



# look beyond

## Role of Youth in Action Programme in Youth Work Development

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Centre for Intercultural Dialogue (CID) would like to thank the rapporteur, all facilitators, all participants from 47 organizations based around Europe and 87 organizations based in Macedonia as well as all the staff members and volunteers who dedicated their energy and time to make this event an open and pleasant space for evaluating, exchanging and learning.

We would like to thank all the panellists and experts for their workshops and their contribution for taking further the discussion on youth work development and recognition as well as the European cooperation in the youth field.

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## BACKGROUND

The Look Beyond seminar and conference were held back to back in June of 2014. The Centre for Intercultural Dialogue (CID) received support from the European Commission, Youth in Action Programme (Programme) to evaluate the Programme from the point of view of the beneficiary organisations, youth workers and young people.

CID wanted to evaluate the impact of the Programme by gathering the views and experience of the beneficiaries over the 7 year period 2007-2014. This started with an online survey, 'The Impact of the Youth in Action Programme on Youth Work', then came the Seminar and was followed immediately by the Conference both titled, 'Look Beyond: The Role of the Youth in Action Programme in Youth Work Development.' The respondents to the Survey and the participants of the Seminar and Conference included; young people, youth workers, youth researchers, policy makers, representatives of various institutions such as the European Commission, SALTO Resource Centres, the Council of Europe Youth Department, and the European Union – Council of Europe Youth Partnership.

### The Online Survey

The Online Survey was responded to by 128 people from 28 different countries, the survey asked about the 'Impact of the Youth in Action Programme on Youth Work'. The full results of the survey can be found following this link: [www.lookbeyond.cid.mk](http://www.lookbeyond.cid.mk)

### The Seminar

The Seminar brought together 47 participants from 29 different countries from across Europe. The group came from a wide diversity of organisations and a broad geographic coverage. The Seminar was an opportunity to explore in detail many of the thoughts and feelings of young people, youth workers and youth organisations regarding the Programme, the last 7 years of their work, their dreams, and their aspirations for the future. This was an opportunity to look back and to 'Look Beyond'. All the participants had experience of being participants, leaders, organisers, trainers and or policy makers in the various Actions of the Programme in the previous 7 year period.

The atmosphere was relaxed with the participants ready to work hard and have fun in evaluating the Programme – both elements that have represented the Programme throughout the last seven years. Participants committed themselves to sharing ideas, to support and listen to one another, and to share both good and bad practice. It was highlighted that this was a chance to celebrate the last seven years of the Programme, to step away from the everyday workings of our organisations in order to explore without outside pressures what we did, with whom we did it, how we did it and how satisfied we are with the process. Look Beyond was also an opportunity to meet again for many of the participants and a chance to develop ideas and opinions on what we can do better and not to just complain!

In a light hearted beginning to the Seminar the participants reflected on a number of different elements: the main horror story of the Programme was meeting the deadlines for the funding applications; many Programme activities had involved love stories of one description or another, connecting people and changing their universe; there was also an aspect of comedy, especially concerning language, the almost universal use of English creating a lot of confusion and misunderstandings; EVS represented for many the thriller feeling, the sense (at the beginning) of being kidnapped, scared and lonely; the final aspect commented on was the case of the missing participant! Something many who had organised Programme activities were very much aware of!

At the end of the five days of analysis, criticism and praise there was a general feeling of satisfaction, the group found the experiences interesting, exhausting, fruitful, inspiring, fascinating and challenging... Others said it was full of learning for them and rich in methodologies. Others had gained new perspectives and had much to reflect on.

## The Conference

The Conference brought together 150 participants, who were representatives of 87 youth organizations and institutions from across Europe. The conference provided further opportunity to reflect on the impact of the Programme and to include the views and opinions of the major institutions. It created space for youth work providers and the main stakeholders in the field to spend time together, to work together and to discuss together.

It provided space and time to tackle important issues of youth work development, current challenges, developments in local youth work, and developments in youth policy across Europe. It provided the opportunity to identify the strengths and opportunities of youth work, providing guidance for the future by taking a look at the last 7 years.

Each person at the conference was invited because they have a connection to CID and a connection with youth work. It was again emphasised that this was a time to not only look at what has happened but to 'Look Beyond' so we can have an even greater impact on the new programme, Erasmus+. It was important to state and have recognised that this was not just about looking back at the things that we are proud of but also of looking at the things we are not so proud of.

## NOTES

### Organiser of 'Look Beyond' – CID



The Centre for Intercultural Dialogue (CID) is a non-governmental, non-profit youth organization based in Macedonia, working on local, national and European level. It was formed in May 2006 by active youth leaders and youth workers, following the need to

develop a youth-led organization in the Municipality of Kumanovo, Macedonia.

CID works for creating diverse responsible and cooperative communities where citizens are actively contributing to the social development and integration. The mission of the Centre for Intercultural Dialogue is ensure sustainable community development by creating opportunities for quality engagement of civil society, advancing learning opportunities, and active involvement of young people and other citizens.

The organization's work focuses on many aspects which are of interest for young people: from provision of services and information, to research and support for policy-making and networking. CID works with young people and citizens from diverse religious, ethnic, national and other beliefs who are at the same time creators and beneficiaries of our activities. CID also works with public administration that works with youth, as well as all stakeholders involved in inter-community dialogue and sustainable community development on local, national and international level.

CID is a member of few European and global networks such as Service Civil International, Youth for Exchange and Understanding and UNITED. The organization is actively participating in initiating and shaping the main European Youth Policy processes. On national level CID advocates for development of sustainable youth support systems and youth representatives bodies.

The organization is one of the most experienced mobility support points ensuring youth mobility through quality educational exchanges and is involved in the general mobility of teachers, school support staff, and people on the labour market in general. CID offers as well international volunteering opportunities through summer camps and long term volunteering in Europe and globally.

### Author of the Report – Nik Paddison



Nik has a background as a youth worker from the UK. Over the last 15 years he has worked as a trainer of youth workers, leaders, volunteers and activists in the European youth field. He has been based in South East Europe since 2003, the bulk of his work is focussed on the South East Europe and Caucasus regions. During this period he has been a part of youth work and non-formal education/learning recognition, working with local and international organisations in the above mentioned regions. Areas of work include: youth worker curriculum development; assessment processes; training of youth workers; training trainers/facilitators; conflict transformation; communication/presentation skills; Human Rights; Co-Working. Over the years he has developed numerous activities, theories and approaches related to the youth field in the context of non-formal education/learning. His work can be found in various publications including Coyote magazine. For the last few years he has been working as a freelance trainer / writer / consultant / copy editor for youth NGOs, European networks, and the European Union and the Council of Europe youth departments.

# CONTENTS

Background.....	2
The Online Survey.....	3
The Seminar .....	3
The Conference.....	4
Notes .....	5
Organiser of 'Look Beyond' – CID .....	5
Author of the Report – Nik Paddison .....	5
Contents .....	6
Introduction .....	7
The Influence of the Youth in Action Programme .....	9
Adapting for Good and Bad!.....	9
Something New .....	10
Motivation .....	10
Benefits .....	10
Cultural Perspectives .....	11
Local Youth Work and the Programme .....	11
And Finally .....	11
Influence of the Permanent Priorities .....	12
European Citizenship .....	13
Participation of Young People.....	14
Cultural Diversity .....	15
Inclusion of Young People with Fewer Opportunities .....	16
Evaluation of Different Actions .....	17
Local Youth Initiatives.....	18
Youth Exchange.....	18
EVS.....	21
Training Courses .....	21
Policy:.....	22
Impact On Youth Work Development .....	26
Youth Work.....	26
Individual Development .....	29
Organisational Development .....	30
Local Community.....	30
Looking Beyond .....	31
Youth Work in Europe .....	32
Recognition .....	33
Recognition on the European Level.....	34
Social Recognition .....	35
Self-Recognition .....	35
Political Recognition .....	35
Employment .....	36
The Future is Now! .....	36
Appendices .....	37
The 'Look Beyond' Coordination Team.....	38
The 'Look Beyond' Facilitators and Speakers.....	39
Facilitators of the Seminar and Conference.....	39
Speakers for the Conference .....	39
The 'Look Beyond' Participants .....	40
Seminar .....	40
Conference .....	41
The 'Look Beyond' Seminar Programme .....	43
The 'Look Beyond' Conference Programme .....	44

## INTRODUCTION

This report is compiled from all three parts of the CID initiated evaluation of the European Commissions, Youth in Action Programme, 2007 to 2013. It contains references to the Online Survey, the Seminar and the Conference. The report is not chronologically written but takes a thematic approach. The themes are taken from the different elements of the whole process, some specific to the agenda of the seminar and conference and some developed from the specific elements the participants developed through discussion and analysis. In essence the report explores exactly what the title says, 'The Role of the Youth in Action Programme in Youth Work Development'. This development not only focusses on the programme countries but the countries of South East Europe (Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia) and the countries of the Eastern Partnership Youth Window (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine).

Although it is not chronological much of the first part of the report is evaluation oriented and therefore much is based on the Seminar while the final chapter has more focus from the Conference inputs and workshops. The first part explores the influence of the Youth in Action Programme on youth work, locally and internationally and in some cases how youth work influenced the Programme. There is a chapter dedicated to looking at the influence of the permanent priorities of the former Programme – citizenship, participation, cultural diversity and inclusion. The next chapter broadly evaluates the impact of the different 'Actions' of the Programme and is followed by looking at the impact on youth work development in a variety of approaches. The final chapter moves more into the realm of comments and recommendations from the participants and speakers of both the seminar and the conference on the youth programme – past and present.

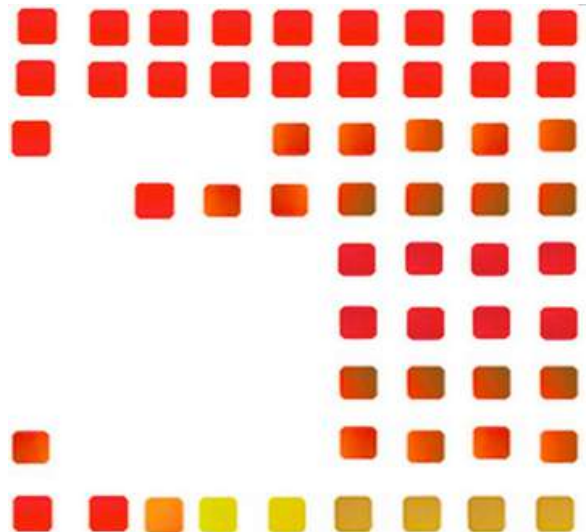
Much of the report is very critical, which is a direct reflection on the depth of feeling of the participants and speakers to the subject matter in hand. Although the online survey, the seminar and the conference were designed as an evaluation of the former youth programme, the approach to evaluation by the participants involved has meant that most of the evaluation is in the form of recommendations and proposals.

It should be noted that the criticism from the participants is not directly solely at the European Commission but that the majority of the criticism is focussed on their own sector – the non-governmental organisations, organisers, participants, youth workers/leaders, and trainers of the sector. This is especially in the case of Follow-Up in all aspects of the Programme. Despite the many criticisms the overall evaluation of the Programme is more than positive. Individuals and organisations benefiting hugely from it and feeling in general supported in their development of work with young people.





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## THE INFLUENCE OF THE YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME

Regardless of good or bad, all the participants involved in this whole process agreed that the Youth in Action Programme, 2007-2013, had an influence on youth work throughout the continent. Long discussions took place, especially during the Seminar, on the kinds of influence the Programme had on different aspects of youth work. This chapter will explore those different aspects and the opinions of the participants as they evaluated the influence of the Programme on their work.

*On the organisations working on local level the main benefits to participation were getting to know and use non-formal education methodologies. Gaining experience of Europe's diversity was next and then development of staff members. For the regional level, again it was the same picture, though a lower percentage rate throughout. The national level peaked with the experience of Europe's diversity and international networks being established. For the international level the greatest benefit was for the development of an organisations scope of work, closely followed by knowing and using non-formal education methodologies.*

*CID Online Survey*

### Adapting for Good and Bad!

Some organisations managed to make the Programme fit with their work while others adapted their work to fit in with the Youth in Action Programme. The question arose; "should an organisation change its mission to fit better into the Programme?" Some felt that if it meant getting funding then yes an organisation should adapt itself, if it meant the difference between surviving or not, then yes. But is this always for the good? An example was given where in Croatia money came for work with Roma. Many organisations changed their agenda to fit this criteria, yet many of these organisations had never worked or had any prior interest in this field before. Others felt that their organisations mission was too important to change and adapt to fit certain criteria for funding. Some stated that they had added to their mission to incorporate the Programme, while for others the Programme neatly fitted into their pre-existing approach and was a welcome addition.

### **EVS**

Some specific elements of the Programme had a huge influence and caused specific changes for some organisations. European Voluntary Service (EVS) became a big part in the life of many organisations and so they needed to adapt accordingly.

### **From Bad to Good**

In a more extreme case of adaptation, one organisation was created because of an experience with the Programme. Mohammed Zaman from the UK expressed how he had such a bad experience on a Youth Exchange that when he got home he decided to start his own organisation. He and some colleagues believed that they could do a much better job and provide other young people with a much more constructive experience. They have not been the only ones to create an organisation to work with the Programme, though unfortunately it was acknowledged that not all these organisations were working for the good. Some were operating as a kind of travel agent to make money and send young people/friends on trips across Europe.

### **Positive Influence**

Another aspect shared was that some organisations were already involved with running training courses, conferences and so on. One participant stated that, "My organisation was made by young people working with young people; minorities, rights, and intercultural competences, we started in Belgrade then spread across the Balkans – none of this was with the Youth in Action Programme – even from first." By applying for activities through the Programme they freed up other resources to finance activities not directly involved with the Programme, for example; local advocacy trainings, funding grants to local youth councils, etc.

## Something New

It was expressed that for many the Programme brought a new understanding of youth work, while for others, it supported the development of new policies or introduced the international aspect to their work. One thing the Programme did do for nearly all the organisations represented, was to bring new topics for them to work with. These included; upcycling, employment, entrepreneurship, corporate social responsibility, promoting bike use in Georgia, personal and professional development, development of soft skills, and internet addiction.

### **New Methods**

Many of the organisations represented developed new methods as a direct result of their participation in the Programme, they would take a methodology from an international experience and use it with a target group at home. These include arts, theatre, photography, creative writing, role plays, simulations, involving the community in decision making, storytelling, engaging target groups, and video making. Others perceived the Programme as having 'standardised' their activities, meaning that non-formal education activities have become a bit 'mandatory' in order to meet the expectations of the Programme.

### **New Target Groups**

Another area of strong influence from the Programme was on the development of work with new target groups local youth organisations worked with. These included; work with Internally Displaced People, trainings for group leaders, young people with fewer opportunities who want to do EVS, minority groups, and disabled young people.

## Motivation

A lot of participants expressed that their motivation had increased as a result of their interaction with the Programme. Many expressed about the benefits of participating in the Programme, the sharing of experiences was one of the strongest and it was felt that this alone supported both the personal and professional development for many.

### **Competences**

For some organisations, their motivation for taking part in the Programme was that they could see the benefits it could bring in the form of the collective and individual competences of their members and the local community. In some cases this led to the continued involvement of young people in their local communities, especially in rural areas. It also provided improvement to the quality of local youth work and contributed to both personal and professional development, and the independency of young people.

Others organisations were motivated to start international cooperation, for example in one instance; they developed the local activities with disabled people on the international dimension in order to provide opportunities for disabled young people to take part in such activities. Some participants were motivated to simply inspire young people and support the intercultural dimension and tolerance.

## Benefits

Some of the benefits highlighted included the development of new partnerships and networks, the opportunity of taking part in training courses, workshops, and conferences. These things led to the building of organisational capacity and professional development. Taking part in the Programme meant that for many people they got access to new experiences and tools. Ivo Ivanovski from Bitola, Macedonia pointed out that it helped the capacity building of his organisation and of the young people they work with. It also helped to define their presence in the local community as well as internationally.

### **Non-Formal Learning**

The educational approach within the Programme, the acknowledgement of, the use of, and promotion of, informal and non-formal education, supported the betterment of knowledge and experiences within the international frame. Youth workers were able to promote European active citizenship and increase active

participation. Organisations saw a development in project management skills and in turn were providing other organizations information on the Programme therefore promoting their involvement in the Programme in the future.

### **Recognition of Learning**

Many other benefits and influences were explored. Some people recognised that they were being more open minded, that they were promoting values and were more open to understanding different views – developing intercultural awareness. The very basic approach of exchanging ideas provided some with more opportunities for learning and self-reflection. This in turn led to a breaking down of barriers, stereotypes and prejudices, leading to greater tolerance and respect.

### **Cultural Perspectives**

With regards to cultural influence, participants from neighbouring countries felt that the Programme offered a lot, especially for those from countries where travelling was difficult because of Visa restrictions. Activities taking place within their country meant they received a lot of access to other cultures. It also provided mobility for many young people from the neighbouring countries. One participants shared, “We don’t have interethnic cultural dialogue between Azerbaijan and Armenia – so with the Youth in Action Programme we could meet and learn about each other.”

For other countries where there are multicultural societies, it was felt that more effort should be put to working on intercultural learning and experiences in the local youth work. Some organisations had over the years expanded the scope of their work because of their interaction with the Programme. This included the addition of new target groups, as one participants said, “We had an opportunity to include more young people with fewer opportunities – but it is still difficult to reach them.”

### **Local Youth Work and the Programme**

The difficulty of combining local youth work with the Programme was another issue explored, in other words, the lack of influence of the Programme on the local level. As someone pointed out, “The local community is not always ready for the international community.” The tactic some tried to take was to persist in informing the local young people and so over time getting to a point where they could move to creating a project or at least get some interest from local young people.

### **Needs of Young People**

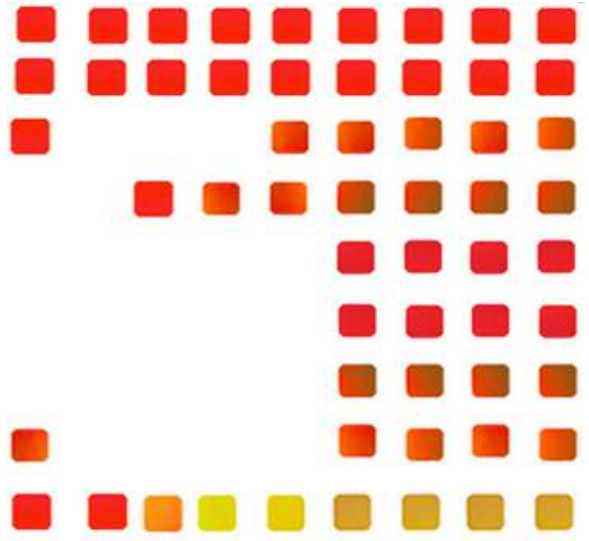
Another aspect here that concerned many was that Programme projects are often not based on the needs of the local community. However it was pointed out that even when that is so, a project can be good for the local community, for example; the introduction of forum theatre into local work or the case where one activity used hip-hop and afterwards a hip-hop group started in that community. Darko Dimitrov, Director of the Macedonian National Agency for Erasmus+ Programme, shared that European cooperation has had a huge influence on Macedonia, he pointed out that it “brought us experience and knowledge that has benefitted youth work in Macedonia”. Ultimately the extent of influence on the local level is also dependent on the country and culture. At the end of discussions an open question remained; ‘does the Programme influence the local society or does local society influence the Programme?’

### **And Finally**

This last point emphasises an understated influence of the Programme which is perhaps just as important as everything else, the Programme provided young people and youth workers the opportunity to sometimes simply have fun.



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## INFLUENCE OF THE PERMANENT PRIORITIES

A large part of the Seminar was dedicated to exploring how the permanent priorities of the Programme affected and influenced the work of youth organisations while implementing Programme activities. This chapter will explore the evaluation of the participants on each of the permanent priorities.

As a general note, it was pointed out that the level of influence and impact of the priorities was dependent on whether an organisation was in the European Union or not. One participant from Azerbaijan said, "The Programme was a great opportunity to bring these principles and values to my country, and they brought additional values to our work." Others felt that the priorities were so broad it did not matter whether you were from a Programme country or not.

### European Citizenship

*In terms of the European Citizenship, according to the survey the local organisations noted the most impact as well as some organizations working on international level. But in general the level of impact recorded was low.*

*CID Online Survey*

There was a deep discussion about the European dimension, one which drew few common conclusions, one of the main points related to this was the lack of common ground in defining the 'European context', or as was stated, "It is up to us how we take it, understand it and use it".

### **An Obligation!**

For many people this priority theme was a dimension that they felt obliged to include in their application forms as a key word. "A lot of the work that we did around EU citizenship seemed to be obligatory, it just ticked a box in our projects, we would just mention it, not discussing anything specific." It was clearly felt by some that it was a political concept or even a political construct.

### **Young People as European Citizens?**

Some of the participants who had participated in the Programme did not feel like they had a sense of European citizenship or any level of acceptance of that identity. Covering such areas in a Youth Exchange or training course felt very artificial for many. An issue raised by many of the group was that training courses on citizenship were not inspiring.

### **Making it Work**

However with more thought and more understanding the subject could be applied in many different simple activities. One approach was to discuss a topic in local or national groups and then asking them to discuss the same topic in international groups. By others it was considered as involving and promoting European values, such as human rights, tolerance, fighting prejudice and discrimination, mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue. The main idea that was promoted by one project was the idea of the European Union as a unique country made up of different cultures sharing the same values. In another example, on a training course they asked participants to put different concept borders on a map, in order to show each other what they thought about Europe. Someone shared that they simply explored each individual's definition of European Citizenship and then compared them to an official definition. In a project that took place in Croatia, the subject was related to activities of development in Europe, taking together the cultures of different countries and making comparisons. In another case they simply informed the participants about elements of the Programme like EVS, Youth Exchanges, and other training courses, and considered that was enough.

A good example of a project that really developed the theme of European Citizenship was titled: 'My Vote is Our Future'. It is an ongoing project in which all the partners set up an action plan to promote European Citizenship and develop local activities. These included flashmobs, interviews, and discussions involving stakeholders, policy makers, candidates for the European Elections, and young people. The project will close with a youth meeting in which the participants will monitor if the policies proposed by the candidates are being implemented.

## **More Focus Needed**

It was concluded that Europe needs to be seen as more than economics, this whole subject needs more reflection and greater attention. One of the key issues highlighted is the fact that so many people refer to 'the Europeans' as the others, rarely is it said 'we Europeans'. The meaning behind this being that many people for many reasons see others as the Europeans not themselves.

## **Participation of Young People**

*The impact with regards to Participation of Young People was highest on the local level, followed closely by the organisations working on international and national level.*

*CID Online Survey*

This Priority was more widely understood. The emphasis here was to enable young people to take an active role and to support them in taking that active role.

## **Youth in Action Programme**

Several examples of participation of young people in all or most steps of a project were shared. From the stage of recruitment of participants, to designing the activity, through the using of different methodologies such as simulation games to further foster participation, to the evaluation of a project. In one concrete example an informal group of young people applied for a Youth Exchange and were supported by an NGO from Estonia. Together they came up with an idea, worked on the planning, writing and implementing of the project. This is a good example of why participation is important. Another example that highlights the importance of participation is taken from the opposite perspective. In this example half of participants didn't participate or didn't show up to sessions. As a result the project could not fulfil its aim and objectives. The cause was felt to be the non-participatory selection of participants by the partners and the applicant.

## **European and National Level**

Taking the subject further beyond the realms of Programme activities, Luis Alvarado Martinez of the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe shared the experience of the Advisory Council. It runs an almost unique approach to participation, it is the co-management system. This system sees Government representatives and young people on an equal footing. No decision can be made by one without the other. He encouraged the Macedonian National Agency to adopt such a system as part of their development and for the promotion of participation. "I extend an Invitation to the Macedonian National Agency to set up a co-management system to treat the youth organisations as partners and develop together".

While it was not rejected outright, the head of the National Agency, Darko Dimitrov, was a little reluctant to publicly accept, stating that the National Agency is not a policy making body and that the co-management system is often used for development. Luis replied that National Agencies can adopt the co-management system if they are willing to work with National Youth Councils, etc. This can be about evaluating grants and projects, it does not have to be about policy. Luis went on to emphasise that in terms of participation of young people, dialogue between the National Agencies and young people is important.

Another part of the work of the Advisory Council (both the young people and Government representatives working together) is to monitor Human Rights violations against young people, it is advocating along with the European Youth Forum for a 'convention on youth rights'. Young people are often being discriminated against with regards to employment and housing simply because of their age.



## **Policy Development**

Luis went on to share that consultation between the European Union and young people is also an important part of the participation picture and has increased during the period of the last youth programme. Unfortunately one of the major issues with regards to this is that the young people often don't see their contribution reflected in the final decisions.

Giselle Evrard-Markovic, Educational Advisor of the Partnership between European Commission and the Council of Europe in the Field of Youth, shared that there is increasing space being given to evidence based youth policy based on experiences of young people and of youth work on both national and European levels. There is a general agreement that this is both necessary and important. She went on to describe the 'Policy Triangle': Researchers, Practitioners and Policy makers, and how the development of good quality policy is only achievable if it includes people from all these elements – particularly young people themselves as much as possible. Much of this has been developed in the last 7 years through the Youth in Action Programme.

Chris Henshaw from the National Democratic Institute stressed several times in his speech that it is extremely necessary to ensure civic participation in the legislative process, and that civic participation must include young people. Almost as a warning to the youth sector, he said, "If civic organisations and connections with parliament don't include young people then it is not inclusive and it is not going to work."

As an example of young people's participation in policy development, Marcio Barcelos, Board member of the European Youth Forum (Forum), talked about how the Forum has lobbied hard in the previous years for developments in the new youth programme within Erasmus+. The Forum is made up of young people who represent youth organisations from all over Europe. He went on to explain that many of the things that the Forum proposed were taken into account. He also stated that we need to involve people in the democratic process and allow them to influence it.

## **Make Participation Real**

However, youth participation on the European level still has a long way to go, Marcio said at one point, "we were told by the European Union that they know what we want so there is no need for consultation." This was in regards to early developments of the new youth programme. Marcio explained that the Forum is working hard to put civil society back into the picture and that the youth field is still not completely involved in the decision making processes.

Giselle summarised much of what was explored in this part on participation, especially in relation to national and European policy levels, "There are more and more ways for young people to participate in more and more restricted ways", and "Participate in our agenda, but if you speak too loud, don't do it, if you move too much, don't do it". She closed one discussion with this, "We have to ensure that space is maintained for young people to participate fully, really fully".

## **Cultural Diversity**

*Cultural Diversity had the highest impact on the local level by a big margin, next was the international, regional and national.*

*CID Online Survey*

## **Understanding**

This was a subject / priority that most felt much more comfortable with. One person expressed how in their organisation during the selection of participants for EVS they do preparation workshops for cultural shock – especially for those who have never been away before. They also explained that during a Youth Exchange activity they conduct activities that help to break stereotypes and promote tolerance – no matter what the subject of the exchange. In another project titled 'Steps of Dialogue' (about promoting intercultural dialogue through ethnic dance) each country group of participants showed their own dances. Through combining the dances they made an intercultural dance. This was as a tool for them to better understand how to face misunderstandings and how to raise their tolerance.

### **Intercultural Evenings – the Eternal Question!**

'Intercultural evenings' are often used to help participants discover more about the other cultures. The concept of the intercultural evenings was a point of contention and created a lot of discussion. Some felt that such evenings can be used to explore cultural diversity, if they are organized well. One example of this could be that each evening a different country hosts that evening and the participants from that country introduce how they live, dance, and share food and drinks. Many different thoughts and feelings were expressed but one unifying reflection on such evenings was that they should be more interactive, participatory and culture based. Sadly it was noted that most of the time these events consist of eating and drinking celebrations with a patriotic country promotion.

### **Missed Opportunities**

Some shared experiences where the organization or project failed to properly integrate the groups and as a result each group remained separated and the cultural diversity opportunity of breaking stereotypes and prejudice was missed.

### **Inclusion of Young People with Fewer Opportunities**

*Impact on the Inclusion of Young People with Fewer Opportunities was low on every count, the organisations working on international level reporting the highest level of impact but only just, with all the others more or less the same.*

*CID Online Survey*

### **Equal Access for All**

There were a lot of strong feelings related to this subject. Some organisations work hard to ensure that everyone has equal access to their activities. Even to the point of providing translation, sign language, wheelchair access or bus fare reimbursement, etc. Another aspect covered was the need for developing common projects with different target groups.

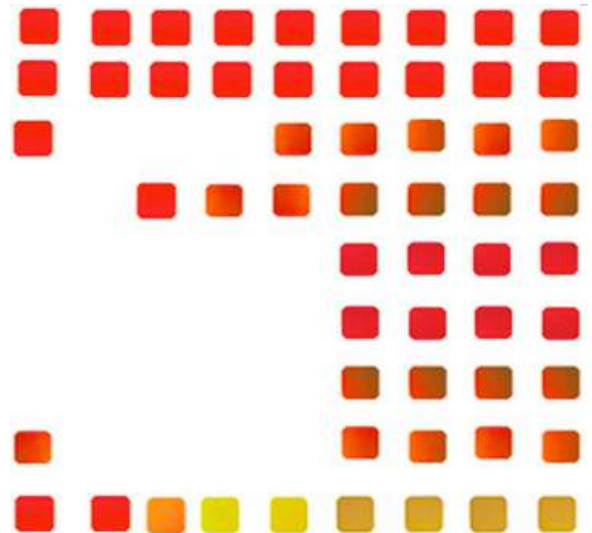
For others the starting point was even before the preparation of the project. They look for and select partners that are working with young people with fewer opportunities. During the activities all the young people with fewer opportunities are involved, this is not just down to the organisers and partners but also because of the choice of methodologies used. Gjoko Vukanovski from the Volunteer Centre Skopje was asked about their work with EVS and the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities. He stated that as an organisation they had hosted 130 volunteers and sent more than 150. He explained that while not all are young people with fewer opportunities there is always a preference given to the less advantaged, but this also depends on the needs of the project!

### **Actively Excluding**

However it was not all good news, it was pointed out quite strongly that the NGO sector themselves are excluding many young people from the Programme because of their language ability. Others are excluded because of their lack of knowledge and access to information about the Programme. Some are excluded because of all the rules and regulations that come with taking part in the Programme. However, most young people with fewer opportunities are excluded simply because most youth organisations involved in the Programme are not working with them. Mila Karadafova from the organisation KRIK said, "We are always talking about working for inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities, but are we really serious about including such young people?"



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## EVALUATION OF DIFFERENT ACTIONS

*Just under 70% of organisations stated that the Programmes main impact was through the increasing of their competence in project management and their appreciation of cultural diversity. Around 55% stated that its main impact was on making contacts with organisations from other countries.*

*CID Online Survey*

Throughout both the Seminar and the Conference it was clear that every individual and organisation represented had faced their own challenges over the years and they all had their own reflections on and evaluation of the Programme. This next chapter streamlines this feedback into the five areas that roughly represented the five Actions of the Programme: Youth Initiatives; Youth Exchanges; EVS; Training Courses; and Youth Policy.

### Local Youth Initiatives

Although this area does not exist in the new Erasmus+ Programme, it was still felt to be important to evaluate it and make recommendations. Though this was a very much underused part of the Programme, where it was used, it was highly valued. On one level it directly met the needs of young people and on another it was felt that it was difficult to reach less structured groups of young people.

One thing that was learned by those who had taken part in Local Youth Initiatives was that youth workers needed to invest more time in providing information about the Programme in order to increase the motivation of young people. In terms of outreach to young people and the development of Initiatives, more varied communication channels should have been utilised along with a broader spectrum of different actors, this would have better supported young people from remote areas and those with fewer opportunities to participate.

The general feeling was that the European Commission and the National Agencies needed to be more flexible in accepting new and changing priorities, and needed to take into account the local reality of the local NGOs. The NGOs needed to make more effort in mapping local needs in order to be able to identify the challenges the young people faced and so pass them on to the National Agencies and the Commission.

One recommendation that initially emerged was that National Agencies should organise regular training and networking events for informal groups as well as new NGOs with less experience in the Programme.

### Youth Exchange

This was a huge area of discussion and covered many sub topics with many strong opinions. This section consists of the comments and recommendations of the group based on their evaluation of this area of work.

#### **Budget**

In general it was felt that there was insufficient funding provided for Youth Exchanges, payments were too low, especially for accommodation and food. With the amount of funding provided it was difficult for many organisations to provide accommodation if there were no connections with the local authorities. However it was felt that this should encourage beneficiary organisations to seek external funding from local authorities and other donors, etc. Other alternatives explored were; to encourage organisers to set up a participation fee, inspire the young people and leaders to seek additional funding from local companies, create fundraising campaigns...

It was felt that there should be funds for preparation, implementation, and follow-up. Meaning each part should be a separate budget so organisations will not be able to use follow-up or preparatory money for the main exchange.

Organisations were frustrated that they were being asked to include young people with fewer opportunities but travel costs were only 70% refunded. The group felt it would be better if the Sending or Hosting Organisations could provide disadvantaged young people with their flight tickets, so that young people who experienced financial hardship could also take part. They also suggested that the National Agencies should be able to transfer travel costs directly to all partner organisations, rather than just the Host Organisation.

### **Participants**

Many of the group reflected that it was good if Youth Exchange participants were less experienced – instead of the same more experienced so called tourists. Also finding participants in the last minute was never a good policy. For many, the lack of pre-event preparation of the young people was the biggest annoyance in working with Youth Exchanges, in some cases the young people did not even know what they were turning up to. A short preparation meeting organised by the Sending Organisations to give vital information to the participants should have been happening automatically. Developing at least some cultural awareness should have been part of the preparation for participants. They should also have received information about the other participating groups and had an opportunity to explore and understand something of intercultural learning prior to departure.

Another issue was about young people attending Youth Exchanges but not able to speak English. Although this was seen as a frustration it was also seen as challenge, why should young people be excluded because they don't speak English? It was pointed out that if we are targeting young people with fewer opportunities then there is a higher probability that they don't know English. More tolerance was needed for multilingualism during Youth Exchanges. Preparation work could be conducted with participants to learn basic words by the Sending Organisations. Language should not be used as a reason for non-participation. The Youth Exchange leaders should ensure that they provide translation and should be creative in coming up with activities that do not need a lot of speaking. Hosting Organisations should also be made aware of any participant with language difficulties and appropriate preparation should be done by the Host Organisation.

### **Leaders**

It was shared that the leaders role in a Youth Exchange was basically undefined and that there was a lack of training or guidance. The group stressed that the leaders role needs to be clearly defined and the responsibilities clearly outlined.

Leaders should have a certain amount of experience, the group agreed that potential Youth Exchange leaders should have followed at least one training course in youth work or leadership before leading other people on a Youth Exchange. The organisations involved in a Youth Exchange should be responsible for checking if the leaders are competent to lead a group (non-formal education methodology aware, basic facilitation skills, able to task support, awareness of risk management, etc.). The leaders should be responsible for preparing the group well before the group leave for the Youth Exchange and for the follow-up after the Youth Exchange. The leaders should not expect their experience on the Youth Exchange to be the same as the participants, the Youth Exchange is for the participating young people, while the leaders are there to lead, support and facilitate as and when needed.

The organisers should ensure that all the partners are aware of the topics to be covered in the Youth Exchange and that each of the leaders are including the participants in the preparation. This will lead to greater levels of communication between all parties prior to the Youth Exchange. The team of leaders should implement daily evaluations, not only of the group and the topic but also of the practical issues as well; cooking, accommodation, cleaning, etc. Legal obligations for working with minors are different in

different countries, both Hosting and Sending Organisations must make sure that all the leaders are aware of the relevant legislation and are supported to do what is needed.

There was a lot of criticism that leaders were also expected to pay the 30% travel contribution as they were working and often working for free. Some felt that the leaders should also be provided with subsistence costs in order to cover expenditures needed for any communication back home and ongoing smaller costs for the group they are responsible for.

In another discussion it was stated that the relevant SALTO's should have provided more training opportunities in order to raise the quality of the work of youth leaders. However it was pointed out by representatives of SALTO that they organized such trainings and faced a lack of participants.

### **Programme**

Another area of frustration for many was the programme/agenda of many Youth Exchanges. It was felt that far too often the programme was not suitable and the activities not always inclusive. In order to prepare an inclusive programme it is necessary to have all the information about the participants. Unfortunately when participants are recruited in the last-minute, any specific needs that they may have cannot be accounted for. This can be combatted to a certain extent by the Sending Organisations having a back-up list of participants so they have people ready if needed.

### **Partners**

One of the key things highlighted with regards to Youth Exchanges was that an Advanced Planning Visit (APV) is essential. An APV helps with preparatory work, with clarifying the theme and topics of the Exchange, for making clear the profile of participants and so on... It is also a good way to judge who the reliable partners are likely to be and who not!

A big push from the group was for the Erasmus+ Programme to have more flexibility with regards to the changing of partners. The system needs to be more simplified to ensure quality partners can replace poor quality partners. Too often National Agencies have not been flexible to allow a quick change to happen or for the removal of an unreliable partner. One piece of advice from the group was that it is important to keep track of the communication via e-mail as a form of proof if there are difficulties, so if something comes into question, you have the proof to show that the partner has failed and not you.

It was proposed that organisations should conduct Skype meetings before engaging in partnerships. This would provide the opportunity to gather information about potential partners and to be able to have more of an idea if that partner is able to do their part of the work (prepare, identify, send participants, and conduct follow-up). The simplest piece of advice was "learn from experience and do not work with partners who are not reliable."

The group also proposed that the funding should not be so directly linked with the number of participants. If one or more participants have to cancel their participation, the project should not be penalised. Under the old Programme system, organisations would be trying to fill the places with often inappropriate participants, just not to lose valuable funding.

### **Follow-Up**

Follow-up activities should be planned, the creation and development of follow-up must be given space in the programme. It was also recommended that there be mechanisms in place to ensure that they take place. It would be good to have extra funds for follow-up activities. Hosting and Sending Organisations should be responsible for ensuring the participants do something back at home after the exchange



## **National Agencies / European Commission**

The group wanted to push for more monitoring visits to be conducted, not just for administrative issues but also looking at the quality of the project. Such visits could provide guidance and so support the development of better quality Youth Exchanges in the future.

## **EVS**

The evaluation of EVS was extensive and initially was a series of complaints from the participants. After the initial complaining things became more constructive with many recommendations. Some of the initial elements stated were; a lack of preparation of the volunteer by the Sending Organisations, accreditation taking too long, many volunteers missing on-arrival and or evaluation seminars, a lack of quality mentors, volunteers having their own agenda and not respecting the Hosting Organisation, the amount of pocket money being too small, and a lack of a quality support system for many volunteers when they returned home.

The group expressed very strongly that they felt that EVS projects should be created according to the needs of young people and local communities – something that sadly cannot be said of many past and existing EVS projects. They also proposed that to have true impact on the local community and on the development of individuals, the EVS projects should be continuous, meaning that there should be continuity from one volunteer to the next. In general EVS needs to be part of the long term strategy of the organisation. One of the biggest issues regarding EVS was that not enough effort was made to include more young people with fewer opportunities – an issue that needs to be faced by both organisations and the National Agencies.

An issue of particular concern regarded the distribution of grants between countries and regions, there was very strong opinion that this needed to be revised by the European Commission. Currently it does not take into consideration enough the economic realities of different countries and regions. In some countries the budget was basically adequate while in others the same budget was simply not enough to work with. The existing support system was felt to be very important, meaning; mentor, supervisor, pocket money, language support, living conditions, etc. This system potentially enables the volunteers to be integrated into the local community. As good as this support system is, it was also felt that organisations should pay more attention to the quality of these support systems. The practice of cooperation between Sending, Hosting and Coordinating Organizations has proved to be efficient. However it is still necessary that the National Agencies monitor all the organisations to ensure they carry out their respective responsibilities from the preparation till the final evaluation of the project. This would then help to ensure the quality of the projects and the best experience possible for the volunteer. Overall it was felt that for the actual volunteers the process from application till receiving a volunteer position was too long and too discouraging.

## **Training Courses**

This was another big area for discussion, agreement, disagreement and general exploration. Many concerns were raised and explored in detail, the main areas of focus were the trainers themselves and the participants, though other aspects were also covered.

## **Recognition of Trainers**

A common opinion was that there are many people operating as trainers without the competences required for such work. One suggestion was that in order to improve the quality of trainers there could be a selection process of trainers for each project. The group felt there should be an official accreditation of trainers that takes into account their experience, qualifications and knowledge. Also for the development and quality of training courses there was a strong push for the recognition of the role of a freelance trainer, participants expressed a need for the Erasmus+ application form to recognise this role. In this way projects could choose the trainer of their choice from wherever they wanted with the competences they required rather than taking someone from one of the partners who may not be really qualified or suitable. The

group also wanted to see the Erasmus+ budget for training courses reorganised so that it would include a separate budget for a for trainers fees in order to ensure a fair salary is paid to trainers. These elements could promote the use of the SALTO database of trainers. In the working group 'Youth Workers Competences' it proposed that there be a Youthpass for trainers. This would act as a recognition of work and competences achieved.

### **Participants Issues**

There were many complaints about partners and participants. These elements included; participants without motivation, a lack of communication between partners about the profile of participants, the wrong profiles being promoted, irresponsible partners who do not care about the participants they send, participants not connected to youth work, and participants who are basically tourists traveling from project to project. It was fully recognised that these issues are in the hands of the organisations and not the Programme itself.

### **Ensuring Reliable Partners**

One way to support partnerships for the future was to adopt an existing grading system like the one that Couchsurfing has. Hosting Organizations could grade their partners after each project; how did the partner contribute to the project, how well informed were the participants, etc. Too often participants who openly abuse the system are not denied their travel reimbursement when they should be, organisers need to take a tougher stand and should send an e-mail to the Sending Organization about the situation. In order to promote the quality assurance of projects there should be quality checks with regular and more effective monitoring by the National Agencies. In order to keep a balance the participants should also be responsible for giving feedback about the quality of a project. An online survey could be carried out for each project, it should include such things as; food, accommodation, trainers, hosts, etc. Such surveys would need an administrator and could be monitored by the respective National Agencies. A similar concept operates in some USA Universities for the assessment of Professors in order to help students make informed decisions about who they want to be taught by, only posts that are respectful and with explanation are allowed.

### **A Lack of Evaluation**

It was felt that there was a lack of evaluation by the organisers, organisations and trainers at the end of projects. It was proposed that the Host Organizations should introduce a compulsory evaluation day at the end of a training course or seminar which would be specifically there for a multilevel evaluation of the project between organisers and trainers.

### **A Lack of Follow-Up**

Under the Youth in Action Programme the section of a project life called Follow-Up was probably and sadly the least important part for many organisations. This was in part because it was not checked up on, and so many organisations did not feel it to be important. The group proposed putting more emphasis on Visibility, Impact and Dissemination, and giving specific responsibility to trainers, organisers and partner organisations to make sure it happened – participants making presentations or workshops to their organization and/or doing something specific related to the subject of the training course should be shared with the organisers and other participants. Partner organisations also need to be more responsible and offer support for follow-up.

### **Policy:**

Under the heading of Policy there was a lot of debate and a large number of inputs. The Programme has without a doubt strengthened the capacities of young people and youth organisations to influence and initiate youth policies. This is because of the tools and methods that have been developed and exchanged on the European level covering the different European realities. Through the Programme young people have had opportunities to be involved in decision making processes. This has been achieved by involving both young people and decision makers in events mainstreaming active youth participation. Yet despite these important steps forward, there is still a long way to go to get young people and youth organisations fully participating in the development of youth policy.

### **Young People and the Political Level**

In general it was felt that there is a lack of preparedness of young people to participate in the world of policy, policy making and policy makers. One person expressed that many young people have a lack of trust in the political system and a lack of education regarding civic engagement. It was also pointed out that few people in the world of policy making were ready to work with young people. Even in cases where there was dialogue, often the people in power did not follow up or make any developments. Someone else stated that the challenge we face is to be recognised as being a relevant actor by governments and within civil society.

### **Bottom Up Approach**

Chris Henshaw from the National Democratic Institute, Macedonia, emphasised that political and civic activism is not just about the skills and knowledge, it is also about enthusiasm. In Macedonia a new law on youth work is being developed by CID. The National Democratic Institutes work is in helping CID connect with parliament along with other civil society organisations through briefings, informal groups and other bodies in parliament. It is crucial to develop partnerships and cooperation with the politicians, "we hear a lot about change and change agents, but change is not good unless it goes in a positive direction. CID has and is proving it is pushing things in a positive direction."

Darko Dimitrov, Director of the Macedonian National Agency for Erasmus+ Programme said that the biggest achievement for them in the field of youth policy was the development of partnerships and networks between youth organisations. Several others also shared about their experiences and involvement in Policy development. When asked if the youth work that CID conducts in Kumanovo brings respect from the local authorities, the volunteers and employees of CID gave a definite 'yes'. They went on to share that as an organisation they are respected and as a result of that respect they have been able to create the local strategy for youth in Kumanovo (2014-2019). This was a huge success for CID and the local youth council.

Gjoko Vukanovski from the Volunteer Centre Skopje shared that they have been engaged on the local level for many years and in 2009/2010 were recognised as the main creators of the youth strategy for their municipality. They also created a strategy for cooperation with the NGO sector.

### **More Support from National Agencies Needed**

The group want National Agencies and/or the National Youth Councils to organise trainings and seminars for decision makers and youth leaders in order to prepare them for mutual work and understanding. These can, for example, be trainings on the value of youth work and participation, and/or introductory seminars on the Erasmus+ Programme and its possibilities, etc. Youth organisations could invite decision makers to participate in and/or observe their work in order to open their eyes to the actual work done and methods used by youth organisations and to enable them to see the results of their public funding and inputs, etc.

State and local institutions and youth organisations should work towards the creation of formal structures for dialogue. For example national or local level advisory councils of youth comprised of both decision makers and youth leaders – based on the co-management model of the Advisory Council of the Council of Europe. Another approach could simply be that certain funds from Erasmus+ can only be used for projects where decision makers would participate alongside young people.

### **Visibility, Dissemination and Impact**

Visibility, Dissemination and Impact need improving in the field of policy. Gabrijela Boshkov from CID stated, "We need to think more about how we communicate our intentions to the wider community, for them to see what we are capable of." Organisations need to co-operate better with media partners in order to provide visibility and credibility to activities in this area. Youth organisations should implement the good practice of having meetings with decision makers prior to an activity in order to explain the value

of the activity and to promote participation. National Agencies and youth organisations need to put more emphasis on displaying and proving the value of youth work and youth participation in policy processes. In the framework of policy related events, youth organisations and decision makers need to agree on concrete follow-up.

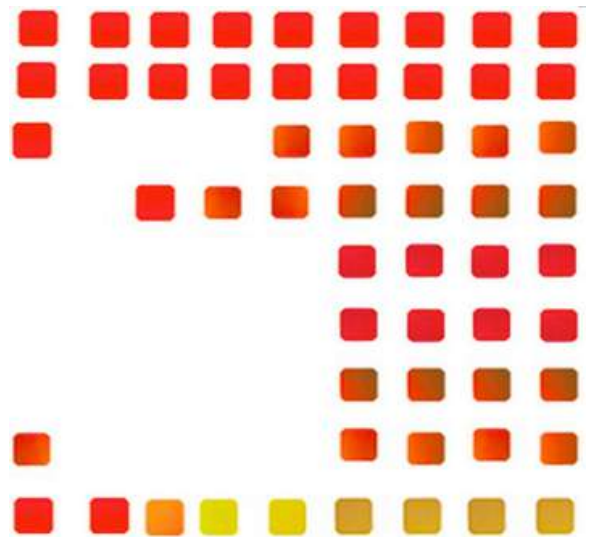
### **Policy and the Private Sector**

Youth organisations should work and cooperate more with the private sector, especially those interested in supporting the policy processes and youth involvement. Co-funding with the private sector would help to increase the visibility and credibility of projects in the eyes of both decision makers and the public in general.

In conclusion it was evaluated that the Programme has had a great impact on the development of youth work policy on both national and international levels, although there are still conflicts between European and National policies, therefore restricting development. The group recommended that there should be closer cooperation between the European level, the nation states and civil society.



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## IMPACT ON YOUTH WORK DEVELOPMENT

This chapter explores the actual impact of the Programme on four specific areas. The direct impact on local youth work, the impact on individual development, the impact on organisational development and the impact on the local community.

*Nearly a 25% of respondents did not believe that the Programme had any impact on young people and decision making processes. However nearly 60% said that it had a big impact or some impact.*

*CID Online Research*

### Youth Work

In terms of the impact of the Programme on youth work itself, there were mixed feelings. The impact of the Programme in general was quite high as can be read in many of the previous sections, however many felt that the direct impact that the Programme had, was less than satisfactory. The Programme has played a big role in the development of non-formal education and learning. The methodological approaches of non-formal education have become an essential part of the youth work field across Europe.

Giselle Evrard Markovic shared that she felt the Programme did shape youth work because in some countries the Programme is the only means of youth work. She also talked about how we are responsible for shaping youth work from the inside but we as a sector need to be careful and cautious about how things develop. She stressed that we have to ensure our involvement, "and we need to wonder each day, why do we do all this and what are the values behind all this and stand very strongly. We must be extremely self-critical of the way we function and as a field."

### Young People with Fewer Opportunities

*Well over 70% felt that inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities was enhanced as a result of the Programme, while just over 10% were not sure and the remainder doubted the impact in this area.*

*CID Online Survey*

It was felt by many that most of the young people taking part in Programme activities are well educated and reasonably well off. Some of these young people are already a part of the youth work scene and some are clearly not, unfortunately many of those who are not already involved in youth work do not have any interest in developing civil society. For many their interest is in the experience of the moment which in itself is a legitimate reason for taking part in the Programme but these young people have no further impact in youth work.

The lack of young people with fewer opportunities taking part in the Programme can be put down to a lack of information for many young people about these kind of activities from local organisations. This was confirmed by Snezana Manceva of the National Agency on European Educational Programmes and Mobility in Macedonia when she said, "The challenge for us is that so many young people still do not know about the Programme and the opportunities available." It was echoed by Zorica Stamenkovska of the Agency for Youth and Sport of Macedonia, "Still too many young people do not know what benefits youth work can bring." Both of these comments were made in reference to young people from rural and more remote locations in Macedonia. Either local organisations are not set up to work with young people with fewer opportunities or if they are, they don't have time for or access to, the Programme. Another reason identified was that it is much harder to develop and implement a training course, Youth Exchange or EVS for young people with fewer opportunities. Something the Programme itself does not help very much with.

The overall impression was that there was a restricted impact on youth work in the context of young people with fewer opportunities and those organisations who work with them.



## **Quality of Local Youth Work**

Sharing and networking among individuals on Programme activities supported the development of youth work practice, especially when dealing with minority groups. Through the Programme there was an opportunity to introduce and explore new topics, some of which were considered as 'taboo' for some people, for example; introducing projects concerning LGBT in Albania. However, developments are not always being achieved locally or on a long term basis, this is due to short term projects such as a Youth Exchanges with no follow up activities.

It was identified that in Georgia, some people felt that the quality of local youth work had been improved because of the Programme. An example was given where, through one organisation, they were promoting youth work, encouraging young people to take decisions, implementing different projects, and recruiting volunteers. They firmly believed that the Programme had given them the possibility as young people to broaden their points of view and think outside the box.

Sonja Mitter from SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre shared that through research they had conducted they had collected evidence that the Programme has helped to promote the quality of local youth work. However she went on to say that, "While the Programme has helped the development of the competencies of youth workers and these competencies have been transferred to the organisations and have therefore promoted organisational development. 85% of cases in a survey responded that this transfer happened accidentally. This means there is not a process in place. Youth leaders and youth workers attend Programme activities, they learn something, and if inspired enough when they go home it rubs off onto their colleagues."

In Turkey it was reported that although many good quality youth organisations exist, there are too many poor quality youth organisations. Those complaining went on to explain that these organisations are not interested in quality or even in youth work, most simply exist to get money from the Programme. This in turn makes it very hard to develop the quality of youth work on both the international level and the local level.

Similar issues were reported from Macedonia where many organizations don't even have offices and sometimes there is only one person is in charge. Other connected problems were identified, for example such organisations only select participants who act as tourists, therefore bringing nothing back to the organisation and making no impact on the quality of the youth work. It was felt that there should be obligations for participants, so that when they come back from a project they will take part in local activities. It was emphasised that sending a young person on a Programme project is an investment and upon coming back those young people should bring benefits with them for the local organizations.

If an organisation does get the benefit of the competencies developed by the young people who take part in the Programme, it will gain from their experiences. Former participants can be inspired and organize some local activities. But the influence is also more personal – the individual becoming more open mind and having new knowledge. Organisations can also benefit from the technical side of taking part in the Programme, for example in dealing with human resource, logistics, accounting and finances...

Sonja Mitter commented further on the benefits for youth work as a result of the Programme when she said, "The quality of local youth work can develop the most from the Programme if there is a strategy – this needs organisations to think about how the Programme activity they are wanting to engage in, fits in with their work and the young people they work with at the local level. How can this be used, what extra dimension does it bring, what extra value does it bring to what you are already doing?"

Some of the group noted that hosting long term EVS volunteers has a big impact on the local community, for them, EVS had the strongest impact of all the Programme projects. This was impact on the volunteers themselves, the local young people they came into contact with and in the development and quality of youth work. Generally it was felt that the quality of youth work improves by small steps through the influence of the Programme.

### **Local Youth Work Outreach**

Outreach through the young people themselves and through different institutions all help in creating an impact of the Programme on local youth work.

To gain the attention of young people is never easy, to get young people to listen about the benefits of the Programme can be very difficult, especially when trying to reach young people with fewer opportunities. It was highlighted that promotion is a very important part of Programme activities. The best way identified was the spreading of information through the natural networks of participants. It was stated that it is much easier for young people to explain the opportunities of the Programme to friends than trying to get someone to read the Programme guide.

Some organization are going to different high schools and promoting the Programme and attracting new young people that way. As representatives of educational institutions the teachers can also get benefits from the Programme and local youth work. Sharing and promoting with the municipality and local government was also seen as important, both for support and further outreach to different groups of young people.

### **Sustainability of Local Youth Work**

It is clear that Programme funds have helped to sustain organisations at the local level, especially those that do not have other funding sources available. For example, having a project manager on the payroll because of the Programme enables that person to support the organisations other activities. If projects are implemented continuously year by year it helps a local organisation to become sustainable. Applying for the same EVS project over a number of years can be a huge support to an organisation and ensure sustainability. The negative side of this is that some organisations have tended to replicate their previous Programme projects, simply working within their comfort zone, therefore not developing the youth work they are undertaking. This is particularly visible in organisations which rely on Programme funding to survive, they don't risk applying for innovative projects.

There are examples of organizations who started their work at the local level and then through their involvement with the Programme, started to create networks with others organizations and shared good practice with each other. This has also been responsible for sustainability.

### **Follow-Up**

The lack of follow-up in Programme activities, especially locally but also internationally, has resulted in less impact than many would like to see. The group proposed that the Erasmus+ Programme should include an option for organizations to apply for funds to develop follow up activities as a result of a Programme project. Follow-up activities should be proposed and developed during the initial activity with clear aims and a plan of implementation – which would make up part of the application for further funds. Participants should also be encouraged to be more creative and innovative which could also be a part of the assessment criteria.

It is not just about having an impact, it's also about how much that impact will remain in the long term. Matej Manevski from CID pointed out, "It built competences in individuals who took part in the Programme but it is not sustainable, there is a lack of follow-up. Each individual goes back to their reality and slowly loses the effect." From an organisational perspective Ivana Davidovska from CID added, "Working with the Programme created a greater vision for the organisation, however many individuals don't follow-up locally, so they are involved just on the international level, there needs to be a stronger link made to the local dimension. This created a split between those involved on the international level and those not."

Sonja Mitter offered a different perspective when she said, "If the young people are involved in their organisation, the follow-up has more effect, but only if it was thought about and developed before the project." Sandra Anastasovska from the Youth Education Forum, Macedonia, gave an individual young persons viewpoint when she said, "We need more motivation to do something with all we learned on our volunteering, not so many of us continue with the volunteering or giving some help in our communities. Maybe there could be some kind of framework that could help us and support is in giving something back."

Others gave simpler solutions to conducting at least some form of Follow-Up, one person explained that as an organisation they always have meetings with the young people after they come back and where possible organise workshops with them to pass on their experience. Katerina Gjoigjevska from CID explained that before sending anyone on an international activity they have meetings with the ones who will go and when they come back they organise an evaluation meeting. This ensures that CID gets to know about their experience and gets them to share their experience with their friends in order to multiply the effect.

In general, whether with more positive views or more negative, everyone agreed that we need to be having more focus on local impact in our work with the Programme.

## Individual Development

Almost everyone agreed that the Programme had an impact on individual development, especially in terms of personal, social and professional growth. In other words the development of attitudes, knowledge, and different transferable skills; soft skills, language skills, leadership, and team work, etc. The Programme empowered many young people in improving their competences in different areas, especially in relation to intercultural enlightenment, self-awareness, self-confidence, and self-realisation. Some young people with their new found competences went on to develop their own projects. Others used the tools and methods they had discovered in their work and daily lives. Many benefited from experiencing the strength, energy and work of the other young people they were on the project with, united around a common interest based on their needs.

Impact was also identified for young people in terms of the development of respect and tolerance to other people's beliefs and values. This is simply from communicating, working and living with different people with different cultural backgrounds and life experiences during projects. This increased self-awareness also came through the experiencing of non-formal and informal learning.

Many in the group agreed that participation in the Programme empowers young people to progress beyond their perceived limits as well as the limits imposed on them by society. Through participation they have the opportunity to overcome the constraints of their comfort zone and have the chance to achieve objectives which they may have otherwise thought were impossible. All these individual impacts can motivate young people to take an active role in society and use the tools and methods they learned in every aspect of their lives.

It was not all good news though, it was pointed out that there have been too many low quality projects with low quality trainers, leaders and partnerships. This poor quality experience has caused a lack of motivation for many. This has seen young people either no longer taking part in the Programme or becoming so called 'tourists' who just see the Programme as a means of travelling to different countries, meeting people and partying.

In order to support the impact of Erasmus+ on young people, the group thought that there should be more clarity regarding the role of partners for Programme activities and a strengthening of the roles and responsibilities of partners. This will make them answerable for their support or lack of it with regards to the individual participants they send.

## Organisational Development

The Programme had good impact on organizational development because of the personal development of participants who took part in Programme projects. People who were already actively involved in youth NGOs (Staff, coordinators, youth workers, youth leaders, etc.) improved their competences and contributed to the development of their organizations. One negative aspect of the Programme was again the lack of quality follow-up. For instance if participants of a Programme activity were not active in the youth field, they didn't make any contribution to the development of any organisation when they returned.

The Programme required that NGOs have a large number of international partners for projects. This increased the number and the size of networking as well as contributed to the promotion, and visibility of organizations. Because of the networking between organisations, new tools were developed through the exchange of experiences. New educational methods, promotional and management tools were constantly being developed and improved on among many organisations. The Programme supported the enlargement of existing international youth networks by providing greater visibility and greater impact on the development of youth policies which in turn supported the recognition of youth work, non-formal education and youth work as a profession.

## Local Community

The Programme over the years had increased the credibility of local youth organizations and opened the doors for dialogue with local decision makers on topics relevant to young people and youth work.

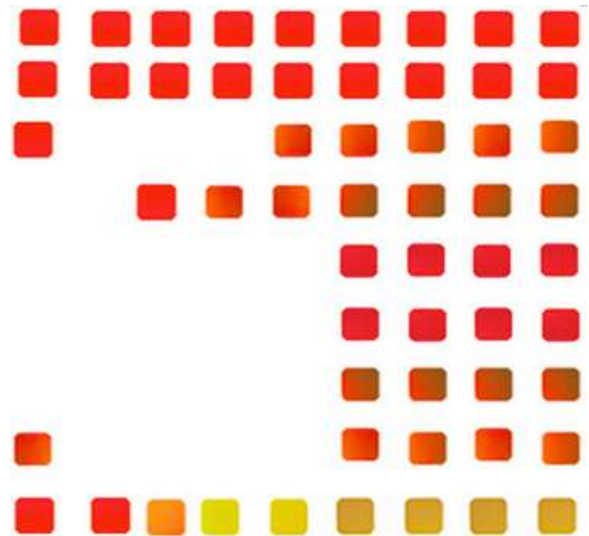
Mohammed Zaman from the UK pointed out that there can be a negative impact from working with the Programme. There can be a divide between local and international youth work. In some communities there is a fear and a lack of knowledge and understanding about European programmes. He went on to explore that this has led many of their local partners being apprehensive or reluctant to partner with them on such programmes. As a result they have identified a need for a much greater local impact with the Erasmus+ Programme.

In some cases young people from local communities gained more interest in civil society because of the Programme projects that organizations implemented in their localities. For some this meant being motivated to contribute to solutions for social problems. Projects that are organized in smaller communities see a much stronger visible impact on young people. In some such projects they see an increased level of participation, but in most instances the organizations do not put enough effort to include local young people.

Local communities hosting Programme projects became more aware of diversity which supported intercultural learning and the exchange of ideas. However local communities 'sending' participants rarely benefited from Programme projects due to the lack of dissemination of results and follow-up activities. There have also been negative impacts on some local communities with young people being discouraged from attending future projects because projects were not being created according to the needs of the local young people and the lack of capacity of the implementing organizations.



look  
beyond



## LOOKING BEYOND

“Youth work is the inner circle that gives support to every young person to become part of society. If we are facing a lack of motivation then youth work is the answer. Youth work brings and helps young people to understand the communities and societies where they live and shows them how they can bring their initiatives forward and develop their ideas into reality.”

Stefan Manevski

This final chapter will expand upon many of the elements that 'looked beyond' the Youth in Action Programme, that looked to the 'Erasmus+ Youth in Action' and to the future of youth work in Europe. Much of the discussion was focussed either directly or indirectly on the question of 'recognition', this will be explored extensively in this chapter from the point of view of the different institutions, the NGO sector, youth workers / leaders, policy makers, and young people. The key question that sums up this final chapter was asked by Ivana Davidovska from CID, "What can we expect from the future of youth work in Europe, where is it leading us?"

### Youth Work in Europe

In the working group 'Youth Organisations for Youth Work Development in Europe' Gerd Tarand, European Youth Forum Working Group on Youth Work Development, explored with the group a number of points on the impact of youth work. The group identified several elements relevant to individual and societal impact. In terms of individual impact the group spoke about youth work providing opportunity for employment, improvement of soft skills – open mind; tolerance; self-confidence; self-discovery, self-improvement and orientation. It can also provide more direction and focus on achieving goals and it can overcome the gap between formal education and the employment market. For societal impact the group shared that they felt youth work provided an opportunity for young people to contribute to society, for young people to be a role model and to motivate others. It also gave some a more active role in the decision making processes in their communities and supported them to address social issues. Youth work also acts as a source of support, information and guidance as well as a bridge between young people and the rest of society.

### Defining It!

There is a discussion that has been running around the youth sector for many years – locally, nationally and internationally. 'What is youth work?' As Rita Bergstein, SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre, pointed out, "Some countries develop youth worker profiles that cover huge areas including arts and sports."

Alfonso Aliberti from the European Youth Forum said that they were in the process of developing a policy paper on youth work and during their research they realised there is no common understanding of youth work, there are geographical, historical and cultural differences. He went on to say, "So rather than trying to define it specifically we started to define its boundaries." In another discussion Luis Alvarado Martinez from the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe put it another way. "First we have to agree on what is youth work, maybe we don't need a single answer, maybe we need one for each country or one for the employment sector, one for policy, etc."

Stefan Manevski from CID, presented a double warning on the subject. At first he shared that if we limit or define youth work too much we are in danger of kicking out a lot of people, but he also said, "However if we don't define it we are just seen as something that is part of another field in which we have to fight for our own space." Marcio Barcelos from the European Youth Forum, added his own warning that we need to take hold of what youth work is, he explained that if we did nothing then it will be shaped by institutional programmes and funding systems. He also warned, "if we are existing only to fulfil check lists so we can get money, we need to question what it is we are doing!"



It was common agreement in the end that creating a single entity called youth work for the whole of Europe was impossible and almost certainly not appropriate. Defining youth work is a complex subject and should be treated as such taking all the variables into account and letting it speak for itself. The European Youth Forum is currently developing a database of youth work from across Europe that is available working on quality assurance in non-formal education available on: <http://www.youthforum.org/publication/quality-assurance-of-non-formal-education-manual-a-framework-for-youth-organisations/>

### **Standardisation**

Very much linked to the debate on definition the subject of standardisation was raised. In the working group titled, 'Recognition of youth work in Europe – Trends and Challenges' facilitated by Gisele Evrard Markovic, European Union and Council of Europe Youth Partnership, they talked about the standardisation of youth work. Bojana Markovic from the Red Cross expressed a fear shared by many that standardization would decrease the voice of young people. It was also expressed that some youth workers are against any form of standardization because they believe it will kill the creativity and innovation of youth work. However this was countered by Gisele Evrard Markovic who argued that she felt it would not.

### **Professionalization**

Rita Bergstein shared that countries like the UK and Germany have youth work as a profession whereas most other countries don't, particularly Eastern European countries. The countries where youth work is being recognised and professionalization is beginning should use the knowledge and experience of the countries that already recognise youth work, since half of the work is already done. From discussions it was clear that youth work needs professionals but as someone said it is far from a black and white issue. The group felt that it should not only be accredited youth workers who can work with young people because for example, young people are also peer educators. Those who work with young people in the field of youth work cover a vast range of competences, specific roles, responsibilities, and approaches, only allowing so called accredited youth workers to work with young people would exclude so many quality people from the field.

Chris Henshaw from the National Democratic Institute, Macedonia, talked about the fact that many people have been working hard to recognise youth work and to get it regulated as a profession. But he emphasised that it should not be over regulated. He said, "it is about establishing a base standard. But above that recognising the real complexity of youth work and the ways in which youth work needs to be done."

In the working group 'Youth Workers Competence Framework', they explored the work being undertaken in defining a competence framework for youth workers. Rita Bergstein revealed that they will soon be publishing a manual of competences. The work of SALTO Training and Cooperation also revolves around competences needed to work in transnational projects and the competencies needed to support young people's mobility in these projects. Rita Bergstein also talked about the formalising of youth work using the European Qualification Framework. She explained that in some countries the validation and recognition of youth work comes about through using the Framework in order to create an occupation profile for youth workers. This in turn gains broader recognition which also supports the development of youth work. However in other countries they are very much against the Framework because it formalises youth work.

### **Recognition**

Possibly the biggest single subject for discussion during the whole event of Look Beyond was the subject of recognition. Giselle Evrard Markovic put a question to everyone which formed the foundation for a lot of the discussions that took place. She said, "What is it that you want to be recognised? Why is it important? When you know the answers to these questions then you can define the path you want to take to recognition." Nik Paddison, from Boka Creative Experiences, Montenegro added, "The recognition process can work for us or against us, but basically if we don't react it will be against us."

In the working group 'Recognition of Youth Work in Europe – Trends and Challenges' Gisele Evrard Markovic presented the current processes taking place in Europe on the recognition of youth work and non-formal education. With the group she went on to explore the challenges of recognition work which include the issue of simply getting the relevant actors to talk to one another. One of the biggest issues that needs to be faced with regards to recognition on the European level is keeping it in the hands of those who are actually involved in youth work. There is a big danger of youth work becoming too politicised and being seen from an economic perspective as 'the' answer to youth unemployment. This was something that Rita Bergstein also picked up on, when she said, "Don't fall into the trap that we have to solve the crisis... ..we cannot do that."

### **Recognition in Macedonia**

Zorica Stamenkovska from the Macedonian Agency for Youth and Sport shared how the recognition process was initially developed in Macedonia. She stated, "Recognition in Macedonia started with young people, youth workers and youth organisations, not the ministry – this was important." And this is still important, Zorica Stamenkovska went on to explain that their biggest challenge was to stay in the support role for the Union of Youth Workers and not lead the process, "Accreditation should not just come from the Agency but from the youth workers as well because they are what they do." Mila Karadafova, from one of the working groups shared that the Union of Youth Workers gathers 27 organisations that are all working on the recognition process.

Zorica Stamenkovska also explained that they had a lot of discussions trying to define youth work which meant a lot of sharing among a lot of people talking about what they do and how they do it. For her this was a first step in recognition, the listening and understanding between the practitioners. She went on to share that from such small beginnings they now have the draft of a Law on Youth, although it is still not a Law and their National Youth Strategy is out of date and needs renewing. However in cooperation with the UNDP they are preparing local youth strategies and local youth councils. Darko Dimitrov, Director of the Macedonian National Agency for Erasmus+ Programme informed the group that another aspect of recognition in Macedonia was that they have a University level youth work course.

### **Recognition on the European Level**

On a European level the recognition of youth work is a complex subject. Rita Bergstein explained, "When developing recognition tools on the European level we have to force ourselves to be critical and to focus on quality, we have to be ready to constantly adjust, to see what is the need and if it serves the purpose." The conclusion from that particular discussion was that there is no one universal way for recognition but that we have to find and develop a basic framework, and then adjust it to specific situations.

From the perspective of the European Youth Forum Gerd Tarand shared that they advocate for the recognition of youth work through a number of different areas and sectors. They are involved in the promotion of youth work studies at Universities, making youth work activities / events visible, developing intergenerational projects, offering volunteering opportunities, publishing their newsletter, and developing networking.

Anca Ruxandra Pandea, Educational Advisor of the Council of Europe, talked about recognition work being undertaken by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. "At the Council of Europe we have a more political action plan that will lead to a Charter on non-formal learning and other political instruments at the European level that can also be useful for youth organisations in terms of advocacy." She shared that in her opinion quality is a key ingredient in the development of recognition. The European Portfolio for Youth Leaders and Youth workers is an important contribution towards the development of quality. Ruxa Pandea went on to explain that European level policies or charters are only good if they can be used at National level and be placed into the reality of the work being done by the youth workers and youth organisations. The relevance of such documents has to be maintained and the Council of Europe is currently revising their Quality Standards Paper and the European Portfolio for Youth Leaders and Youth Workers (new edition of the Portfolio to be published in 2015).

## Social Recognition

With regards to social recognition Alfonso Aliberti made an important point that in his opinion the Programme had contributed a lot to the way youth work is perceived in many countries. For many youth organisations in those countries it is the main source of funding to do youth work. He went on to explain that the Programme is a mobility programme and it is mainly operating at an international level, "We as youth workers must show that youth work has worth, not only to policy makers but to friends and family and colleagues – to the whole of society. This will help us to develop more youth work in the future. We need two parallel processes, one to policy makers and one to the whole society." Marcio Barcelos added that he felt that while there is a European level desire for a more coordinated approach to recognition, the greater focus now needs to be on ourselves and on society. "It is time for youth organisations to work together, now is not the time to work alone." This was reinforced by Alfonso Aliberti, when he said, "you can have an impact if you coordinate at grassroots level, then you can show the impact of youth work on society."

Ivana Davidovaska questioned the role of youth organisations in shaping recognition. Zorica Stamenkovska stated that she believed it must not be just the youth organisations but the young people themselves involved in all the processes of recognition, "if we the institutions do not involve young people then we cannot speak about recognition and youth work." She argued that youth work will always remain as something that our parents and friends don't understand or know about if we don't involve young people in processes that are important to them. Alfonso Aliberti said, "Lets work on communicating what it is we do, it is not just about having a piece of paper that recognises our skills, it is also important that society understands what it is we do." Zorica Stamenkovska also stated, "Very often we hear that the institutions do not hear young people, but the reality is, not that many young people actually try to contact any institutions."

## Self-Recognition

In the working group 'Recognition of Youth Work in Europe – Trends and Challenges' Gisele Evrard Markovic asked the group, who is working on the recognition of youth work. Only a few participants raised their hands and were able to talk about how they were involved in the recognition process, most however didn't have any experience in this topic. This indicates that for most people recognition is still seen as something done at a higher level rather than something each and every individual in the youth sector is responsible for.

Eliza Popper from the Advisory Council on Youth of Council of Europe said, "The issue is confusing, it is a paradox, on one side we want to recognise our work, our competencies that we have gained through youth work and non-formal learning because we are proud of it, because it is a real thing, on the other hand if we recognise it, are we formalising it and then the beauty of it and the creativity of it is gone! We need balance."

Eliza Popper also said, "What we gained through youth work is really important, it is who I am, everything I know and everything I learned is through youth work, so I want that recognised." In terms of how this could be achieved she proposed looking at initiatives that already exist outside of the youth sector, for example 'LinkedIn'. Stefan Manevski highlighted that many of us fail to explain what it is we do, that many of us struggle to be able to define it or put it in a box, partly because of what it is, it does not fit in a box.

## Political Recognition

In the working group on 'Cooperation Opportunities for the Western Balkans', Sonja Mitter, SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre, explained that for South East Europe there were specific circumstances that meant they had a specific role in the field of recognition. Part of these circumstances are that the nature of the region is changing, both Croatia and Macedonia are now Programme countries and so no longer under the SALTO SEE RC remit. Part of the role of SALTO SEE RC is the development of the youth sector in the

bigger accession perspective of the remaining countries, she said, “we see our role as support for full entry to the programme for all the countries. This can’t be done only by supporting organisations, we encourage ministries towards cooperation with us as well.”

Jelena Ilic from Hajde da! Serbia, emphasised the need for cooperation between all levels of the youth sector when it comes to political recognition, “On a policy level, if it stays with the politicians, the process of recognition will lead us in a direction we don’t want to go, so we need to ask the Council of Europe and Erasmus+ to help us not to lose this.” If there is not full engagement by the youth sector the policy will be dictated by politicians and political parties who do not understand youth work and its complexity.

## Employment

The subject of employment and youth work was another issue that was raised on several occasions, Rita Bergstein acknowledged this and added that the direction for youth work is to work on life skills and competences that can support employability. She also felt that this was something that needed to be strengthened and have more focus on in youth work. In the working group ‘Quality Assurance of Non-Formal Education – Fiction or Reality’ some of the participants said that, without realising it they were often focused on educating young people to improve their employability skills rather than more general concepts of youth work.

Many speakers and participants echoed these thoughts and it was clear for the majority that youth work is not only about employability preparation. However Marcio Barcelos provided some interesting information from a survey carried out by the Forum. “One of the impacts of non-formal education on youth organisations is young people’s employability. The Youth Forum got together with other stakeholders and asked what skills are needed and what skills non-formal education is bringing. The top 5 skills identified by youth organisations as being provided by non-formal education were the same as 5 of the 6 skills employers identified as most frequently demanded by employers”<sup>1</sup> They are:

- communication skills
- organizational or planning skills
- decision-making skills
- confidence or autonomy
- team work

## The Future is Now!

Sonja Mitter in the working group ‘Cooperation Opportunities for the Western Balkans’ assured the group that the 8 SALTO Resource Centres will have the same priorities within Erasmus+. In terms of the South East Europe region she explained that their continuing role is to help in the process of applying and implementing projects through the official ‘Contact Points’ in each country in the region. She continued with an acknowledgment that the new Programme Guide is more difficult to access and so they will be giving more focus to support work. In general there is a feeling that the Erasmus+ Programme will not be as accessible for new comers, which will also need to be prioritised for support in the region. However Sonja Mitter also pointed out that the Erasmus+ Programme opens new possibilities, for example combinations of activities and combinations of sectors, though she acknowledged that this will suit already developed and experienced and bigger organisations.

While it was acknowledged that the Erasmus+ Programme is not what many had hoped for and lobbied for, there was some strong advice from Rita Bergstein with regards to its future. “You as youth organisations have the power to create realities in Erasmus+ through your participation, your applications and projects, they will have an impact on the direction of the Programme, ultimately they have to respond to the users – you!”

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<sup>1</sup> The Impact of Non-Formal Education in Youth Organizations on Young People’s Employability. European Youth Forum. 2012.

## APPENDICES

## THE 'LOOK BEYOND' COORDINATION TEAM

<b>Name and Surname</b>	<b>Function</b>
Stefan Manevski	Project Manager
Ivana Davidovska	Coordinator
Milos Ristovski	Coordination Assistant
Matej Manevski	Youth Work Fair Coordinator
Dragana Jovanovska	Logistics
Magdalena Manevska	PR Manager
Filip Janevic	Participants Support Coordination
Lendita Ajdini	Participants Support Coordination
Neal Raimi	Registration desk
Monika Bozinovska	Volunteer
Anisija Petrovska	Volunteer
Simona Stefanovska	Volunteer
Aleksandra Tasic	Registration desk
Nenad Dojcinovski	IT Support
Katerina Gjoigjevska	Participants Support
Aleksandra Cvetkovska	Participants Support
Natasa Burnazovska	Participants Support
Bojana Trajkovska	Participants Support
Anisija Petrovska	Volunteer
Kubilay Han Kalkan	Volunteer
Ivo Gospodinov	Volunteer
Clemence Delmotte	Volunteer
Atalay Mahir	Volunteer



# THE 'LOOK BEYOND' FACILITATORS AND SPEAKERS

## Facilitators of the Seminar and Conference

Name and Surname	Function and/or Organisation
Aleksandra Gligorovic	ADP Zid, Montenegro
Jelena Ilic	'Hajde da...', Serbia
Nik Paddison	Boka Creative Experiences – Montenegro/UK (Rapporteur)
Marko Paunovic	Out of the Box International, Belgium/Serbia
Julijana Daskalov	Center for Intercultural Dialogue, Macedonia
Stefan Manevski	Center for Intercultural Dialogue, Macedonia

## Conference Speakers

Name and Surname	Function and/or Organisation
Alfonso Aliberti	European Youth Forum
Luis Alvarado Martinez	Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe
Marcio Barcelos	European Youth Forum
Rita Bergstein	SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre
Darko Dimitrov	Director of the Macedonian National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility
Gisele Evrard Markovic	European Union and Council of Europe Youth Partnership
Snezana Manceva	Macedonian National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility
Sonja Mitter	SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre
Anca-Ruxandra Pandea	Council of Europe, Youth Department
Eliza Popper	Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe
Ivana Savic	Major Group of Children and Youth of the UN
Zorica Stamenkovska	Agency of Youth and Sport of Macedonia
Nita Starova	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Office Skopje Macedonia
Gerd Tarand	European Youth Forum Working Group on Youth Work Development
Marija Topuzovska Latkovikj	Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research
Aleksandra Vuckovska	National Youth Council of Macedonia

# THE 'LOOK BEYOND' PARTICIPANTS

## Seminar

Name and Surname	Organisation
Jose Antonio Alvarez Pacheco	Servei Civil Internacional de Catalunya
Emilia Alaverdov	Active Youth Union
Ander Eceiza Arana	AINARA Cultural Association / Support Staff
Jon Heidar Asgeirsson	Ungir Evropussinar
Sindija Berzina	Latvian Dyslexia Association
Skerjanec Blaz	Povod
Iryna Bohachuk	Institute of Ukrainian Studies
Irhana Cajdin	Youth Information Agency
Gabriela Delsignore	Servei Civil Internacional de Catalunya
Dorena Dyrnishi	Beyond Barriers Association
Richard Ellul	Genista Research Foundation
Gerard Fenoy	Associationet Migration Solidarite et Echanges pour le Developpement
Gwen Gilbank	Ungir Evropuussinar
Elis Ginetsyan	Civic Forum NGO
Sesilja Kristo	PVN Albania
Nadezhda Korobko	New Group Belarus
Martina Kratka	Service Civil International Hellas
Armir Kadrija	Mus-e Kosova
Antonija Lelas	Realization
Andy Martin	Global Love Youth Trust
Antonio Martis	Associazione TDM 2000
Clodagh McGreal	MARDI
Dusan Milojevic	Toplum Gonulluleri Vakfi
Fahd Mohammadi	AMSED
Merve Nurhan Guney	Toplum Gonullureli Vakfi
Marina Oprea	AVI-Moldova
Diana Paade	MTU React
Daniela Pandurska	Cooperation for Voluntary Service Bulgaria
Christos Papas	Youth Net Hellas
Susanna Petrosyan	United Youth International
Marco Pinto	MoJu – Olhao
Victoria Reija Edrosa	AINARA Cultural Association
Vesna Savic	Center E8
Makuna Shulaia	Youth Association DRONI
Katarzyna Strzelec	Stowarzyszenie "Jeden Swiat"
Gerd Tarand	Pro Futuro
Pawel Tempczyk	Jeden Swiat
Turkan Vusat Gizi	AIESEC Baku
Mohammed Zaman	OpportUNITY
Guzel Zarbeeva	World for Youth

## Conference

Name and Surname	Organisation	Name and Surname	Organisation
Sandra Anastasovska	Youth Education Forum	Bojana Markovic	Klub na Mladi
Marko Andonov-Acov	YEF	Rozana Mateva	Humanopolis
Bojana Angjelkovska	Red Cross	Faton Mehmedi	Balkan Images
Mariana Angelova	CRLZ Stip	Simona Miladinova	CRSD
Aleksandra Antoska	JCWE	Blagoj Mitevski	Democratic Youth
Olivera Aritomoska	Humanopolis	Dimitar Nizamovski	Youth Educational Forum
Ozgur Auoglu	CRSD	Dijana Osmanovikj	ESTIEM
Aleksandar Bogojevski	NAEOPM	Loreta Panovska	SPUKM
Katerina Bozinovska	Together Macedonia	Dejan Petrovski	EGT-Bitola
Petra Brankovska	IAESTE	Aleksandra Radevska	NPZDZP Skopje
Filip Bujaroski	YEF / MOF	Martin Risteski	IAESTE
Sandra Buzlieva	OSCE	Aleksandra Ristova	Kreaktiv
Natasha Cavdarovska	FORUM 16	Igor Ristovski	ADORA
Ana Chaloska	YEF	Velina Rusjakova	IAESTE
Angela Chalovska	YEF	Rejhan Rustemi	Sonce
Zaklina Coleska	MPF	Sunai Sabrioski	Sumnal
Darko Dimitrov	NAEPPM	Ivana Savic	CHRDS
Kristina Dodz	IHR	Isidora Sidorovska	USI
Milcho Duli	SFERA	Gorjan Slavkovski	Youth Can
Goran Giorgiev	NYCM/Scouts	Filip Spasovski	BEST
Goran Gjorgjievski	IRZ-Tetovo	Selma Idrizi	Sonce Tetovo
Mila Golcheva	AEGEE	Ivana Janakievaska	AEGEE
Marija Strezovska	ESTIEM	Gojko Janakievski	YEF
Filip Janevic	LIDEM / LYC Kumanovo	Simona Jandrevska	YWCA
Goran Janevski	MPPS Skopje	Aleksandra Tasic	Bujrum
Ivo Ivanovski	YCC-Bitola	Jasmina Todorovska	OSCE
Dragan Jovanov	MIT Univerzitet	Bojana Trajkovska	Bujrum
Ivan Jovanov	NYCM / Youth Can	Andrea Ugrinoska	AEGEE
Daniel Kalajdzieski	HERA	Aleksandar Vanchoski	YATA
Mila Karadafova	KRIK	Ivo Varsakevski	Streets
Bojan Kocevski	Association PEL	Xhenur Iseni	MPF
Irena Krsteva	KRIK	Gjoko Vukanovski	VCS / SEGA
Bozana Zdravevska	CMA KRIK	Marjan Vuckovic	MPF
Elena Zdravevska	CMA KRIK	Aleksandra Vuckovska	NMSM
Slivija Siljanoska	JEF	Kristijan Gramov	
Kristina Ilievska	JEF	Marija Grceva	
Fuat Iseni	FRI	Dimitri Srbinovski	
Ivan Stamenov	Youth Can	Mihail Talevski	

Zoran Ivanov  
Martina Stefanovska  
Nikola Jalceski  
Tamara Dimeska  
Stefan Dimevski  
Dejvid Pavlovski  
Vasil Petreski  
Elena Petrovska  
Todorka Petrovska  
Momir Polenakovic  
Jovan Radanovic  
Aleksandar Kimovski  
Sofija Konstandinova  
Mehide Krasnikji  
Tijana Madzevikj  
Ivan Manalovski  
Viktorija Bandikova  
Marija Basheska  
Marija Blazevska  
Viktorija Blazevska  
Mirjana Daminovska  
Snezana Dicevska  
Dushica Nikolovska  
Elena Nikolovska  
Ivana Nikolovska

Simona Kabranova  
Valbona Kadriu  
Simona Trajkovska  
Nikola Trajkovski  
Stefan Trpovik  
Redzep Jasora  
Aleksandra Janeska  
Andrej Vasev  
Brankica Vasileva  
Djuliana Vasilevska  
Martina Velichkovska  
Marija Velickovska  
Ema Vodenicarska  
Metodij Butnejski  
Aleksandra Gjorgjievska  
Andrijana Ranevska  
Mario Gjurcheski  
Katerina Mihailova  
Simona Miteva  
Elena Nedelkovska  
Marija Nikolova  
Aleksandra Nikolovska  
Aleksandra Simeonova  
Liljana Simonova  
Dragana Manasova

## THE 'LOOK BEYOND' SEMINAR PROGRAMME

Day 1 Thurs 5 <sup>th</sup> June	Day 2 Fri 6 <sup>th</sup> June	Day 3 Sat 7 <sup>th</sup> June	Day 4 Sun 8 <sup>th</sup> June	Day 5 Mon 9 <sup>th</sup> June
Introduction Expectations	Impact on the Local Level	Annual Priorities of the Youth in Action Programme	Identification of Shortcomings and Challenges	Drafting Recommendations
Break				
Group Building Activities	Permanent Priorities of the Youth in Action Programme	European Dimension of Local Youth Work	Identification continued	Drafting Recommendations
Lunch				
My Organization as a Beneficiary of the Youth in Action Programme	Impact of the Permanent Priorities in Local Youth Work	Drafting Conclusions from the Discussions	Opportunities and Strengths of Cooperation in the Youth in Action Programme	Departure to Skopje
Break				
My Organization as a Provider of Youth Work	Impact continued	Drafting continued	Opportunities continued	Preparing for the Conference
Dinner				
Space for Sharing Ideas / Self-Organized Evenings				

## THE 'LOOK BEYOND' CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Time/Hall	Day 1 – Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> June	Time/Hall	Day 2 – Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> June
09.30	Registration	09.30	Registration
10.00 Business Hall	Welcome and introduction to the conference - Opening address - Concept and programme of the conference	10.00 Business Hall	Future developments of youth work <i>Alfonso Aliberti (European Youth Forum)</i> <i>Rita Bergstein (SALTO T&amp;C)</i> <i>Anca-Ruxandra Pandeia (Youth Department of Council of Europe)</i> <i>Zorica Stamenkovska (Agency of Youth and Sport)</i>
10.30 Business Hall	Opening Panel 'Political cooperation on youth work issues in Europe' <i>Darko Dimitrov (Macedonian NA)</i> <i>Gisele Evrard Markovic (Youth Partnership)</i> <i>Marcio Barcelos (European Youth Forum)</i> <i>Eliza Popper (Advisory Council on Youth of Council of Europe);</i>	10.00 Diplomatic Hall 1	Research in youth work development <i>Nita Starova (FES, office Skopje Macedonia)</i> <i>Marija Topuzovska Latkovikj, (Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research)</i>
11.15	Break	11.15	Break
11.45	Impact of youth in action in youth work development [organizational view]  <i>Presentation of outcomes from research and evaluation meeting about the impact of youth in action programme on youth work development</i>	11.45	Thematic Workshops
12.15	Working Groups <i>Thematic working groups analyzing the outcomes of the evaluation meeting</i>	Diplomatic Hall 2	European Portfolio for youth leaders and youth workers <i>Anca-Ruxandra Pandeia [Council of Europe]</i>
13.30	Lunch	Diplomatic Hall 1	Youth workers competences <i>Rita Bergstein [SALTO Training&amp;Cooperation]</i>
14.30 Business Hall	Impact of youth in action in youth work development [institutional view] <i>Sonja Mitter (SALTO SEE)</i> <i>Rita Rita Bergstein (SALTO T&amp;C)</i> <i>Luis Alvarado Martinez (Advisory Council on Youth of Council of Europe)</i> <i>Snezana Manceva (Macedonian NA)</i>	Business Hall	Quality assurance of NFE - Fiction or reality? <i>Marcio Barcelos [European Youth Forum-YFJ]</i>
15.30	Break	11.45	Presentations
15.45	Thematic Workshops	IT Room	No Hate Speech Online Movement [National Committee on Hate Speech Online Movement]
Business Hall	Youth organizations for youth work development in Europe <i>Gerd Tarand [European Youth Forum-YFJ]</i>	Lobby	Youth in the UN System <i>Ivana Savic (Major Group of Children and Youth of the UN)</i>
Diplomatic Hall 1	Recognition of Youth Work in Europe - Trends and Challenges <i>Gisele Evrard [EU-CoE Partnership on Youth]</i>	Lobby	National Youth Council of Macedonia <i>Aleksandra Vuckovska (SG of NMSM)</i>
Diplomatic Hall 2	Cooperation opportunities for Western Balkans <i>Sonja Mitter [SALTO SEE RC]</i>	13.00	Lunch
Lobby	History of youth work development in Macedonia <i>Julijana Daskalov</i>	14.00 Lobby	Youth Work Fair [Fair of youth work providers from Macedonia and Europe] <i>organised by: Union of Youth Work (initiative for recognition of youth work in Macedonia)</i>
Lobby	Outcomes of the CID Survey-Impact of Youth in Action Programme <i>Gabrijela Boskov</i>	15.30	Break
17.15 Business Hall	A.I.V.A.R <i>Presentation of the Association for Integration Valorization Activism and Reconciliation</i> <i>Stefan Manevski [CID]</i> <i>Marko Paunovic [Out of the Box International]</i>	15.45 Business Hall	PL 6: ERASMUS + [Questions, Answers and Peer Support] <i>Guest Speakers: Macedonian National Agency for Erasmus +</i>
		17.00 Business Hall	Closing of the conference <i>presentation of Conclusions</i>