal entity that provides youth infrastructure for the development of youth activities and initiatives, non-formal education programs, information activities, mentoring and training for young people, and youth work. In this regard, it is important to distinguish between two concepts:

- a safe space for youth refers to a physical, social, psychological, or digital environment that creates conditions for safety, protection, access, inclusion, and participation;
- The Youth Center refers to an organized structure, defined by youth legislation, that offers infrastructure and activities, programs, and services dedicated to young people.

Consequently, a youth center can be a safe space, but the concept of a safe space is broader than just the concept of a youth center. Safe spaces can also be created and used in other environments where activities, programs, or services for young people take place, according to their nature and purpose.

Youth legislation links the development of youth structures and services also to demands arising from other fields. In this direction stands the National Youth Strategy 2022–2029 (NACR 2022–2029), which constitutes the main national strategic document for youth policy development. NAC 2022–2029 links the safe space for young people with several fundamental elements such as the physical, social, and mental well-being of young people, safety, protection, inclusion, participation, and the provision of youth-friendly and acceptable services.



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### II.4.2. The integration of Albanian legislation on safe spaces with that of rights and protection

- **Territorial planning and use** – the safe youth space in Albania must meet not only the requirements related to its youth function but also those related to territorial planning and use, construction, technical conditions, building safety, and protection in emergency situations, according to the nature of the building and the activities carried out within it. For this reason, in planning, adapting, or reconstructing a youth space, the relevant legislation and subordinate acts in the field of territorial planning and development, applicable technical requirements, as well as rules for fire protection, emergencies, and user safety, must be analyzed.
- **Inclusion and accessibility -** The safety of a space cannot be considered complete if a portion of young people cannot access or use it equally. In this regard, legislation on the inclusion and accessibility of persons with disabilities is of particular importance. Accessibility must be considered in an integrated manner and include the physical environment, information and communication, as well as the organization of activities and services. A youth space is not completely safe if physical, communication, or organizational barriers hinder the participation of a particular group of young people.
- **Child protection, equality, and protection from violence -** When youth spaces are used by persons under the age of 18, alongside youth legislation, the requirements of legislation on children's rights and protection, protection from violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect, equality and non-discrimination, as well as relevant legislation on gender equality, are also applied. These areas define different parts of what practically makes a space safe: protection from harm, equal treatment, respect for dignity, prevention of discrimination, and the creation of appropriate mechanisms for reporting and referring concerns.
- **Privacy, data protection, and digital security** - Another dimension of security relates to how the data of young people is collected, used, stored, and published. Legislation on personal data protection constitutes the main national reference in this field. It must be taken into account for participant registration, contact lists, photos and videos, activity data management, use of digital platforms, and any other processing of personal data. This further expands the understanding of the secure space: security must be protected not only in the physical environment and interpersonal relationships but also in how digital information and communication are managed.



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# III. THE CONCEPT, PRINCIPLES, AND DIMENSIONS OF A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUTH

## III.1. The concept of a safe space for youth

The EU policy framework for youth defines safe spaces for young people as creating and maintaining physical and virtual spaces that are safe, welcoming, inclusive, and accessible, where young people can meet, express themselves, participate, and develop their potential. Additionally, the EU places special importance on involving young people in the design and development of spaces that serve them.

Albanian youth legislation explicitly defines the concept of a "safe youth space." A safe youth space is any space where young people carry out activities and that meets the standards set out in the legislation on territorial planning and development. For young people with disabilities, the law requires the implementation of reasonable accommodation elements, in accordance with the degree and type of disability.

In this Guide, the concept is addressed more broadly, including, alongside physical conditions, psychological, social, and digital dimensions, as well as youth participation. This expansion represents the practical approach of the Guide and should not be understood as a replacement or change of the definition established in legislation.

***A safe space for young people***

*A safe space for youth is any physical, virtual, or combined environment where young people can meet, express themselves, participate, learn, develop their potential, and carry out activities under conditions of safety, respect, equality, inclusiveness, and accessibility. These spaces must provide a welcoming and protective environment, preventing violence, discrimination, harassment, abuse, and any other form of behavior that undermines the dignity, well-being, and rights of young people.*

*Safe youth spaces are planned, developed, and managed with the participation of young people, taking into account their diversity and the specific needs of young people who face barriers or have fewer opportunities. Safety, accessibility, inclusiveness, and the well-being of young people must be considered at all stages of design, operation, monitoring, and improvement of the space.*

The safety of a space is not determined solely by the physical conditions of the environment. It is also related to the quality of relationships, the behavior of staff and other involved persons, the way activities are organized, operating rules, the possibility to seek help, and how concerns are handled.

Space can be considered safe for young people when appropriate measures for risk prevention and management are implemented, clear responsibilities for safety and protection are defined, and accessible mechanisms for reporting and handling concerns are in place. Safety is not a state reached once and remains unchanged; it requires evaluation, participation, response, and continuous improvement.

In this Guide, safe spaces for youth include:

- **physical spaces**, such as youth centers, community spaces, libraries, activity areas, and other places where youth activities take place;
- **social spaces**, created through relationships, interaction, cooperation, and a culture of respect;
- **digital spaces**, such as online platforms, communication groups, and virtual environments used for information, consultation, organization, and youth participation.



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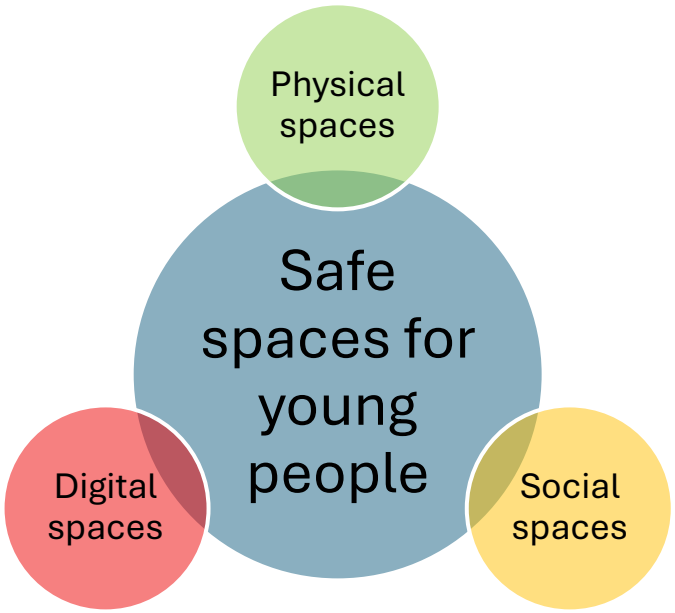



*Figure no. 1 The composition of safe spaces for young people*

The responsibility for ensuring safe spaces for youth is shared among the actors according to their roles and competencies. The institution or space provider is responsible for creating the necessary conditions and mechanisms; staff and volunteers must recognize and fulfill the responsibilities related to their role; while young people must be informed about rights, rules, participation mechanisms, and reporting methods. Creating and maintaining safe spaces for youth requires an ongoing process that includes several interconnected phases:

a) **Planning and creation** – identifying the needs of young people, risk assessment, selecting and adapting the environment, and evaluating accessibility;
b) **Organizing activities** – defining responsibilities, informing participants, rules of conduct, and appropriate supervision;
c) **Daily operations** – maintaining a respectful environment, preventing harmful behaviors, protecting privacy, and the functioning of reporting mechanisms;
d) **Assessment and improvement** – listening to young people, identifying risks and obstacles, reviewing concerns, and updating safety measures.

Also, the safe space for young people should not be confused with youth-friendly services; these are related concepts but are different. Youth-friendly services aim for the services to be tailored to the needs, characteristics, and expectations of young people, while space security focuses



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especially on harm prevention, protection of rights, risk management, and creating safe conditions for participation. Both approaches should complement each other within a functional framework for young people.

### III.2. Fundamental principles and dimensions of security

The creation and operation of safe spaces must be supported by interconnected principles that guide decision-making, activity organization, staff behavior, and youth relations. These principles[13] are summarized and adapted for the purposes of this Guide, relying on the legal framework, standards, and European and national political documents reflected in Chapter II. They are not presented as a single list defined in a single legal instrument, but as a practical framework that helps translate various requirements into how youth spaces are planned and operate.

- **Respect for rights and dignity -** Every young person should be treated with respect and dignity, without humiliation, threats, pressure, or degrading treatment. Communication and behavior of staff, volunteers, and other involved persons must be appropriate and respectful.
- **Non-discrimination and equal treatment -** Spaces must offer equal opportunities for participation and prevent discrimination, bullying, harassment, and exclusion. When young people face various barriers, equal treatment may require supportive measures or reasonable accommodations to create real opportunities for participation.
- **Inclusiveness and accessibility -** Accessibility includes not only the possibility of physical entry but also access to information, communication, technology, activities, and participation opportunities. Responsible actors must identify and reduce barriers that may hinder the participation of different youth groups.
- **Protection and Prevention of Harm -** Spaces must take measures to prevent, identify, and respond to violence, abuse, harassment, bullying, threats, and other forms of harmful behavior. There must be clear ways to seek help, report concerns, and refer cases to competent authorities.
- **Privacy and confidentiality -** Personal data and information related to the personal circumstances of young people must be handled securely and in accordance with legal requirements. Young people should be informed about how their data is used and who can access it.
- **Youth Participation -** Young people should be considered actors in creating and improving the space, not just its beneficiaries. They should have the opportunity to express their opinions, identify risks and obstacles, propose improvements, and provide feedback on the

[13] Annex no. 1 "Self-assessment matrix of the principles of a safe space for youth" is the practical mechanism for actors responsible for guaranteeing these principles.



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measures taken. Participation should be meaningful and not merely formal. The institution should inform young people about how their contribution has been included.

- **Accountability and transparency -** It must be clear who is responsible for safety, where a concern can be reported, and how identified issues are handled. Information about the rules and support mechanisms must be accessible to young people.

The safety of a space for young people is not determined only by the implementation of principles, the existence of rules and procedures, but also by how they are applied in daily practice. A culture of safety means creating an environment where respect, appropriate communication, harm prevention, seeking help, and responding to concerns are considered shared responsibilities. The institution and the people involved in the space should set an example through their behavior, while young people should be informed about the rules, rights, and ways to seek help. Such a culture should support reporting concerns without fear of stigmatization, retaliation, or unfair treatment.

The above principles are concretized through several security dimensions[14] that must be examined during the planning, operation, and evaluation of youth spaces. These dimensions are interconnected and must be assessed together, as deficiencies in any one of them can affect the safety and participation of young people overall.

- **Physical safety and environmental conditions -** The space must be well-maintained and minimize avoidable risks for young people, staff, volunteers, and visitors. In the physical security assessment, the condition of the premises and equipment, entrances and exits, lighting, ventilation, hygienic-sanitary conditions, safety equipment, and physical accessibility must be examined according to the nature of the space. Inspections must be carried out periodically, and any issues that pose risks must be addressed.
- **Psychological and emotional safety -** A safe space should create an environment where young people can express themselves and participate without fear of humiliation, threats, exclusion, or unfair punishment. This requires clear rules for behavior and respect, appropriate communication, opportunities to express concerns, and appropriate responses to conflicts, intimidation, or exclusion. When a young person needs specialized support, the persons managing the space must recognize the limits of their role and competencies and refer the case to the relevant services or structures, according to applicable procedures.
- **Protection from violence, abuse, harassment, and exploitation -** Spaces must have preventive measures and procedures for identifying, reporting, and addressing concerns related to violence, abuse, harassment, bullying, threats, or exploitation. These measures should include, where appropriate, clear rules, responsible persons, reporting mechanisms,

[14] Annex No. 2 "Self-assessment matrix of security dimensions in the safe space for youth" is the practical mechanism for guaranteeing security dimensions by the responsible actors.



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information for seeking help, and procedures for referral to competent authorities. Reporting mechanisms must operate in such a way that people reporting a concern are treated with respect and protected, in accordance with applicable legislation and procedures, from discrimination, stigmatization, or other forms of unfair treatment resulting from reporting. Persons responsible for the space must not conduct investigations or professional assessments beyond their role and competencies. In cases requiring specialized intervention, their responsibility is to follow the appropriate procedure, take immediate security measures required, and refer the matter to the competent structure or authority. When the space is also used by persons under the age of 18, the relevant requirements of the legislation on the rights and protection of the child must be followed.

- **Non-discrimination, inclusiveness, and accessibility -** Safety requires that young people have real opportunities to use the space and participate in its activities. The assessment should analyze physical, communication, digital, economic, and organizational barriers. Measures to improve accessibility may include adapting environments, information, equipment, communication methods, schedules, and the organization of activities. Young people facing such barriers should be involved in identifying them and discussing possible solutions.
- **Privacy and confidentiality -** Space must respect the privacy of young people during communication, support, and handling of personal information. It must be specified what information is collected, for what purpose it is used, who has access, and how it is stored. In cases where sensitive concerns are addressed, information should be shared only with persons or entities that have a legitimate role in handling them. Confidentiality is not absolute and must be implemented in accordance with the applicable legislation. It must not hinder the fulfillment of legal reporting obligations or the taking of necessary measures to protect a person.
- **Safety in the digital environment -** Online platforms, communication groups, and social networks used in connection with youth activities should be considered part of the safety environment. Measures should be taken to protect data, ensure the secure use of accounts and devices, maintain professional communication, publish photos and videos, and handle inappropriate and harmful content or behavior. Young people should also be informed about ways to report concerns occurring in the digital environment.
- **Safety during outdoor activities -** When activities take place outside a permanent environment, the safety assessment should be extended to location, transportation, itinerary, duration, environmental conditions, participants' needs, and the ability to respond in case of an emergency. Before the activity, responsibilities, contacts, transport arrangements, accessibility needs, and incident response methods must be determined. When activities involve persons under 18 years of age, organizational measures and



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supervision must be adapted to the age of participants, the nature of the activity, and applicable child protection requirements.

- **Emergency preparedness -** Spaces must be prepared for situations that may threaten participants' safety, such as fire, earthquake, floods, health emergencies, or other situations. Preparedness should include hazard identification, responsibility assignment, evacuation routes, collection points, emergency contacts, and measures for individuals who may need support. Emergency procedures must be documented, understandable to staff, and communicated appropriately to young people using the space. They should include support that may be needed during evacuation or other emergency situations.

Space security is the result of the interaction of physical conditions, the way it is organized, the behavior of the people involved, and the experience of the youth. The principles and dimensions of security presented above form the basis on which institutions and responsible actors must plan, organize, and monitor the spaces used by young people. To translate this framework into practice, the institution must determine which conditions and measures should be present and how their practical functioning will be ensured.

**What should the institution guarantee for a safe space for young people?**

The institution or actor responsible for creating, managing, or operating a space used by young people must take measures to guarantee the basic conditions of safety, protection, accessibility, inclusion, and participation. Considering the nature and function of the space, these measures should include, as appropriate:

- **A safe and well-maintained environment –** the environment and equipment must be in suitable working condition and not pose avoidable risks to users;
- **Clear and communicated rules –** the rules of use and behavior must be clear, accessible, and communicated to young people;
- **Designated responsible person or persons** - it must be clear who is accountable for the operation of the space and for handling the concerns;
- **An accessible mechanism for reporting concerns –** young people should have a clear and appropriate way to seek help or report a concern;
- **Response and referral procedure –** it must be determined how a concern is addressed and, when necessary, how to refer it to the competent structure or authority;
- **Privacy and data protection measures –** personal information must be handled in accordance with legal requirements and relevant procedures;



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- **Measures for accessibility and inclusion –** barriers limiting the use and participation of young people should be identified and, as far as possible, addressed;
- **Informing young people about their rights and ways to seek help –** young people need to know the rules, their rights, responsible persons, and ways to seek help or report concerns;
- **Emergency preparedness –** appropriate measures and procedures must be in place to respond to emergencies and other situations that could compromise safety;
- **A mechanism for gathering young people's opinions –** young people should have the opportunity to provide feedback on safety, functioning, and improving the space;
- **Periodic monitoring and review –** conditions, risks, safety measures, and the experience of young people should be reviewed periodically and whenever necessary.

These elements should not be understood as an exhaustive list or as identical requirements for every type of space. They serve as a practical starting point for institutions and responsible actors to assess whether the basic conditions for a safe space for young people have been established.



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# IV. CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR YOUTH IN ALBANIA

## IV.1. Space Security and Institutional Responsibility

For Albanian state institutions and other actors who create, manage, finance, or support spaces used by young people, security must be part of the way the space is planned, organized, and operated. A space is not considered safe simply because it meets certain physical conditions or because the institution has adopted internal rules. Security requires that the institution has identified risks, taken measures to prevent or reduce them, defined clear responsibilities, and ensured that the measures work in practice.

This responsibility should begin at the moment a space for young people is planned. The institution must define the target user groups, the activities to be carried out, the usage schedules, and the characteristics of the area and the building. This data should be used to identify risks and needs that must be addressed before and during the operation of the space. This data should be used to identify risks and needs that must be addressed before and during operation.

State institutions and other responsible actors must initiate the process of creating and managing safe spaces for young people, clearly defining the responsibilities and duties of the involved actors[15].

The process does not imply that responsible actors must create a new administrative structure or a separate documentation system for its implementation. Depending on size, function, number of users, and risk level, responsible actors can use the structures, procedures, and resources they already have available, adapting them to the needs of the space. For a small space used periodically for youth activities, the measures can be simple and integrated into existing procedures. For a structure that operates daily and hosts a large number of young people, especially when providing services or carrying out activities with higher risk levels, a more structured organization of responsibilities, procedures, training, documentation, and monitoring may be required.

Also, creating safe spaces for young people requires different approaches depending on whether it concerns an existing space that needs to be adapted and improved, or a new space that is planned and created. In both cases, safety should be treated as an integrated part of the planning, organization, and functioning of the space, and not as a measure taken only after the space has been created. For existing spaces, the process begins with assessing the current situation, identifying risks and obstacles, and determining measures for improvement. For new spaces, the

[15] Annex no. 3 "Matrix for implementing the process of creating and managing a safe space for youth" is the practical mechanism that assists the responsible actors in carrying out the process.



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principles of safety, accessibility, protection, and youth participation must be included from the early stages of planning and design.

In all cases, the institution must be able to indicate not only what documents it has approved, but also what measures it has taken, who is responsible, how young people are informed and heard, how concerns are addressed, and how it is assessed whether the measures are effective. Creating a safe space is not a one-time action nor a one-time achievement. For Albanian institutions, it should be treated as a continuous process of evaluation, planning, implementation, information, monitoring, and improvement, in which youth safety is part of the daily functioning of the space.



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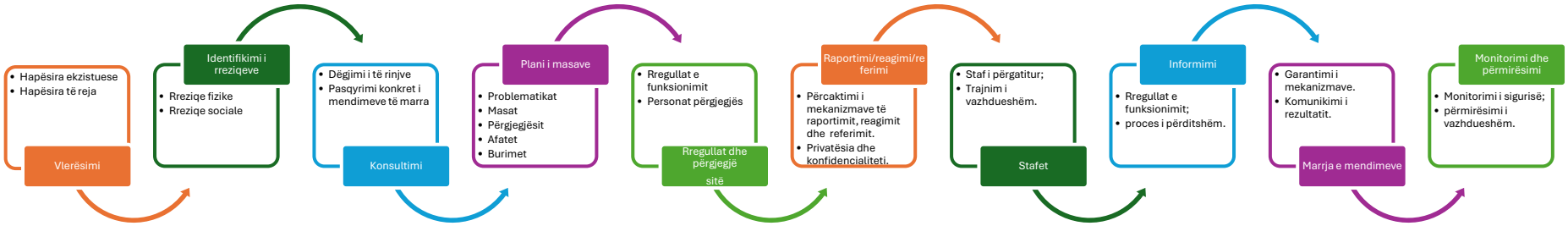



*Figure no. 2 The process of creating and managing safe spaces for the young people*



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i. **The institution must conduct an initial security assessment of the space**. This assessment must examine the physical conditions of the environment, entrances and exits, lighting, stairs and corridors, hygiene conditions, emergency exits, equipment and furnishings, accessibility for persons with disabilities, the possibility of privacy, and the security of the surrounding area. For existing spaces, the assessment must also highlight deficiencies that require immediate intervention, organizational measures, or medium- and long-term investments.

ii. **Risk Identification**. Risks that may affect the safety and well-being of young people while using the space must be identified and assessed. In addition to physical risks, the institution must also include the possibility of bullying, discrimination, harassment, violence, abuse, exploitation, conflict, privacy violations, or unsafe use of digital tools and channels. For activities outside regular environments, risks related to transportation, location, and the organization of the activity must also be analyzed.

iii. **Consultation with young people**. Young people who will use the space should be consulted. Consultation should not be limited to asking whether they like the space. Young people should be able to identify places or situations where they feel unsafe, barriers to access and use of the space, issues related to privacy, schedules, rules, and ways of communication. The institution must ensure that in this process, young people with disabilities, young people from different groups, and, depending on the nature of the space, young people with different experiences or needs are also heard.

iv. **The action plan**. The findings must be translated into a plan of measures. The institution must determine which issues require intervention, what needs to be done, who is responsible, what the deadlines are, and what resources are needed. Measures can be immediate and low-cost, such as improving lighting, signage, information, or usage rules; organizational, like defining responsibilities and procedures; or structural, when physical interventions or investments are required.

v. **Rules of operation and division of responsibilities**. For each space, it must be clear who manages it, who is responsible for security matters, who supervises activities, and who acts after a concern is reported. The rules of use should be simple, understandable, and visible to users[16]. They should define expected behaviors, the way premises and equipment are used, and how situations that threaten safety or the rights of young people are handled.

vi. **Defining mechanisms for** reporting, **feedback, and referral.** Young people should know whom to turn to if they experience or notice a distressing situation. Staff should know what to do after receiving a report and in which cases the involvement of other competent

[16] Annex no. 7 "Guiding Model of Space Rules" is the practical mechanism for informing young people about safe space rules.



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structures or services is required. Mechanisms must respect privacy, confidentiality, and the rights of the individuals involved and operate in accordance with relevant legislation and procedures. Persons responsible for the space must not conduct investigations or professional assessments beyond their role and competencies. In cases requiring specialized intervention, their responsibility is to follow the appropriate procedure, take immediate security measures required, and refer the matter to the competent structure or authority.

vii. **Preparation and capacity development of staff[17].** People who have direct contact with young people must be familiar with the rules of the space, their responsibilities, the way to identify and report concerns, and how to respond, in accordance with their role and competencies. In accordance with the function of the space and the user profile, the institution must also provide appropriate guidance or training for protection, inclusion, accessibility, communication with young people, and management of difficult situations. The institution must also take care of the safety and well-being of staff, volunteers, and other persons engaged in the space, especially during the management of conflict situations, incidents, or emergencies. Engaged persons must have appropriate information, guidance, and support to perform their role.

viii. **Informing young people.** Young people should be informed about how the space operates and about their rights. Information should be accessible and understandable and, if necessary, offered in accessible forms. At the beginning of using the space, young people should receive clear and appropriate information about the space's rules, responsible persons, ways to seek help and report concerns, as well as how personal information is handled. The information must be accessible and adapted, when necessary, to the age, skills, and needs of the users. Information should be part of daily operations and not just an activity at the moment the space is opened.

ix. **Ensuring mechanisms for gathering opinions.** The institution must provide regular mechanisms for gathering opinions from young people. Opinions can be gathered through direct conversations, meetings with youth groups, short questionnaires, suggestion boxes, or digital tools, depending on the characteristics of the space. It is important that young people see that their concerns and suggestions are taken into account and that the institution communicates what has been changed or improved in response to their contributions.

x. **Monitoring and improvement.** The institution must monitor and review the safety measures. After implementing the measures, it must be checked whether they are functioning in practice, if new risks have emerged, and if user needs have changed or new

[17] Annex no. 8 "Orientation board for staff and persons responsible for a safe space for youth" is the practical mechanism for strengthening administrative capacities.



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needs have appeared. Monitoring should not be just a document check. It should include, as appropriate, monitoring the space, communicating with young people and staff, reviewing reported concerns, and verifying the implementation of the established measures. In cases where deficiencies are identified, the institution must determine corrective measures and deadlines for their implementation. If a problem cannot be solved immediately, it must be documented and included in the institution's further planning, determining temporary measures that can be taken to reduce the risk until a final resolution.

### IV.1.1. From the existing space to a safe area

In Albania, creating safe spaces for young people does not necessarily mean building new spaces. In many cases, responsible actors, especially central and local state institutions, already have spaces available that can be used by young people but require adaptation to physical conditions, management methods, usage rules, and protection mechanisms. For this reason, the process must begin with assessing whether the existing space is truly safe for the young people who use it.

The assessment should go beyond checking the physical condition of the building. It should examine how young people use the space, how they feel about it, what dangers they might face, how easily they can seek help, and whether institutions have the capacity to respond. The safety assessment should also include the environment surrounding the space, including foot access, connection to transportation, lighting, entrances and exits, as well as other local factors that may affect the safety of young people when entering and leaving the space.

For this purpose, it is recommended that institutions follow the following process for improving and managing the safe space for young people:



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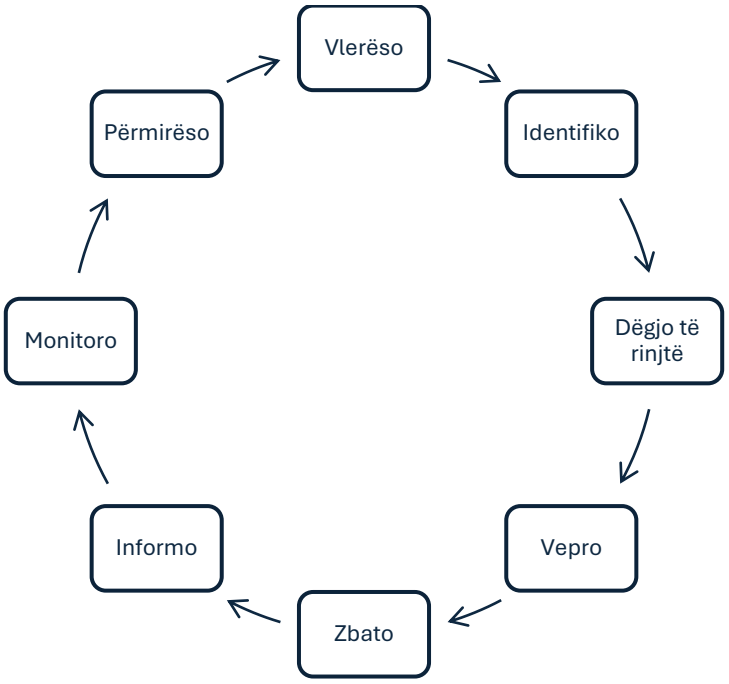



*Figure no. 3 The process of improving and managing the existing space for youth*

### i. Evaluate

The responsible actors must first clearly define which space will be used by young people and how it will be used. The assessment of the existing space should include at least: the location and access to the space; the spaces used by the youth; the schedules and manner of use; the activities that take place; the persons who have access to the space; the method of supervision; physical and maintenance conditions; accessibility for young people with disabilities; spaces where privacy may be needed; the possibilities for reporting concerns; the information provided to young people; the use of digital devices and platforms.

The assessment should not be limited to an administrative review. It must identify what is functioning, where the shortcomings are, and what changes are necessary[18].

### ii. Identify

After the initial assessment, responsible actors must identify risks and deficiencies that may affect the safety and well-being of young people. Risks may be related to:

- **Physical environment:** unsafe entrances, insufficient lighting, damaged equipment, emergency exits, stairs, floors, furniture, or other environmental conditions.

[18] Annex no. 4 "Checklist for the creation and operation of a safe space for youth."



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- **Organization:** lack of clear rules, absence of responsible persons, insufficient supervision, or uncertainty about how to respond to a concern.
- **Relationships and behavior:** conflicts, bullying, harassment, discrimination, exclusion, or other behaviors that may create an unsafe environment.
- **Accessibility:** physical barriers, communication barriers, or organizational methods that hinder the participation of some young people.
- **Privacy:** lack of appropriate spaces for confidential communications or improper handling of personal information.
- **Digital environment:** unsafe use of devices, platforms, or communication channels related to space activities.

Safety measures must be adapted to the nature of the activity. For activities that present particular risks due to location, nature of the activity, use of equipment, transportation, or characteristics of participants, a special risk assessment must be carried out and appropriate measures determined before the activity takes place.

Not every deficiency has the same level of urgency. The institution must determine which issues require immediate intervention, which can be addressed within a short period, and which can be planned as part of further improvements.

### iii. Listen to the youth

The institution should not unilaterally decide whether a space is safe. Young people who use the space should have the opportunity to express their opinions about: the environments they consider safe; the environments or situations that cause them discomfort; the feelings they have when frequenting the space; the information they have about whom to turn to when they have a problem; changes that would make the space safer; the barriers to their participation.

Consultation[19] can be conducted through meetings with young people, short questionnaires, group discussions, space safety maps, or other appropriate forms. The institution must ensure that the consultation is not merely formal. If young people identify a problem, it should be determined if, and how it will be addressed and, when possible, the outcome communicated to them.

### iv. Act

[19] Annex no. 5 "Tools for youth participation and gathering opinions" is the practical mechanism for youth participation in the process of creating and managing a safe space for young people.



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After evaluation and consultation, the responsible actors must determine what needs to change by drafting the "Action Plan,"[20] which details the issues, responsible persons, deadlines, and measures to be taken. For an existing space, the measures can be:

- **Physical measures** - Improvement of lighting, repair of damaged elements, reorganization of furnishings, enhancement of accessibility, creation of suitable spaces for privacy or other necessary measures.
- **Organizational measures** - Defining responsibilities, rules of use, organizing supervision, procedures for reporting concerns, and the method of response.
- **Measures for protection and inclusion** - Informing staff, capacity building, measures against discrimination and exclusion, and adapting the way activities are delivered to young people with different needs.
- **Information and communication measures** - Establishing clear information about the rules of the space, contact person, reporting methods, and services where support may be requested.
- **Digital measure** - Determining the safe way to use devices, data, and digital channels related to the space. The plan must specify for each measure: what will be done; who is responsible; when it will be done; which resources are needed; how implementation will be monitored.

Not all measures require the same level of resources. Institutions must distinguish between:

- **Immediate measures** related to risks that cannot be left unaddressed;
- **Low-cost measures** that can be quickly implemented through changes in organization, information, rules, or the way space is used;
- **Planned measures** that require investment, reconstruction, equipment, or other resources and must be included in the relevant planning and budgeting.

This approach helps ensure that the absence of a large investment is not used as an excuse not to take other measures that could be implemented immediately.

### v. Implement

After determining the priority measures, the institution begins their implementation in accordance with the responsibilities, deadlines, and allocated resources.

[20] Annex no. 6 "Action Plan for the creation and operation of a safe space for youth" is the practical mechanism for its drafting.



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Measures can be physical, organizational, procedural, or related to the way the space operates and is managed. Implementation must be proportional to the needs and the level of risk identified.

**vi. Inform**

Young people[21] should be clearly and accessibly informed about the measures taken for their safety, the rules for using the space, ways to express concerns or report a problem, and the available support resources. The information should be adapted to the age, needs, and characteristics of the users of the space.

**vii. Monitor**

The institution monitors whether the implemented measures work in practice and whether the space continues to be safe, accessible, and inclusive.

Monitoring can rely on regular observations, communication with young people and staff, identification of new issues, and review of reported cases or concerns. When new deficiencies or risks are identified, they should be assessed and addressed according to the level of risk.

**viii. Improve**

Findings from monitoring are used to adapt or improve the measures taken. When new risks, obstacles, or needs are identified, the institution reviews the measures and determines the necessary interventions. Improvement should be an ongoing process and, whenever possible, also supported by the experience and suggestions of young people.

In this way, the creation and adaptation of a safe space does not end with taking measures, but continues through information, monitoring, and continuous improvement.

### IV.1.2. A New Space for Youth and Security Design

In the case of creating a new space for young people, responsible actors should avoid the approach that security is checked only after the space has been built or inaugurated. Safety should be part of the planning from the very first phase. Before designing or adapting the environment, the responsible actors must determine answers to several fundamental questions:

[21] The three stages: inform, monitor, and improve are detailed in Chapter V of this Guide.



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These issues must be analyzed before the project and operation method are definitively determined. For a new space, it is recommended to follow a detailed process to ensure its security:



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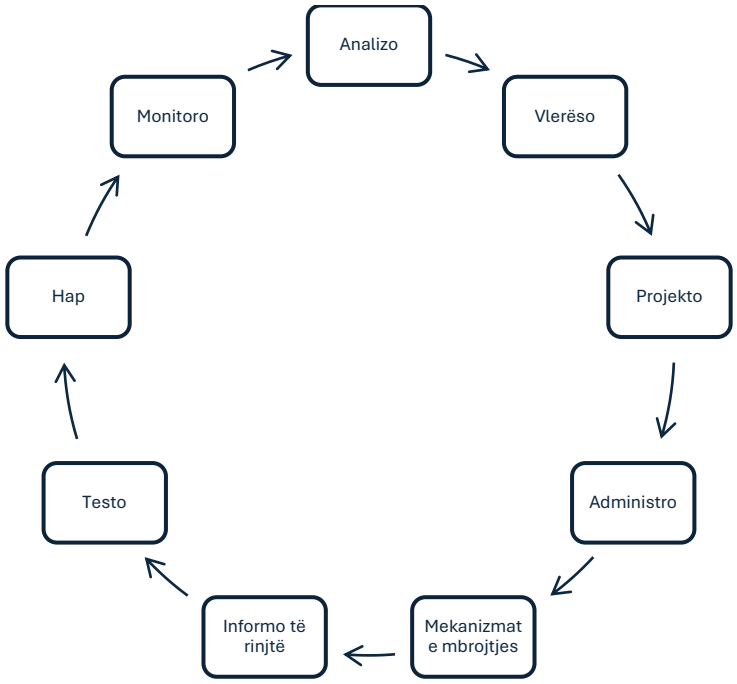



*Figure no. 4 The process of guaranteeing a new safe space for young people*

i. **Analyze the needs -** Identify the young people who will use the space, their needs, and the functions it must cover.

ii. **Assess the location -** Accessibility, transport connections, security of the surrounding area, and entry-exit conditions are reviewed. The assessment should also include the nature of the activities planned to be carried out in the space and the safety measures that may be required for activities with special risks.

iii. **Project the space -** Security, accessibility, privacy, lighting, orientation, and flexible use of the spaces must be integrated into the project.

iv. **Manage -** The direction, staff, responsibilities, and usage rules are defined.

v. **Protection mechanisms -** Before reopening, the methods of reporting, responding, referring, and appropriate communication with young people must be defined.

vi. **Inform the youth -** Before starting operations, it is recommended that young people be informed about the rules, rights, ways to gather opinions, and where they can seek help.

vii. **Test before opening -** The institution should practically check whether the space operates as planned. It is helpful for a group of young people to be involved in this phase to identify problems that may not have been identified during the design phase.

viii. **Open and monitor -** After opening, the institution must gather opinions and correct the identified deficiencies.



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# V. ENSURING SAFE SPACES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE - AN ONGOING INSTITUTIONAL PROCESS

## V.1. The institutional process of guaranteeing safe spaces for young people

The safety of a space for young people does not end with its creation, adaptation of an existing space, or the approval of operating rules. The needs of young people, the way space is used, and the risks that may arise may change over time. For this reason, responsible actors must have a continuous approach to assess whether the implemented measures are implemented and whether changes or new measures are required. This process involves a continuous cycle of:

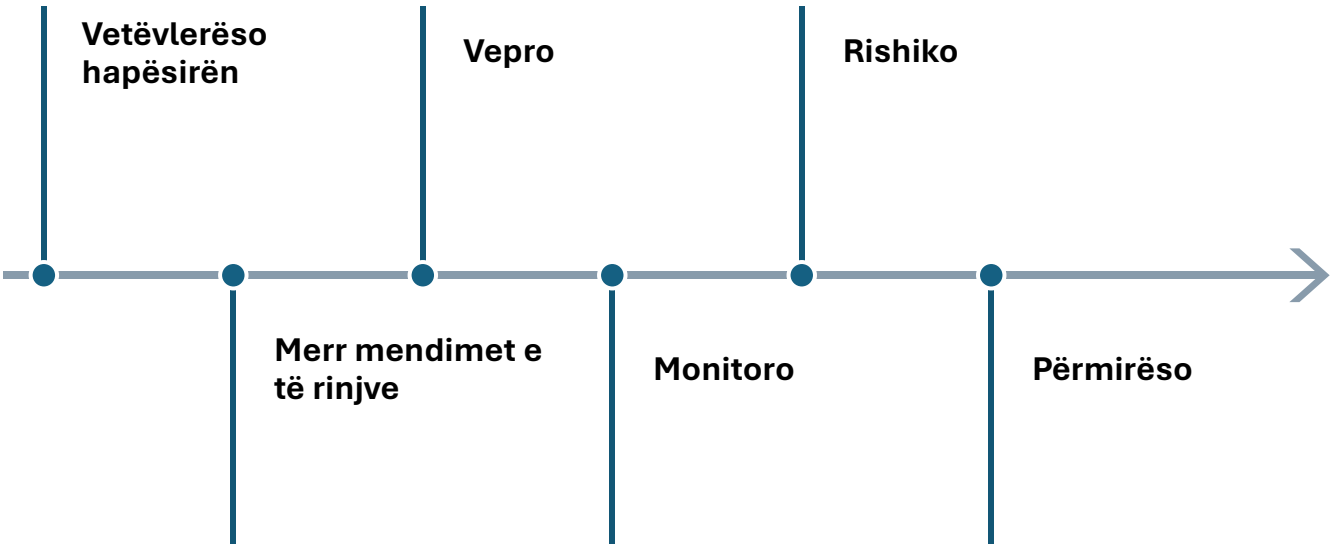



*Figure no. 5 The continuous improvement cycle*

The level of institutionalization and frequency of this process must be adapted to the size, function, number of users, and risk level of the space.

### i. Space self-assessment

Self-assessment is the process through which responsible actors examine whether the space and its mode of operation continue to meet fundamental security requirements. The self-assessment should be examined, as appropriate:

- physical conditions and accessibility of the space;
- the security and organization of the premises;



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- rules and operating procedures;
- the responsibilities of staff and persons engaged in space;
- mechanisms for reporting, feedback, and referral;
- the protection of privacy and data;
- informing the youth;
- opportunities to gather opinions;
- problems or concerns identified during operation.

Self-assessment should not be understood as a process focused solely on documentation. Its purpose is to identify whether the established measures are working in practice and whether further interventions are needed. Also, after a significant incident or concern, the institution must evaluate not only how the case was handled but also whether the incident reveals a weakness in the organization or functioning of the space. When necessary, the findings should be used to update rules, procedures, training, or other preventive measures.

For existing spaces, self-assessment can be used to verify whether the measures taken to adapt and improve the space have yielded results. For new spaces, it helps identify issues that may arise after the start of operation.

### ii. Youth participation

The evaluation process should be complemented by the experience of the young people. Their participation should not be limited only to the consultation that takes place before creating or adapting the space, but should also continue during its operation. The institution should create appropriate opportunities for young people to express their opinions on:

- how they experience space security;
- obstacles encountered during use;
- the way the rules are enforced;
- accessibility and inclusion;
- privacy and a sense of respect;
- how reporting mechanisms operate;
- changes that would make the space safer.

Depending on the nature of the space, direct discussions, short questionnaires, individual consultations, anonymous forms of gathering opinions, and digital tools can be used, through which young people identify areas or situations they consider safe, problematic, or needing improvement.



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Responsible actors, when gathering opinions, should try not to rely solely on young people who regularly participate in the space's activities. Where possible, opportunities should be created to also hear young people who may face barriers to participation, including youth with disabilities or other groups who may have different safety and accessibility experiences.

Participation should be understandable, voluntary, and appropriate for the age and characteristics of the youth. For sensitive issues, safe and confidential ways to express concerns should be provided when necessary.

### iii. From findings to improvement measures

The results of the self-assessment, the opinions of young people, and the information collected during the operation of the space should be used to determine whether new measures or changes to existing ones are required. When a problem is identified, the responsible actors should determine, as appropriate:

- what needs to be changed;
- what measures should be taken;
- who is responsible for implementation;
- when it should be carried out;
- what resources are needed;
- how the result will be verified.

Not every finding requires immediate intervention or the same level of resources. Priority should be given to issues related to significant risks to the safety, protection, accessibility, or rights of young people. When a problem cannot be solved immediately, the responsible actors should, where possible, determine temporary measures to reduce the risk and plan the necessary intervention.

### iv. Monitoring and review

Monitoring must assess not only whether the specified measures have been implemented, but also whether they have effectively addressed the identified risks and needs. In this process, to verify whether the monitoring has been carried out, the institution may examine:

- the specified measures have been implemented;
- the identified risks and shortcomings have been addressed;
- rules and procedures are applied and function in practice;
- the staff and responsible persons know their roles and responsibilities;
- young people know where and how to seek help or report a concern;



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- the mechanisms for reporting, feedback, and referral operate in accordance with the established procedures;
- new risks, obstacles, or needs have emerged;
- Young people perceive space as safe, accessible, and inclusive.

To verify whether the monitoring process worked, it can be based on simple and appropriate indicators for the nature, size, and function of the space. These may include, among other things, the rate of implementation of planned measures, reported concerns and how they are addressed, youth participation in consultation processes, findings from checklists, and changes or improvement measures taken as a result of monitoring.

The review should be conducted at intervals appropriate to the nature of the space and whenever a significant change occurs, an incident, a change in the way the space is used, or a new hazard is identified. After the review, the responsible actors must determine whether existing measures will continue, be adapted, or replaced. When necessary, the evaluation and consultation process with young people should be repeated.

### v. Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement means that space security is treated as a dynamic process and not as a condition that is fulfilled only at the moment of its creation. Findings from self-assessment, monitoring, and youth participation should be used to update safety measures and to adapt the way the space operates.

In this process, responsible actors must maintain a proportional approach. A small change in space use may only require a simple adjustment of organization or rules, while a significant change, an incident, or a newly identified risk may require a more thorough assessment and new measures.

The improvement should also be visible to young people. When changes are undertaken based on monitoring findings, the responsible actors should inform young people about the changes made. This strengthens confidence and shows that their participation has a real connection with how the space functions.

In this way, the cycle of continuous improvement closes and starts again. This cycle does not necessarily require complicated administrative processes. It must be adapted to the size, function, and risk level of the space and integrated, as much as possible, into the existing way of managing and monitoring the institution.



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## VI. IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations aim to assist institutions and responsible actors in translating the principles and dimensions of security into concrete measures for creating, operating, and maintaining safe spaces for young people.

| Field | Recommendation | What should the institution provide? | Guiding Instrument in the Guide |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Institutional responsibility** | Define responsibilities | Clear roles and responsibilities for security, protection, accessibility, and operation of the space. | Annex no. 8 |
| **Planning** | Include security from the start | Safety must be considered during the creation, design, or adaptation of the space. | Chapter IV |
| **Risk assessment** | Identify risks and needs | Assessment of physical, organizational, relational and behavioral conditions, accessibility, privacy, digital security, and the surrounding environment. | Annex no. 1<br>Annex no. 2 |
| **Accessibility and inclusion** | Reduce obstacles | Measures for accessibility, inclusion, and reasonable adaptation, as needed. | Annex no. 2<br>Annex no. 4 |
| **Youth participation** | Take and examine the opinions of young people | Appropriate ways to consult, gather opinions, and identify concerns. | Annex no. 5 |
| **Information** | Inform young people | Clear information about the rules, responsible persons, rights, seeking help, and reporting. | Annex no. 7 |



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|---|---|---|---|
| **Reporting and Response** | Provide reporting and referral mechanisms | Accessible reporting channels, response procedures, and referrals to competent structures. | Annex no. 4<br>Annex no. 7 |
| **Rules** | Set clear rules | Rules adapted to the nature of the space and communicated to users. | Annex no. 7 |
| **Staff and responsible persons** | Define roles and professional boundaries | The engaged persons must be aware of their roles, responsibilities, limits of competencies, and the procedures for reporting/referral. | Annex no. 8 |
| **Training and orientation** | Train and guide the staff | Initial orientation and training according to the role, responsibilities, risks, and characteristics of the space. | Annex no. 8 |
| **Staff safety** | Protect the safety and well-being of staff | Measures for conflict situations, incidents, emergencies, and cases that exceed the capacities of the engaged persons. | Annex no. 8 |
| **Emergencies** | Prepare for emergency situations | Clear measures, roles, and procedures for emergency response. | Annex no. 4<br>Annex no. 8 |
| **Privacy and data** | Protect your personal information | Rules for data handling and recognition of confidentiality boundaries. | Annex no. 4<br>Annex no. 8 |
| **Activities with special risk** | Assess risks before activity | Special assessment and safety measures for activities with particular risk | Chapter IV<br>Annex no. 3 |
| **Documentation** | Document measures and responsibilities | Measures, responsibilities, deadlines, and actions taken must be properly documented | Annex no. 3<br>Annex no. 6 |



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|---|---|---|---|
| **Monitoring** | Monitor implementation and effectiveness | Periodic monitoring of implementation, concerns, gathering opinions, and the effectiveness of measures. | Annex no. 2<br>Annex no. 4 |
| **Incidents** | Learn from incidents and concerns | Assessment of whether the incident reveals weaknesses in the organization or functioning of the space. | Chapter V |
| **Review and improvement** | Update the measures | Changes in rules, procedures, training, or preventive measures when necessary. | Annex 6 |
| **Use of instruments** | Use the Guide's tools | The selection and proportional use of instruments according to the nature and level of risk of the space. | All annexes |



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## PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS OF THE GUIDE

The annexes are an integral part of the Guide and aim to support the practical implementation of the principles, procedures, and measures set out in the respective chapters. They can be adapted by institutions, municipalities, youth organizations, and service providers according to the size, function, and characteristics of the space.

The mechanisms are not intended to replace legal requirements, institutional procedures, or official formats that may be requested by competent authorities. They serve as practical models for organizing daily work.

Annex No. 1 "Self-assessment matrix of safe space principles for youth";

Annex No. 2 "Self-assessment matrix of security dimensions in the safe space for youth";

Annex no. 3 "Matrix for implementing the process of creating and managing a safe space for youth"

Annex no. 4 "Checklist for the creation and operation of a safe space for youth";

Annex no. 5 "Tools for the participation and gathering of opinions from young people";

Annex no. 6 "Action Plan for the creation and operation of a safe space for youth";

Annex no. 7 "Guiding model of spatial rules";

Annex no. 8 "Orientation board for staff and persons responsible for a safe space for youth."



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## ANNEX NO. 1 "SELF-ASSESSMENT MATRIX OF SAFE SPACE PRINCIPLES FOR YOUTH"

The annex serves the responsible actors to assess the extent to which the principles of a safe space for youth are integrated into the organization, operation, and management of the space. It can be used during periodic self-assessment, planning improvement measures, and monitoring progress.

| No. | The principle | Control questions/criteria | Yes | Partially | No | Not applicable | Evidence / Comments | Measures for improvement |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Respect for rights and dignity** | Are young people treated with respect and dignity in all interactions with staff, volunteers, and other involved individuals? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Are humiliating, threatening, denigrating behaviors, or pressure on young people prohibited and prevented? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Do the staff and volunteers have clear guidelines or rules for communication and respectful behavior towards young people? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| 2 | **Non-discrimination and equal treatment** | Are equal participation opportunities offered to all young people, without discrimination? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Are there measures to prevent and address bullying, harassment, discrimination, and exclusion? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Are cases identified where equal treatment requires reasonable support measures or adjustments? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| 3 | **Inclusiveness and accessibility** | Is the space physically accessible for young people with disabilities and various needs? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Is the information accessible and understandable for young people with different needs? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |



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| | | Are measures being taken to reduce barriers in communication, technology, activities, and participation? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Are the needs of different groups of young people identified during the planning of activities and services? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| **4** | **Protection and Harm Prevention** | Are there measures to prevent violence, abuse, harassment, bullying, threats, and other forms of harmful behavior? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Are the methods for identifying and reporting concerns or incidents defined? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Do young people know where and from whom they can seek help or report a concern? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Are there procedures for referring cases to competent structures or services? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| **5** | **Privacy and confidentiality** | Is the personal data of young people handled securely and in accordance with legal requirements? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Are the persons who have the right to access personal information specified? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Are young people informed about how to use and store their data? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Are measures taken to maintain confidentiality during communication and handling of individual cases? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| **6** | **Youth participation** | Are young people involved in creating, developing, and improving the space? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Do young people have opportunities to express their opinions, identify risks and obstacles, and propose improvements? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Are appropriate mechanisms used for consulting and gathering the opinions of young people? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |



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| | | Are young people informed about how their contribution has been taken into consideration and what measures have been taken? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| 7 | **Accountability and transparency** | Is it clear who is responsible for the safety and well-being of young people in space? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Are the ways to report a concern clear and the steps to be followed after reporting? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Are the rules for space use and support mechanisms accessible to young people? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | | Are the identified concerns documented, addressed, and monitored? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |



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## ANNEX NO. 2 "SELF-ASSESSMENT MATRIX OF SECURITY DIMENSIONS IN THE SAFE SPACE FOR YOUTH"

The annex serves the institution to monitor and evaluate the measures taken to ensure the safety of young people in physical, psychological, and emotional dimensions, protection from violence and other forms of harm, non-discrimination and accessibility, privacy and confidentiality, security in the digital environment, safety during outdoor activities, and emergency preparedness. It can be used for periodic self-assessment, identifying risks and gaps, as well as planning measures for improvement.

| No. | Security dimension | Question/control criteria | Yes | Partially | No | Not applicable | Evidence / Comments | Measures for improvement |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | **Physical safety and environmental conditions** | Is the condition of the premises and equipment periodically checked to identify potential hazards? | | | | | | |
| | | Are the entrances and exits safe and convenient for space users? | | | | | | |
| | | Is the lighting appropriate for indoor and outdoor spaces, depending on the nature of the space? | | | | | | |
| | | Are the ventilation and hygiene-sanitary conditions appropriate? | | | | | | |
| | | Are the devices and tools used in space safe and well-maintained? | | | | | | |
| | | Have the identified physical hazards been identified and addressed? | | | | | | |
| | | When a risk cannot be eliminated immediately, is the use of the environment or device limited until measures are taken? | | | | | | |



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| **2** | **Psychological and emotional safety** | Are there clear rules for behavior, respect, and interaction in space? | | | | | | |
| | | Can young people express themselves without fear of humiliation, threats, exclusion, or unfair punishment? | | | | | | |
| | | Are there suitable ways for young people to express concerns or seek help? | | | | | | |
| | | Are there appropriate ways to prevent and manage conflicts, intimidation, and exclusion? | | | | | | |
| | | Are the boundaries of the roles of staff and other individuals clear when a young person needs specialized support? | | | | | | |
| | | Are there appropriate mechanisms for referral to competent services or structures? | | | | | | |
| **3** | **Protection from violence, abuse, harassment, and exploitation** | Are there preventive measures against violence, abuse, harassment, bullying, threats, and exploitation? | | | | | | |
| | | Are there designated persons responsible for receiving and treating the complaints? | | | | | | |
| | | Is there a clear and accessible mechanism for reporting concerns? | | | | | | |
| | | Are young people informed about ways to seek help and report? | | | | | | |
| | | Are there procedures for referring cases to the competent authorities? | | | | | | |
| | | When the space is used by persons under 18 years old, are specific child protection requirements included? | | | | | | |



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| **4** | **Non-discrimination, inclusiveness, and accessibility** | Have physical obstacles that could hinder the use of the space been identified? | | | | | | |
| | | Have barriers to communication and access to information been identified? | | | | | | |
| | | Have measures been taken for the accessibility of digital technology and tools? | | | | | | |
| | | Are economic, organizational, or other barriers that may limit participation analyzed? | | | | | | |
| | | Are reasonable adjustments foreseen when needed? | | | | | | |
| | | Are young people who face obstacles in identifying themselves and discussing solutions included? | | | | | | |
| **5** | **Privacy and confidentiality** | Has it been specified what data and personal information are collected and for what purpose? | | | | | | |
| | | Is it clear who has access to personal data and information? | | | | | | |
| | | Are personal data and information stored securely? | | | | | | |
| | | Is privacy respected during communication and support? | | | | | | |
| | | Are there rules for handling sensitive information and limiting its sharing? | | | | | | |
| | | Are legal obligations for reporting or the protection of individuals taken into account when confidentiality cannot be absolutely enforced? | | | | | | |
| **6** | **Security in the digital environment** | Have rules been established for the safe use of online platforms, communication groups, and social networks? | | | | | | |



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| | | Are measures taken to protect data and secure accounts and devices? | | | | | | |
| | | Are there established rules for publishing photos, videos, and other content related to young people? | | | | | | |
| | | Are there ways to identify and handle inappropriate communications or content? | | | | | | |
| | | Are young people informed about ways to report concerns in the digital environment? | | | | | | |
| **7** | **Safety during outdoor activities** | Is a risk assessment conducted before activities outside the permanent space? | | | | | | |
| | | Are the location, itinerary, transportation, and duration of the activity assessed? | | | | | | |
| | | Are the conditions of the environment and the special needs of the participants taken into account? | | | | | | |
| | | Have responsibilities and contacts been defined before the activity? | | | | | | |
| | | Have measures been established to respond to incidents or emergencies during the event? | | | | | | |
| **8** | **Emergency readiness** | Have the main hazards and emergency situations that could affect space been identified? | | | | | | |
| | | Are the responsibilities clearly defined in case of emergency? | | | | | | |
| | | Are evacuation routes and collection points designated and accessible? | | | | | | |
| | | Are emergency contacts available and up to date? | | | | | | |



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| | | Is the support that people might need during evacuation or in emergency situations analyzed? | | | | | | |
| | | Are the emergency procedures familiar to the staff and the young people using the space? | | | | | | |
| | | Are exercises, tests, or reviews of emergency procedures conducted periodically, depending on the nature of the space? | | | | | | |



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## ANNEX NO. 3 "MATRIX FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PROCESS OF CREATING AND MANAGING A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUTH"

This Annex aims to offer institutions a practical tool for planning and step-by-step implementation of the process of creating, evaluating, and improving a safe space for young people. It can be used both to create a new space and to evaluate and improve an existing space.

| stage | What should the institution do? | How can this be achieved? | Who should be involved? | What needs to be documented? | Expected outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Defining the space and purpose** | To define the space to be evaluated or created, its function, and the groups of young people who will use it. | The type of space, activities to be carried out, usage hours, and user profiles must be specified. | The responsible institution/structure; the staff; as applicable, youth organizations and young people. | Description of the space; purpose; activities; target groups. | Clear definition of the space and its users. |
| **2. Defining responsibilities** | To designate the persons responsible for coordinating the process. | A person or a working group should be appointed and responsibilities defined. | The persons responsible for managing the space; the relevant staff; if necessary, experts or specialized services. | The internal decision/order or the document defining responsibilities. | Clear responsibilities for the process. |
| **3. Initial Space Assessment** | To examine the conditions and characteristics of the space before determining safety measures. | A systematic monitoring should be conducted of the premises, entrances/exits, lighting, stairs, corridors, hygiene, equipment, furniture, accessibility, privacy, and the surrounding area. | The responsible group: the staff; as needed, technical specialists or others. | Form/checklist; photographs when appropriate; notes and findings. | Overview of the initial situation and identified issues. |
| **4. Identifying Risks** | To identify risks that could endanger the safety and well-being of young people. | Physical, psychological, social, discrimination, bullying, violence, abuse, harassment, privacy, and digital security risks should be assessed. For activities outside the space, transportation and location should also be assessed. | The responsible group; the staff; the youth; as needed, specialists. | Hazard register/matrix; description of the risk and existing measures. | Clear identification of risks and priorities. |



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| **5. Risk level assessment** | To determine which risks require priority intervention. | For each risk, the possibility of occurrence and potential impact should be examined, and the priority of intervention should be determined. | The responsible group: the staff; specialists, according to the nature of the risk. | The risk matrix; the classification of priorities. | Prioritized and listed risks for intervention. |
| **6. Consultation with young people** | To involve young people in identifying risks, obstacles, and solutions. | Meetings, group discussions, questionnaires, interviews, spatial maps, online consultations, or other appropriate methods should be used. | Young people who use or will use the space; youth organizations; youth structures; depending on the case, groups facing specific obstacles. | Questionnaires; minutes; summary of the consultation; proposals from the youth. | Identifying the perspectives of young people and the measures they propose. |
| **7. Identification of measures** | To determine what should be done to prevent or reduce the identified risks. | Measures should be divided, as needed, into organizational, technical/structural measures and by duration: immediate, short-term, medium-term, or long-term. | The institution; the staff; the persons responsible for the budget/infrastructure; the youth, as applicable. | List of measures; priority; necessary resources. | A concrete package of measures to create or improve security. |
| **8. Drafting the action plan** | To turn the identified measures into an actionable plan. | For each measure, the action, responsibility, deadline, source, and method of verification must be determined. | The responsible institution and structures. | An action plan approved/determined by the institution. | A clear and feasible plan. |
| **9. Defining the rules of operation** | To establish rules for the safe use of space. | To define expected behaviors, the use of premises and equipment, responsibilities, and the way to handle concerning situations. | The administrator of the space; the staff; the youth, as appropriate. | The regulation/rules of use; instructions for staff. | Clear, understandable, and accessible rules. |
| **10. Defining reporting and referral mechanisms** | To create clear and accessible ways for reporting concerns. | It should be determined to whom it is reported, how the concern is recorded, how it is handled, and when it is referred to another competent structure. | Responsible persons; staff; competent services/structures. | The reporting and referral procedure; the relevant contacts. | A functional and understandable reporting mechanism. |
| **11. Staff capacity development** | To ensure that people working in space understand | Initial orientation, practical guidance, training, or other activities as needed. | Staff and people who have contact with young people. | Orientation/training materials; attendance records. | An informed and prepared staff for implementing the measures. |



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| | their roles and responsibilities. | | | | |
| **12. Informing the youth** | To inform young people about how it works and safety mechanisms. | Displayed information, informative materials, orientation at the time of use, online channels, or other appropriate forms. | All new users of the space. | Information materials; rules; information on reporting and assistance. | Young people informed about the rights, rules, and ways to seek help. |
| **13. Implementation of measures** | To implement the measures outlined in the plan. | Physical, organizational, procedural, or other interventions should be carried out according to priorities and deadlines. | The persons/structures responsible for each measure. | Implementation evidence; reports; documents; photographs when appropriate. | Security measures implemented in practice. |
| **14. Gathering Opinions** | To periodically gather the opinions of young people about the safety and functioning of the space. | Short questionnaires, meetings, suggestion boxes, consultations, or digital tools. | Young people and space users. | Results of gathering opinions; suggestions; identified concerns. | Evidence on user experience and improvement needs. |
| **15. Monitoring** | To check whether the measures are working in practice. | Space observation, review of incidents and reports, communication with staff and youth, and verification of plan implementation. | The institution; the responsible persons; as the case may be, the youth. | Monitoring report/record; findings and recommendations. | Evidence on the actual functioning of the measures. |
| **16. Review and Improvement** | Review the process and adopt measures when risks or needs change. | Risk assessment, consultation, and implementation of measures should be reviewed, and the plan updated. | The institution; the staff; the youth as appropriate. | Updated assessment; revised action plan. | A continuous process of improvement and adaptation. |



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## ANNEX NO. 4 "CHECKLIST FOR CREATING AND OPERATING A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUTH"

This Annex is a practical tool that helps institutions and youth space providers verify whether the key elements of safety, protection, inclusion, accessibility, and participation have been incorporated and implemented in practice. The list can be used for an existing space, during the adaptation of a space, as well as in the planning phase of a new space. It can also be used within the framework of periodic monitoring and planning measures for improvement.

**A. Planning and users**

| No. | Elements | What needs to be verified | Yes | Partially | No | Evidence / what was verified | Necessary measure/action |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The needs of young people | The needs, activities, and ways of using the space by young people have been identified. | | | | | |
| 2 | User groups | Different groups of young people and their needs have been included. | | | | | |
| 3 | Obstacles | Barriers that may restrict access or participation have been identified. | | | | | |
| 4 | Youth Involvement | Young people have had the opportunity to express their needs and expectations regarding the space. | | | | | |

**B. Physical security and space conditions**

| No. | Elements | What needs to be verified | Yes | Partially | No | Evidence / what was verified | Necessary measure/action |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | Location | The location is convenient and accessible for users. | | | | | |
| 6 | Entries and Outings | Entrances and exits are clear, usable, and suitable for evacuation. | | | | | |
| 7 | Lighting | The main areas and entrance-exit areas have appropriate lighting. | | | | | |
| 8 | Movement and organization | Organizing furniture and appliances allows for safe movement and use. | | | | | |



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| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | The state of the space | The premises, furniture, and equipment are in suitable condition and do not pose risks that can be prevented or eliminated. | | | | | |
| 10 | Hygiene and conditions | The hygiene, ventilation, and maintenance conditions are suitable for the use of the space. | | | | | |
| 11 | Emergencies | There are appropriate measures and information for emergency situations, including evacuation routes and collection points. | | | | | |

**C. Accessibility and inclusion**

| No. | Elements | What needs to be verified | Yes | Partially | No | Evidence / what was verified | Necessary measure/action |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12 | Physical accessibility | The space may be used by persons with disabilities, in accordance with applicable requirements. | | | | | |
| 13 | Information Accessibility | The information and instructions are clear and, when necessary, tailored to different users. | | | | | |
| 14 | Reasonable accommodation | When obstacles are identified, necessary measures are taken for reasonable accommodation. | | | | | |
| 15 | Non-discrimination | The rules and practices of the space prevent discrimination, exclusion, harassment, and bullying. | | | | | |

**D. Privacy and digital security**

| No. | Elements | What needs to be verified | Yes | Partially | No | Evidence / what was verified | Necessary measure/action |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | Privacy | There are options to protect privacy when the activity or situation requires it. | | | | | |
| 17 | Personal data | Personal data is collected, used, stored, and accessed in accordance with legal requirements. | | | | | |
| 18 | Information about the data | Young people are informed, as appropriate, about how their data is used and processed. | | | | | |
| 19 | Digital security | Measures have been taken for the safe use of devices, platforms, and digital channels connected to the space. | | | | | |



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| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20 | Photos and videos | There are appropriate practices for photographing, filming, and publishing materials that identify young people. | | | | | |

**E. Defense, reporting, and response**

| No. | Elements | What needs to be verified | Po | Partially | No | Evidence / what was verified | Necessary measure/action |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21 | Responsible person | The person or structure responsible for security and protection matters has been designated. | | | | | |
| 22 | Rules of conduct | Clear rules for behavior and mutual respect have been established and communicated. | | | | | |
| 23 | Reporting | Young people know where and how to report a concern or incident. | | | | | |
| 24 | Reaction | There is a defined procedure for collecting, treating, and documenting complaints. | | | | | |
| 25 | Referral | There are mechanisms for referring cases to competent structures or services when requested. | | | | | |
| 26 | Confidentiality | Concerns and relevant information are handled confidentially, respecting legal obligations for protection and reporting. | | | | | |
| 27 | Staff Preparation | The responsible persons have the necessary knowledge and guidance to identify, report, and respond to concerns. | | | | | |

**F. Information and participation of young people**

| No. | Elements | What needs to be verified | Yes | Partially | No | Evidence / what was verified | Necessary measure/action |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 28 | Information | Young people are informed about how the space functions, the rules, and the responsible persons. | | | | | |
| 29 | Support mechanisms | Information on reporting, seeking help, and referral is accessible and understandable. | | | | | |
| 30 | Participation | Young people have the opportunity to give opinions and suggestions regarding the safety and functioning of the space. | | | | | |
| 31 | Gathering Feedback | There is at least a regular mechanism for collecting opinions from young people. | | | | | |



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| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 32 | Incorporating Thoughts | The thinking of young people is included in improving the space and security measures. | | | | | |

**G. Monitoring, risk, and improvement**

| No. | Elements | What needs to be verified | Yes | Partially | No | Evidence / what was verified | Necessary measure/action |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 33 | Identification of risks | The main risks related to space and its activities have been identified. | | | | | |
| 34 | Risk assessment | Risks have been assessed taking into account the likelihood of occurrence and their impact. | | | | | |
| 35 | Measures to reduce the risk | Specific measures have been determined and, as appropriate, implemented for the identified risks. | | | | | |
| 36 | Periodic monitoring | The space and security measures are monitored periodically. | | | | | |
| 37 | The Review | The results of monitoring and gathering feedback from young people are used to identify new needs or measures for improvement. | | | | | |
| 38 | Improvement Plan | Issues requiring intervention are reflected in a plan of measures with responsibility and deadlines, as needed. | | | | | |



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## ANNEX NO. 5 "TOOLS FOR YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND GATHERING OPINIONS"

A. Short questionnaire on youth experience

Do you feel safe in this space?

☐ Always

☐ Often

☐ Sometimes

☐ Rarely

☐ Never

Do you feel respected by people who work or are engaged in space?

☐ Yes

☐ Partially

☐ No

Do you know where you can turn if you have a problem or concern?

☐ Yes

☐ Partially

☐ No

Is it easy for you to use all the spaces you need?

☐ Yes

☐ Partially

☐ No

Are there places or situations in this space where you don't feel comfortable or safe?

☐ No

☐ Yes



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If yes, which ones? _____

Do you think the rules of space are clear and fair?

☐ Yes

☐ Partially

☐ No

Do you have the opportunity to give your opinion on how space functions?

☐ Yes

☐ Partially

☐ No

What would you change to make this space safer or more suitable for young people?

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Is there any other concern you want to share?

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Young people can use a simple space plan and mark:

🟢 Green – I feel safe and comfortable;

🟡 Yellow – there is something that needs improvement;

🔴 Red – identify a problem or danger.

Among other things, the following can be evaluated:

- Entry;
- corridors;
- common areas;
- work environments;
- activity venues;
- outdoor areas;
- toilets;



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- areas with less visibility;
- spaces where privacy is required.

The results should be discussed with young people and used as one of the resources for defining and planning measures.

C. Questions for discussion with young people

What makes this space safe for you?

What makes you feel uncomfortable?

Is there anyone who cannot easily use the space? Why?

What needs to change?

Do you feel that your voice is being taken into consideration?

How would you prefer to report a problem?

What information are you missing?



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## ANNEX NO. 6 "ACTION PLAN FOR THE CREATION AND OPERATION OF A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUTH"

The annex is used after conducting a space assessment and consulting with young people, to translate the findings into concrete measures to improve safety, protection, accessibility, inclusion, and participation.

The action plan can be used both for existing spaces and during the planning or adaptation of a new space.

### Action plan table

| No. | Field | Identified problem/risk | Measures to be taken | Type of mass | Priority of the measure | Responsibility | Necessary resources | Deadline | How the implementation will be verified | Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | ☐ Physical/Technical<br>☐ Organizational<br>☐ Procedural<br>☐ Information/communication<br>☐ Training/capacities<br>☐ digital<br>☐ Investment<br>☐ Other | ☐ High<br>☐ Medium<br>☐ Low | | | ☐ Immediate<br>☐ short-term<br>☐ medium-term<br>☐ long-term | | ☐ Before starting<br>☐ In implementation<br>☐ Finished |
| 2 | | | | ☐ Physical/Technical<br>☐ Organizational<br>☐ Procedural<br>☐ Information/communication<br>☐ Training/capacities<br>☐ digital<br>☐ Investment<br>☐ Other | ☐ High<br>☐ Medium<br>☐ Low | | | ☐ Immediate<br>☐ short-term<br>☐ medium-term<br>☐ long-term | | ☐ Before starting<br>☐ In implementation<br>☐ Finished |
| 3 | | | | ☐ Physical/Technical<br>☐ Organizational | ☐ High | | | ☐ Immediate | | ☐ Before starting |



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| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | ☐ Procedural<br>☐ Information/communication<br>☐ Training/capacities<br>☐ digital<br>☐ Investment<br>☐ Other | ☐ Medium<br>☐ Low | | | ☐ short-term<br>☐ medium-term<br>☐ long-term | | ☐ In implementation<br>☐ Finished |
| **4** | | | | ☐ Physical/Technical<br>☐ Organizational<br>☐ Procedural<br>☐ Information/communication<br>☐ Training/capacities<br>☐ digital<br>☐ Invest<br>☐ Other | ☐ High<br>☐ Medium<br>☐ Low | | | ☐ Immediate<br>☐ short-term<br>☐ medium-term<br>☐ long-term | | ☐ Before starting<br>☐ In implementation<br>☐ Finished |
| **5** | | | | ☐ Physical/Technical<br>☐ Organizational<br>☐ Procedural<br>☐ Information/communication<br>☐ Training/capacities<br>☐ digital<br>☐ Invest<br>☐ Other | ☐ High<br>☐ Medium<br>☐ Low | | | ☐ Immediate<br>☐ short-term<br>☐ medium-term<br>☐ long-term | | ☐ Before starting<br>☐ In implementation<br>☐ Finished |
| **6** | | | | ☐ Physical/Technical<br>☐ Organizational<br>☐ Procedural<br>☐ Information/communication<br>☐ Training/capacities | ☐ High<br>☐ Medium<br>☐ Low | | | ☐ Immediate<br>☐ short-term | | ☐ Before starting<br>☐ In implementation<br>☐ Finished |



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| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | ☐ digital<br>☐ Invest<br>☐ Other | | | | ☐ medium-term<br>☐ long-term | | |



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## ANNEX NO. 7 "GUIDING MODEL OF SPATIAL RULES"

The annex can be adapted by the responsible actors according to the nature, function, users, and organization of the space. The rules must be clear, understandable, and accessible to young people and others who use the space.

**Basic rules**

**In this space:**

- Every person is treated with respect and dignity.
- Discrimination, harassment, threats, violence, bullying, or other behaviors that endanger the safety and well-being of others are not tolerated.
- The privacy, dignity, and rights of young people and other users of the space are respected.
- Equipment, materials, and facilities are used carefully and according to the purpose for which they were placed.
- Photographing, filming, or publishing materials that identify other persons is carried out in accordance with privacy and personal data protection requirements.
- Behaviors that obstruct, intimidate, or exclude others from using the space are not allowed.
- Anyone can seek help or report a concern in the manner determined by the institution.
- Concerns are addressed respectfully, appropriately, and in accordance with institutional responsibilities and the applicable legislation.
- The rules are applied fairly and without discrimination.
- Young people can provide suggestions and propose improvements regarding the functioning and safety of the space.
- In case of emergency or immediate danger, the instructions and procedures established by the institution are followed.

**Where can I report a concern?**

If you feel insecure, experience or witness a distressing situation, or need help, you can turn to:

**Responsible person/structure:**

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**Contacts:**

---

**Reporting method:**

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**Schedule/duration of availability:**

---

**Other reporting options:**

---

**What should the user of the space know?**

The institution must specify and make clear:

- Whom can a young person turn to for help;
- how a report can be made;
- if and when confidential reporting methods can be used;
- what happens after receiving a concern;
- when a case must be referred to another competent structure or service;
- which contacts should be used in emergencies.

**Other important information:**

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## ANNEX NO. 8 "ORIENTATION BOARD FOR STAFF AND PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUTH"

This model can be adapted according to the nature, function, size, users, and risk level of the space.

| No. | Field | What the institution must provide | What the staff or responsible person must have/know/do | Yes | Partially | No | Necessary measure/action |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Responsibilities | Clear responsibilities for the administration, operation, and security of the space should be defined. | To know their own role and responsibilities, as well as the persons/structures to which they should turn for matters that exceed their role. | | | | |
| 2 | Staff presence | The presence or availability of staff should be determined in accordance with the function and schedule of the space. | To be present or available in accordance with the organization, function, and schedule of the space. | | | | |
| 3 | Relationship with young people | An environment should be created where young people are treated with respect and dignity. | To communicate respectfully, inclusively, and without prejudice. | | | | |
| 4 | Protection from violence and abuse | Measures must exist to prevent, identify, and address situations that threaten security or well-being. | To recognize the signs of a worrying situation and the proper way to report or refer information. | | | | |
| 5 | Harassment and bullying | There should be clear rules for the prevention and treatment of harassment, bullying, and threatening behaviors. | To identify problematic situations and implement the relevant procedures. | | | | |
| 6 | Non-discrimination | Equal treatment and participation opportunities must be ensured for all young people. | Avoid discriminatory behaviors and identify situations that could lead to exclusion. | | | | |
| 7 | Inclusion and accessibility | Different needs and obstacles that may limit participation should be taken into account. | To recognize the different needs of users and to seek or implement necessary adaptations. | | | | |
| 8 | Communication and information | Young people should have clear information about whom they can turn to for help. | To be able to explain the rules, reporting methods, and support options. | | | | |



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| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | Reporting | The person or structure where concerns can be reported must be identified. | To know how to receive a report, to whom it should be forwarded, and what the next steps are. | | | | |
| 10 | Referral | Identify the competent structures or services for cases requiring specialized support. | To understand the basic mechanisms of referral and the limits of their role. | | | | |
| 11 | Privacy and personal data | Measures should be implemented to protect privacy and personal data. | Know how to handle personal information, respect data protection requirements, and understand confidentiality limits, including cases when information must be shared or reported in accordance with the law and relevant procedures. | | | | |
| 12 | Digital security | Rules should be established for the use of devices, platforms, and digital channels. | To recognize the main digital risks and to use communication channels responsibly. | | | | |
| 13 | Emergencies | Responsibilities and basic procedures for emergencies should be defined. | To be familiar with procedures, emergency exits, collection points, and how to seek help. | | | | |
| 14 | Outdoor activities | Security measures and responsibilities for activities outside the space should be defined. | To take into account risks related to location, transportation, participants, and emergencies. | | | | |
| 15 | Youth participation | Opportunities should be created for young people to share opinions about safety and the functioning of the space. | To listen to and reflect the thoughts and concerns of young people. | | | | |
| 16 | Training and orientation | To identify and address staff needs for training and guidance. | Must have appropriate knowledge and skills for the role and responsibilities they perform. | | | | |
| 17 | Professional boundaries | Appropriate standards of professional conduct should be established. | To maintain appropriate professional boundaries and not to abuse their position or responsibility. | | | | |
| 18 | Staff Safety and Well-being | To analyze the safety and well-being of staff, volunteers, and other engaged individuals, especially during conflict | To know the measures and procedures for managing difficult situations, to know when to seek support, and to use the appropriate reporting and referral mechanisms. | | | | |



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| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | situations, incidents, or emergencies. | | | | | |
| 19 | Monitoring and improvement | It should be monitored whether safety measures and staff capacities are functioning in practice. | To participate in identifying problems and improving the way the space functions. | | | | |



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## LEGAL REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

**A. The legal framework and European and international standards:**

- The United Nations Convention "On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities";
- European Union Regulation 2016/679 "On the protection of personal data";
- The European Union Youth Strategy 2019–2027;
- European Youth Goals;
- Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;
- The European Union Strategy on Children's Rights;
- Council of Europe Strategy on the Rights of the Child 2022–2027;
- Council of Europe Convention "On the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse" - Lanzarote Convention;
- Council of Europe, Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 of the Committee of Ministers to the member states "On youth work";
- Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)7 "On youth access to their rights";
- Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 "On youth access from areas with limited access to social rights";
- Council of Europe, European Revised Charter on Youth Participation in Local and Regional Life, 2015;
- Council of Europe, Gender Issues: Manual for addressing gender-based violence affecting youth;
- Council of Europe, Quality Label for Youth Centers – Role, Value, and Impact;

**B. Albanian legislation:**

- The Constitution of the Republic of Albania, (as amended);
- Law no. 10221, dated 04.02.2010 "On Protection from Discrimination" (as amended);
- Law no. 93/2014, dated 24.07.2014 "On the inclusion and accessibility of persons with disabilities" (as amended);
- Law no. 139/2015, dated 17.12.2015 "On Local Self-Government" (as amended);
- Law no. 121/2016, "On Social Care Services in the Republic of Albania" (as amended);
- Law no. 18/2017, "On the Rights and Protection of the Child" (as amended);
- Law no. 111/2017, "On State-Guaranteed Legal Aid";
- Law no. 75/2019, dated 04.11.2019 "On Youth", (as amended);
- Law no. 124/2024, "On the Protection of Personal Data";
- National Youth Strategy 2022–2029;
- Action Plan for the implementation of the National Youth Strategy 2022–2029;
- The Intersectoral Strategy for Decentralization and Local Governance 2023–2030;
- The National Strategy for Gender Equality.



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