

# Dr. Howard Williamson - Professor of European Youth Policy, University of South Wales

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The first thought that comes to mind when seeing and hearing Dr. Williamson is correct, he is a one-of-a-kind visionary, rock star youth work practitioner, and fully-fledged youth advocate. His ability to balance well a plethora of stakeholders and conditions needed for the quality development of youth work quickly immerses you into the youth work field and its importance in our modern world.

As one of the champions of youth work in Europe, Dr. Williamson takes us over all important milestones for youth work in Europe. He can also skillfully inspire us on how and where to reach out for determination and resilience when it comes to lobbying for youth and youth work. Even after decades-long contributions to the field, there's still that spark in his eyes and grit in his voice to drive the development and innovation in youth work.

We had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Williamson during the European Conference on Local Youth Work and Democracy, in Brussels, February 20-23, 2024. For the occasion of Belgium's Presidency over the Council of the European Union, he authored and presented his publication '[Taking Stock - Where are we now: Youth Work in Contemporary Europe](#)'.

Here we share some of his rich biography and contribution to the field of youth work, as well as his full video presentation at the opening ceremony. The conference hosted 400 participants from all over

Europe.

*'Youth work in contemporary Europe', keynote by Howard Williamson, Professor of European Youth Policy University of South Wales*

**Dr. Howard Williamson** is a Professor of European Youth Policy at the University of South Wales in the United Kingdom. Previously he worked at the Universities of Oxford, Cardiff, and Copenhagen and has held visiting positions at universities and research institutes in Hong Kong, Malta, Croatia, China, France, Australia, and Iran. He has lectured and published widely on young people, youth policy, and youth work. His latest books are *The Milltown Boys at Sixty* (Routledge 2021), *About Time!* (Council of Europe 2021), *Advanced Introduction to Youth Studies* (Edward Elgar 2022), *Transitions on Hold* (Council of Europe 2023) and *Taking Stock - Where are we now: Youth work in contemporary Europe* (Flemish Government 2024).



*In 2019, Professor Williamson received a lifetime achievement award for his contribution to youth work in Wales*

He is a qualified youth worker who ran a youth center for 25 years in parallel with his academic research. He has advised many levels of governance on youth policy issues, from the Welsh and UK governments, the European Commission, the Council of Europe, and the United Nations. He coordinated the Council of Europe's international reviews of national youth policy. He is a Vice-

President of the Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services and the Restorative Justice for All International Institute. He is a board member of Grassroots – the Cardiff City Centre Youth Project, the European Forum Alpbach Foundation, the Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award for Young People, and Learn About Britain. He is also co-chair of the Africa Network of Youth Policy Experts.

From 2002-2023, he was Organisational Secretary of the International Sociological Association Research Committee 34 (youth research). He now sits on its Executive Board as Senior Scholars Liaison.

In 2002, he was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) and, in 2016, a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order (CVO). In 2019, he received an Outstanding Contribution to Youth Work award from the First Minister of Wales.

Next to youth work, professor Williamson’s favorite pastime activities are music and motorcycling.



Further Readings:

**2023 book - Transitions on Hold? How the Covid-19 pandemic affected young people’s transitions to autonomy, Strasbourg: Council of Europe**

**2022 book - Advanced Introduction to Youth Studies**

**2021 book - ABOUT TIME! A reference manual for youth policy from a European perspective, Strasbourg: Council of Europe**

**2021 book - The Milltown Boys at Sixty (the third on the 'Milltown Boys', a 50 year longitudinal ethnography)**

**Dr. Howard Williamson - Career interview**